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EMPIRE STATE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

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KINGSBORO PSYCHIATRIC CENTER MIXED-USE PROJECT

VIRTUAL DEIS HEARING

-----X

January 19, 2023

6:00 P.M.

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Marlene Bauer, InGroup Inc.

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1 1-19-2023 - Public Scoping Meeting

2 MS. BAUER: Welcome, my name is
3 Marlene Bauer, a project team communications
4 consultant on behalf of Empire State
5 Development. Welcome to the Public Scoping
6 Meeting for the Kingsboro Psychiatric Center
7 Mixed-Use Project.

8 Tonight we're joined by Doug
9 McPherson, Empire State Development Senior
10 Director, Real Estate and Planning; Destiny
11 Burns, Vice President of Government Community
12 Relations; Eram Qadri, Empire State
13 Development Senior Director, Planning and
14 Environmental Review; Anthony Semancik, Empire
15 State Development Special Counsel; James Wade,
16 STV Consultant, Deputy Project Manager, and an
17 American Sign Language interpreter; and off
18 screen, but other representatives of Empire
19 State Development, along with members from the
20 project team who will address the technical
21 aspects of this meeting.

22 I have been asked by the New York
23 State Urban Development Corporation, doing
24 business as Empire State Development, also
25 referred to as ESD to conduct today's Public

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2 Scoping Meeting. Today's Public Scoping
3 Meeting for the Kingsboro Psychiatric Center
4 Mixed-Use Project is being held pursuant to
5 the New York State Environmental Quality
6 Review Act, or SEQRA, S-E-Q-R-A. The purpose
7 of this meeting is to give the public an
8 opportunity to make comments about Empire
9 State Development's draft scope of work for
10 the proposed project Draft Environmental
11 Impact Statement, or DEIS.

12 My purpose is to run the meeting in a
13 fair and impartial manner and to try to make
14 sure everyone who wishes to make a comment on
15 the proposed draft scope of work has an
16 opportunity to do so during this meeting. All
17 members of the public can also comment via
18 written submission, which will be explained.

19 This is not a question and answer it
20 is instead an opportunity for you to present
21 your views so that ESD can consider them in
22 preparing the Environmental Impact Statement,
23 or EIS. Comments presented at this meeting
24 will be taken into consideration by ESD as
25 part of the environmental review of the

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2 proposed project.

3 Aside from oral public comments
4 during tonight's meeting, comments may also be
5 submitted in writing via e-mail to
6 kpceis@esd.ny.gov, or they may be sent by US
7 Postal Service to the address shown on the
8 screen. Comments must be received before the
9 end of the public comment period, which is
10 5:00 p.m., Eastern Standard Time on Tuesday,
11 February 21st, 2023.

12 For more about the project, including
13 the draft scope of work, you can visit the
14 website at esd.ny.gov/Kingsboro. You'll see
15 this information again periodically throughout
16 the meeting if you need to make note of the
17 addresses or the instructions again.

18 At this time, I'd like to share a few
19 housekeeping notes before we begin. Please
20 note that a stenographic transcript of this
21 meeting is being made. In addition to this
22 online Zoom meeting, these proceedings are
23 being livestreamed over YouTube and recorded.
24 By participating in this meeting, you're
25 granting permission to have your name, voice

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2 and likeness recorded. A transcript of this
3 meeting will be made available on the ESD
4 website within the next few weeks. We ask
5 that if you're participating via Zoom and
6 you'll be speaking, that you turn off or mute
7 the YouTube livestream and eliminate any
8 background noise.

9 Tonight's scoping meeting is for the
10 Kingsboro Psychiatric Center Mixed-Use
11 Project. Comments should be focused on the
12 draft scope of work for this proposed project
13 only. Registered speakers will have three
14 minutes each to provide their comments. We
15 ask that speakers exercise civil conduct
16 during public comments. Speakers who use
17 inappropriate language or act inappropriately
18 will be cautioned and/or muted before being
19 allowed to continue. Continued uncivil
20 behavior will result in removal from the
21 meeting.

22 As you can see, American Sign
23 Language interpretation is being provided on
24 screen. Please e-mail careteam@ingroupinc
25 with any technical issues you may be

1 1-19-2023 - Public Scoping Meeting
2 experiencing. We will now share some
3 prerecorded instructions on how to participate
4 in tonight's meeting via Zoom.

5 (Prerecorded information.)

6 For those of you joining via Zoom,
7 when you enter the presentation, you were
8 greeted with a film strip of presenters on one
9 side with the presentation on the other. As
10 you move your mouse over the bottom portion of
11 your scene, you will find controls. There are
12 chat, raise hand, live transcription and leave
13 meeting buttons.

14 Chat is a way for participants to
15 communicate with our staff ideally to sign up
16 to make a public comment. To do this, click
17 on the "chat" button, enter a message, request
18 comment with your first and last name into the
19 chat box. Our staff will confirm that you are
20 being placed into the speaker's queue in the
21 order you signed up.

22 Raise hand. Click on this button to
23 sign up to make a public comment. Live
24 transcription. Click on this button to turn
25 on or modify settings for closed captioning.

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2 Leave. Click on this button to leave the
3 meeting. Live transcripts via voice
4 recognition technology are enabled. To view
5 captions or adjust font size, click the "live
6 transcription" button to view setting options.

7 Next, this screen provides
8 instructions for providing comments on the
9 draft scope of work during the meeting today.
10 For those of you joining this Zoom meeting
11 from your computer or mobile Zoom app, you can
12 sign up to speak by using the chat or raise
13 hand feature. If you click on "chat," simply
14 type in, "request to make a comment," with
15 your first and last name and affiliation, if
16 you have one, into the chat box. Our staff
17 will confirm that you are being placed on the
18 speaker's list in the order you signed up.

19 Raise hand. If you click the raise
20 hand feature during the meeting at any time,
21 our staff will initiate a chat with you.
22 Confirm your first and last name and
23 affiliation, if any, and we'll confirm that
24 you are being placed in the speaker's list in
25 the order you signed up. The on-screen

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2 speaker list is displayed on the screen, you
3 will see a list of upcoming speakers.

4 (End video presentation.)

5 MS. BAUER: I would now like to
6 introduce Doug McPherson, Empire State
7 Investment Senior Director of Real Estate
8 Development and Planning.

9 MR. MCPHERSON: Good evening, and
10 thank you, Marlene. My name is Doug McPherson
11 and I am a Senior Director of Real Estate
12 Development and Planning at Empire State,
13 Development, or ESD. I serve as project
14 manager for the Kingsboro Psychiatric Center
15 Mixed-Use Project. We appreciate all the
16 stakeholders who are participating in this
17 virtual meeting tonight. Thank you all for
18 being here.

19 The proposed project is part of New
20 York State's Vital Brooklyn initiative, a
21 comprehensive strategy to address chronic
22 social, economic and health disparities in
23 Central Brooklyn. The project envisions the
24 redevelopment of approximately 7.2 acres, to
25 provide affordable housing in East Flatbush

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2 which has long suffered from disinvestment and
3 marginalization that have hindered the
4 wellbeing of its residents.

5 Residents have historically
6 experienced measurably higher levels of
7 obesity, diabetes and high blood pressure,
8 limited access to healthy foods or
9 opportunities for physical activity, as well
10 as higher than average rates of unemployment
11 and poverty. The proposed project seeks to
12 ameliorate these conditions by creating a
13 health-centered community that provides open
14 space, walkable access to retail destinations
15 and proximity to a large concentration of
16 healthcare infrastructure, including
17 Kingsbrook Jewish Hospital, Kings County
18 Hospital, SUNY Downstate Hospital, and of
19 course, the Kingsboro Psychiatric Center.

20 Furthermore, the project will provide
21 up to approximately 7,300 construction jobs
22 and 389 permanent jobs for area residents. As
23 such, the proposed project will provide
24 affordable housing to an under served portion
25 of Brooklyn, including supportive housing and

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2 housing for senior citizens, and improve
3 wellness and economic opportunities as part of
4 the Vital Brooklyn Initiative. The Kingsboro
5 Psychiatric Center is located in the East
6 Flatbush section of Brooklyn. It is operated
7 by the New York State Office of Mental Health,
8 or OMH, and is owned by the Dormitory
9 Authority of New York, or DASNY.

10 Of the five buildings on the portion
11 of the campus proposed to be redeveloped, one
12 building currently is vacant, two buildings
13 are used as storage for OMH, and two of the
14 other buildings are utilized as single adult
15 mens homeless shelters. Two new single adult
16 mens homeless shelters will be reconstructed
17 on the site, replacing the two existing
18 shelter facilities. The remainder of the
19 Kingsboro campus to the east of the portion
20 proposed to be redeveloped will remain an
21 active psychiatric care facility.

22 In collaboration with New York State
23 Homes and Community Renewal, or HCR, ESD
24 published a request for proposals seeking high
25 quality, mixed-use wellness-oriented

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2 redevelopment proposals with affordable and
3 supportive housing components for the site. A
4 team consisting of Breaking Ground, Douglaston
5 Development, Almat Urban, the Velez
6 Organization, Jobe Development Corporation and
7 Brooklyn Community Services were selected to
8 acquire and redevelop the site.

9 The proposed project includes the
10 demolition of the existing buildings on the
11 site and the construction of approximately
12 1,090 new units of affordable housing,
13 including 337 units of senior housing and 326
14 units of supportive housing. Also, two new
15 state of the art single adult mens homeless
16 shelters containing 364 shelter beds, fully
17 replacing the existing 364 shelter beds
18 currently available on the project site.

19 It also includes an approximately
20 8,092-square foot grocery store.
21 Additionally, it includes approximately
22 38,378-square feet of community facility
23 space, including an SEIU1199 facility; that
24 stands for the Services Employees
25 International Union, in addition to an

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2 emergency food provider, a ballet studio, and
3 social service space.

4 The project will also provide
5 approximately 2.16 acres of publicly
6 accessible open space. Construction of the
7 proposed project is expected to occur in three
8 phases, with the first phase of construction
9 beginning in 2024 and the final phase
10 completing in 2030, with full occupancy
11 expected in 2031.

12 As lead agency for the environmental
13 review of the proposed project, under the New
14 York State Environmental Quality Review Act,
15 or SEQRA, ESD has determined that a Draft
16 Environmental Impact Statement, or DEIS, will
17 be prepared. ESD first issued a Notice of
18 Lead Agency, Positive Declaration, public
19 scoping and intent to prepare a DEIS on
20 December 19th, 2022, which was distributed by
21 e-mail and posted on ESD's website, along with
22 the draft scope of work. In addition to the
23 e-mail distribution and posting on the ESD
24 website, the notice appeared in the
25 Environmental Notice Bulletin in the print

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2 addition of the New York Daily News.

3 The purpose of today's meeting is to
4 obtain comments on the draft scope of work for
5 the DEIS. The draft scope of work is
6 available on the ESD website,
7 www.esd.ny.gov/kingsboro, or by sending an
8 e-mail to kpceis@esd.ny.gov, or by calling
9 212-803-2248.

10 While the meeting record normally
11 remains open for ten days following a scoping
12 meeting, ESD is extending the comment period
13 to 30 days after this meeting until
14 February 21, 2023. Please note that today's
15 scoping session is to hear your comments on
16 the draft scope of work. As Marlene mentioned
17 before, this is not a question and answer
18 session and is not a meeting about the details
19 of the proposed project or the design.

20 To describe more about the SEQRA
21 process, I'll turn it over to James Wade from
22 STV Incorporated, an environmental consultant
23 who is assisting ESD in preparing the draft
24 EIS.

25 MR. WADE: Thank you, Doug. Good

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2 evening, everyone, my name is James Wade of
3 STV Incorporated, and as Doug mentioned, we
4 are the lead consultant supporting ESD's
5 environmental review of the Kingsboro
6 Psychiatric Center Mixed-Use Project. In the
7 next few slides I will explain the
8 environmental review process and summarize the
9 draft scope of work to prepare an
10 Environmental Impact Statement, or EIS.

11 The purpose of this public scoping
12 meeting is to obtain comments on the draft
13 scope of work, or the draft EIS, or DEIS.
14 Scoping is the beginning of the public process
15 designed to determine the scope of issues to
16 be studied and addressed in the EIS. Comments
17 from involved or interested agencies and
18 members of the public help identify relevant
19 and key issues of concern which will then
20 guide the scope of environmental analyses
21 performed in the EIS.

22 The comments received here today as
23 well as those that are submitted throughout
24 the comment period, will be considered and
25 responded to in a final scope of work document

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2 that will guide the analyses conducted as part
3 of the draft EIS. These analyses will assess
4 the potential for environmental impacts from
5 the proposed project. The final scope of work
6 will be distributed to involved and interested
7 agencies, as well as anyone requesting a copy
8 and will be made available on ESD's website.

9 When ESD determines that the draft
10 EIS conforms with the final scope of work, the
11 draft EIS will be released for public review.
12 Following issuance of the draft EIS, ESD will
13 hold a public hearing to solicit comments on
14 the draft EIS and proposed project. Based on
15 comments at that hearing and other comments
16 received in writing, a Final EIS will be
17 prepared which responds to relevant comments
18 and makes modifications to the EIS as
19 appropriate. ESD cannot advance, approve or
20 disapprove of the proposed project until the
21 Final EIS has been completed and is available
22 to inform the decision making process.

23 In the next few minutes I'll be
24 providing an overview of the proposed actions
25 and project site, adding to what Doug outlined

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2 before, and I'll be explaining the approach to
3 conducting environmental analyses according to
4 the New York State Environmental Quality
5 Review Act, abbreviated S-E-Q-R-A, or SEQRA.

6 Environmental analyses will include
7 screening analyses and detailed analyses. The
8 proposed actions are the acquisition of the
9 western most portion of the KPC campus, or a
10 portion of Block 4833, Lot 1, and disposition
11 of this property to a conditionally designated
12 developer for mixed-used development. That
13 proposed mixed-use development is what we
14 refer to as the proposed project.

15 As Doug previously described, the
16 property to be acquired as part of the
17 proposed actions we are presenting now is part
18 of the Kingsboro Psychiatric Center, or KPC
19 campus, and currently contains five KPC
20 buildings, including one vacant structure, two
21 storage building and two single adult mens
22 homeless shelters. The two active adult
23 single mens homeless shelters are the
24 Kingsborough Star, a 221 bed shelter operated
25 by the New York City Department of Homeless

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2 Services and the Kingsborough MICA, a 143 bed
3 shelter operated by the Salvation Army.

4 Two new, state of the art, single
5 adult mens homeless shelters would be
6 constructed as part of the proposed project,
7 which would fully replace the existing 364
8 beds currently available. The new shelter
9 buildings will be constructed as part of the
10 first phase of construction, while the
11 existing shelters continue to operate until
12 new buildings are ready for occupancy.

13 As proposed, an approximately
14 7.2-acre portion of Block 4833, Lot 1, would
15 be developed with residential, commercial,
16 community facility and open space uses, as
17 well as an internal private driveway network.
18 This portion of Block 4833, Lot 1, is what we
19 refer to as the project site. The Kingsboro
20 Psychiatric Center will remain in operation on
21 the portion of the KPC campus east of the
22 project site.

23 The proposed project is a Type I
24 action per New York State Environmental
25 Quality Review, or SEQRA. An Environmental

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2 Impact Statement, or EIS, will be prepared to
3 assess potential environmental impacts of the
4 proposed actions, present mitigation measures,
5 for identified significant adverse impacts and
6 explore alternatives that may avoid or reduce
7 potential impacts.

8 Because the project is located in New
9 York City, ESD has the lead agency for the
10 preparation of the EIS, will be following the
11 guidance, methodologies and thresholds
12 presented in the New York City Environmental
13 Quality Review, abbreviated C-E-Q-R, or CEQR
14 Technical Manual. Based on the guidance of
15 the CEQR Technical Manual, the EIS will be
16 structured according to a series of technical
17 areas, for which ESD will prepare analyses.

18 It is expected that some analyses
19 will be sufficiently complete at a screening
20 level, which determines that no significant
21 adverse impacts would result and that no
22 further analysis is warranted. For other
23 technical areas, we anticipate the need to
24 conduct detailed analyses.

25 As outlined in the draft scope of

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2 work, we expect the following analyses would
3 be complete at a screening level:

4 Socioeconomic conditions, community facilities
5 and services, specifically the health care and
6 police and fire services analyses, solid waste
7 and sanitation services, and lastly, energy.

8 If any screening level analyses do not rule
9 out the potential for significant adverse
10 impacts, a detailed analysis will be prepared
11 for that technical area.

12 As described in the draft scope of
13 work, the EIS will include a detailed project
14 description, as well as a description of the
15 proposed alternatives to the proposed actions.
16 For this EIS, the proposed alternative is the
17 no-action alternative, or in other words, what
18 the project site would be in the future if the
19 proposed actions did not occur. Conditions in
20 the future with the proposed actions will be
21 compared to conditions anticipated in the
22 no-action alternative in order to assess
23 impacts.

24 Now I will review the detailed
25 environmental analyses as described in the

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2 draft scope of work. We will provide analyses
3 of land-use zoning and public policy, which
4 will provide an overview of the context in
5 which the proposed actions would occur, though
6 the proposed actions are not anticipated to
7 affect land-use zoning or public policy
8 off-site.

9 For community facilities and
10 services, due to the size of the population
11 that would be introduced, detailed analyses of
12 schools, childcare and libraries will be
13 conducted. For the analysis of open space, we
14 will consider potential indirect effects to
15 neighborhood open space, for example,
16 potential increases in the use of surrounding
17 open spaces.

18 The EIS will also assess the
19 potential for impacts related to shadows.
20 Given the height of the buildings and the
21 proximity of sunlight sensitive resources to
22 the project site, potential effects related to
23 new shadows cast by the proposed project will
24 be analyzed. The analysis of historic and
25 cultural resources will assess the potential

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2 for effects to archeological resources and
3 determine the potential for direct and
4 indirect effects to historic resources,
5 especially given the proposed project's
6 location within the Kingsboro Psychiatric
7 Center campus, which is eligible for listing
8 in the state and national registers of
9 historic places.

10 For urban design and visual
11 resources, potential effects of the proposed
12 project on the urban design and visual
13 resources of the study area will be analyzed.
14 For the analysis of natural resources, a field
15 inspection of the site will be conducted and
16 findings will be summarized in the EIS. ESD
17 will also prepare a Jamaica Bay Watershed
18 Protection Form.

19 For the analysis of hazardous
20 materials, environmental studies, such as
21 environmental site assessments, will be
22 reviewed and evaluated to determine potential
23 for exposure to hazardous materials. We will
24 prepare analyses of water and sewer
25 infrastructure, specifically a sewers and

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2 stormwater assessment, to assess the effects
3 of increased sanitary and stormwater flows on
4 the city's infrastructure serving the project
5 site. The project is located in an area with
6 a combined sewer system and is served by the
7 Coney Island wastewater resource recovery
8 facility.

9 For transportation, analyses will
10 include traffic, bus, subway, pedestrian and
11 parking analyses to determine potential
12 impacts. Vehicular and pedestrian safety
13 evaluations will also be prepared. Air
14 quality, as well as greenhouse gas emission
15 and climate change analyses, will include the
16 evaluation of stationary source impacts, or
17 impacts on or from stationary sources of
18 regulated air pollutants, such as buildings
19 and mobile source impacts, or impacts from
20 mobile vehicle, which may emit regulated air
21 pollutants. It should be noted the buildings
22 constructed as part of the proposed project
23 would incorporate entirely electric, heating,
24 ventilation, and air conditioning systems.

25 For the analysis of noise and

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2 vibration, we will analyze temporary and
3 long-term increases in operational noise and
4 vibration levels in the immediate vicinity of
5 the project site, as well as during
6 construction. Potential effects to public
7 health in the vicinity of the proposed project
8 will be assessed based on any potential
9 impacts identified in other analysis areas,
10 such as air quality, water quality, hazardous
11 materials or noise.

12 Similarly, a neighborhood character
13 analysis will be performed based on any
14 changes identified in other technical areas,
15 including land-use, zoning and public policy,
16 socioeconomic conditions, community
17 facilities, open space, historic and cultural
18 resources, urban design and visual resources,
19 shadows, transportation and noise, which may
20 affect a defining feature or overall character
21 of the neighborhood.

22 Construction impacts will also be
23 analyzed. We will describe the construction
24 activities such as phasing, staging plans and
25 equipment to be utilize and provide a

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2 consolidated review of the potential effects
3 attributable to project construction,
4 specifically to transportation, air quality
5 and noise and vibration. Practicable
6 mitigation measures will be developed,
7 described and analyzed for any predicted
8 significant adverse impacts.

9 Finally, the DEIS will include
10 chapters for the analysis of alternatives, as
11 I mentioned, the alternative to the proposed
12 actions is the no-action alternative. We will
13 also analyze cumulative effects, which puts
14 the project in the context of other actions.
15 This chapter will describe the relationship of
16 the proposed actions to other recent or
17 reasonably foreseeable development in the
18 surrounding area.

19 Lastly, summary chapters will be
20 prepared as part of the EIS, including an
21 executive summary, unavoidable adverse
22 impacts, growth-inducing aspects of the
23 proposed project and is irreversible and
24 irretrievable commitments of resources.

25 This concludes my portion of the

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2 presentation, thank you everyone for your
3 participation this evening.

4 MS. BAUER: Thank you, James. For
5 clarification, comments posted in the chat
6 will not be recorded in the record for
7 consideration or SEQRA review. Please sign up
8 to make a comment tonight by using the raise
9 hand feature or send an e-mail to
10 kpceis@esd.ny.gov. ESD is accepting comments
11 on the draft scope of work for the DEIS until
12 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, Tuesday
13 February 21st, 2023, by e-mail or mail. The
14 addresses are on the screen.

15 For those participating by phone
16 only, I'll repeat the e-mail address again,
17 it's kpceis@esd.ny.gov and the mailing address
18 is Empire State Development, attention Stacy
19 Teran, 633 Third Avenue, 37th Floor, New York,
20 New York, 10017. To get more information
21 about this project and to view the transcript
22 of this meeting, please visit the project
23 website at esd.ny.gov/kingsboro.

24 Before we get started with the public
25 comment portion of the meeting, let's review

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2 some technical aspects again so that you can
3 get ready to make a public comment. For those
4 of you joining this Zoom meeting from your
5 computer or mobile Zoom app, you can sign up
6 to speak with either raising your hand; that's
7 the easiest, or using the chat function. When
8 using chat, just simply type "request to
9 speak," or use the raise hand icon at the
10 bottom of the control bar any time during the
11 meeting to get on the speakers list. Our
12 staff will initiate a dialogue with you by a
13 chat to confirm your first and last name and
14 any affiliation, meaning if you're a resident
15 or if you are associated with an organization,
16 and we'll confirm if you're being placed --
17 that you've been placed on the speakers list
18 in the order in which you signed up.

19 When you're placed in the speakers
20 queue, to prevent feedback noises, please
21 ensure that all livestreams or devices are
22 muted and that noise is kept to a minimum.
23 Just before your turn to speak, a Zoom popup
24 window will ask you to join the meeting as a
25 panelist and we ask you to hit the "okay to

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2 accept," that button. The Zoom platform will
3 then restart and you'll rejoin the meeting,
4 and at that point, you'll have the ability to
5 turn on your video if you want people to see
6 you. Our team on the back end will handle --
7 will have you unmuted at that time. A member
8 of our team, you know, will have you unmuted
9 and then we'll ask that you're ready to begin,
10 and when you're ready, the timer will provide
11 you with three minutes for you to provide a
12 comment.

13 Additionally, please also, again,
14 state your name, spell it out for the record
15 and please announce any affiliation that you
16 may have. If you happen to be using a dial-in
17 only function from your phone, you'll need to
18 enter *9 to let a member of our team know that
19 you wish to make a comment and you'll
20 automatically be added to the speakers list.
21 Since there's no way to modify your Zoom
22 profile, if you're accessing by phone only,
23 we'll just put you on the speakers list and I
24 will identify you by the area code and the
25 last four digits of the telephone number

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2 you're calling from.

3 For those in attendance, we're
4 accepting speaker registrations up until 7:45
5 p.m., and there will be a countdown clock
6 visible on the screen and it will be set to
7 three minutes. Additionally the clock will
8 indicate when you have 30 seconds remaining.

9 Elected officials, community board
10 district managers or chairs, or
11 representatives from government agencies may
12 be provided the courtesy of speaking first if
13 they alert us via chat or provide information
14 about their office. Periodically, your screen
15 will show the list of the next four speakers
16 so you can prepare and get ready for your time
17 to make a comment.

18 When your name or telephone number is
19 called, we will make sure you have time to
20 turn on your video if you wish to be seen and
21 that you're ready to speak before we start the
22 time clock. Following your comment, your
23 audio will be muted again and you'll be placed
24 back into the Zoom meeting in listening mode.
25 You may send any additional comments to ESD's

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2 mailing or e-mail address.

3 This is the scoping meeting for the
4 Kingsboro Psychiatric Center Mixed-Use
5 Project, comments should be focused on the
6 draft scope of work for this proposed project
7 only. Just a reminder that this meeting is
8 being recorded and we ask that speakers
9 exercise civil conduct while making a public
10 comment. Speakers who use inappropriate
11 language will be cautioned or possibly muted
12 before being allowed to continue, and this is
13 not a question and answer session, this is a
14 time for the public comment only. We will
15 display the time clock to begin the public
16 comment portion of the meeting and we will be
17 calling Assembly Member Brian Cunningham from
18 43rd Assembly District.

19 Hi, how are you?

20 MR. CUNNINGHAM: Good afternoon,
21 everyone, good evening, this is New York State
22 Assembly Member Brian Cunningham just
23 representing the 43rd Assembly District, which
24 is Prospect Lefferts Gardens, Flatbush and
25 Crown Heights, and this project is in my

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2 district. One, I want to thank ESD for
3 putting together this opportunity to hear from
4 the public and just wanted to let my
5 constituents know that I am on the call
6 listening to your concerns, and if you
7 comments, questions or concerns about this
8 project, after this meeting please feel free
9 to contact my office.

10 My phone number is 718-771-3105,
11 again, that's 718-771-3105, and my e-mail
12 address is district43@nyassembly.gov, but I
13 will be listening very attentively to your
14 public comments, taking into consideration
15 your concerns. Also just want thank my
16 predecessor, Diana Richardson, who was very
17 instrumental in this project, both in having
18 public forums and conversations about it, but
19 also shepherding through. I intend to listen
20 to your comment and figure out a path forward.
21 Thank you so much, again, for making the time
22 to present to everyone.

23 MS. BAUER: Thank you so much,
24 Assemblyman. We have several speakers signed
25 up. Will start with Ben Elman, then following

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2 Ben Elman, Meir Gewirtz, and Mushky Kotlarsky.

3 Hi, can you please state your name
4 and affiliation?

5 MR. ELMAN: Hi, my name is Ben
6 Ellman, no affiliations. Anyways, so there's
7 only one part of this project that I actually
8 have any agreement with. You know, James
9 mentioned that they're going to demolishing
10 the buildings, which is something that I
11 actually commend, that is something that
12 should be done. Stacy, I don't know if you
13 have ever been to Winthrop and Albany, but I
14 drive there all the time, my wife walks by
15 there with my child. It's not a safe place.

16 There are -- I don't know what they
17 are exactly, if they're drugged up or if they
18 have psychiatric issues, but either way, Doug
19 you wouldn't want to be stopped by someone in
20 a wheelchair when you're trying to drive. It
21 is not only disturbing, it's dangerous. This
22 is an area that has a lot of traffic,
23 especially with the ambulances and, I mean,
24 you guys aren't from here, you guys don't
25 really realize what's going on this in area,

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2 but it is a very busy area, they're going to
3 be adding more people and a lot of them, I
4 would assume from what you're saying, are
5 going to be the types of people that are not
6 going to be conducive to the health of the
7 community.

8 If you guys want to actually do
9 something good for the community, what you
10 could do is demolish the building -- I mean, I
11 know, you know, it might not bring you guys as
12 much money if you're just demolishing a
13 building, a park, but that would actually help
14 the community. You wanted open spaces, well
15 open the entire space.

16 And I would just add that I've been
17 assaulted, I've been mugged in that area and
18 these are the people who live in that
19 facility. So if you're bringing more
20 individuals to live in the facility, you are
21 going to be opening yourselves up to elder
22 abuse if you want to put seniors with
23 psychiatric patients, and it's not a safe
24 place for a shelter either. If you guys want
25 to build a shelter, that is one thing. If you

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2 guys want to build a place for elderly, that's
3 one thing, but when you're mixing -- when
4 you're making a mixed-use project, it sound
5 good on paper, but in practice it doesn't
6 work.

7 You are going to be opening up
8 vulnerable people to abuse, not to mention the
9 rest of the community which lives in this
10 area. We want a safe environment you and --
11 listen, you guys aren't from here, you guys
12 don't know what's going on. Other than Brian,
13 the rest of you are just bureaucrats doing
14 your jobs, but you are basically, you know,
15 thumbing your nose and pushing down on the
16 community who lives here.

17 We do not want this project, we
18 probably don't even have a say in the matter,
19 honestly. You guys are opening this up for,
20 you know, public speaking, but you gave a
21 40-minute presentation which cut a lot of our
22 time to speak. Anyways, I have ten seconds
23 left; I just want to say thank you to Alex
24 Stein, Primetime99, for giving me the courage
25 to do this and to decide to join one of these

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2 public meetings and I hope that this project
3 will only demolish the building. Thank you.

4 MS. BAUER: Thank you for your
5 comment. We will have Meir Gewirtz and Mushky
6 Kotlarsky and then Chaya Margolin. If you
7 would -- as we get the next speaker ready,
8 sometimes it takes a few moments to get folks
9 from listening mode --

10 MR. GEWIRTZ: You hear me?

11 MS. BAUER: I can hear you. Would
12 you please state your name and affiliation for
13 the record?

14 MR. GEWIRTZ: My name is Meir
15 Gewirtz. So I've been a school bus driver in
16 the area for a long time, I'm also a law
17 student, and I've had requests from parents
18 regarding the safety of the area, why they
19 want door to door transportation rather than
20 corners. However, rather than being picked up
21 -- bus stops for the corners, however I
22 understand it might be out of the scope of
23 this meeting, but what I did want to say is,
24 it has been disproportionate to the rest of
25 the Crown Heights area for amount of people

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2 that request stops the in front of their
3 homes.

4 But regardless, for this meeting I
5 keep on hearing that everybody involved is
6 very in touch with the needs and desires of
7 the community, but I want to point out that
8 this meeting was scheduled to run concurrently
9 with the 71st Community Council Meeting, which
10 is tonight, and the -- this project is all
11 within the confines of the 71st precinct. I
12 imagine that if everybody were in touch with
13 the needs of the residents, they wouldn't
14 schedule the meeting at the same time to cause
15 a conflict, but that just leads me to question
16 how in touch everybody is. I know that we
17 were told that we would be given the
18 opportunity to be heard. I feel that we're
19 just being given the opportunity to speak but
20 not to be heard, but regardless, that's pretty
21 much what I have to say.

22 MS. BAUER: Thank you. I just wanted
23 to remind you that your comments are being
24 heard and that the comments tonight will be
25 taken into consideration as part of the

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2 environmental review of the proposed project,
3 and we thank you for your time and coming out
4 to provide comment.

5 The next speaker we have is Mushky
6 Kotlarsky, and forgive me if my pronunciation
7 is a little --

8 MS. KOTLARSKY: Hi, hello, my name is
9 Mushky Kotlarsky, I'm a local resident, I live
10 two blocks away from the proposed project.
11 I'm -- you know, you ask for public comment,
12 this is our comment. I hope, I really hope
13 it's taken into consideration because as a
14 local resident, this project is completely,
15 completely wrong for our neighborhood. This
16 is not the kind of development that we need.
17 We already have way too much of similar
18 projects.

19 This neighborhood is really, really
20 unsafe, it's dangerous. I was spat at
21 yesterday picking my son up from preschool.
22 It's dangerous. I can't let my kids walk down
23 the block, it is really dangerous, I feel
24 unsafe myself. When it's the evening, I will
25 call an Uber to go two blocks away because

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2 this area is so full of exactly the kind of
3 people that you're looking to bring in. This
4 is just not the place for it.

5 We are oversaturated and this is --
6 we can't have such a project here besides for
7 the fact that a thousand units is just
8 completely wrong for this kind of space. If
9 you've been around here, if you've seen the
10 traffic we have and the kind of bottleneck, we
11 don't have the resources for this, we have
12 rolling brownouts in the summer, we have
13 flooding because the sewer system cannot
14 handle whatever development there are already
15 is, our electrical system can't handle it, the
16 infrastructure is not there, the city
17 infrastructure is not there and this is
18 completely, completely wrong for this
19 neighborhood.

20 I understand that these facilities
21 have to exist, it cannot exist here. This
22 should not be happening and the data is
23 publicly available of what happens when more
24 of these facilities are brought into
25 communities. This is the wrong community for

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2 this. What this community is needs,
3 desperately needs is housing, townhouses, four
4 or five bedroom houses. Use some of the area
5 to make some new houses. We can use a housing
6 development that is not for psychiatric
7 patients and for single adult men with -- in a
8 low socioeconomic realm, but just don't have
9 the --

10 They spend all day outside making
11 trouble, and that's the reality, that's the
12 facts on the ground, and last time we heard,
13 yeah, well, they address it, they have
14 security; the security is not walking around
15 two, three blocks away to see what's going on,
16 to see how people's cars are being broken
17 into, packages are being stolen, people are
18 just punched in the face for no reason, things
19 thrown at us for no reason. It is extremely
20 unsafe, and my public comment is no, as a
21 local resident, no. This does not belong
22 here. I don't know what kind of studies you
23 did, the only study you need is to speak to
24 us, who live here and can tell you that this
25 is wrong. That's my comment.

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2 MS. BAUER: Thank you very much for
3 your comment. The next speaker is Chaya
4 Margolin, followed by Theodore Tatic and then
5 Deena Lefkowitz. And, Chaya, please remember
6 to start your video if you wish to be seen,
7 otherwise you can begin speaking. Chaya
8 Margolin, are you there?

9 MS. MARGOLIN: Hello?

10 MS. BAUER: Hi, is this Chaya
11 Margolin?

12 MS. MARGOLIN: Yeah.

13 MS. BAUER: If you wish to be seen,
14 please put your video on.

15 MS. MARGOLIN: I just want to concur
16 with Mushky and Meir said, I live a few blocks
17 away. Our synagogue is right there, I'm
18 always scared when my kids walk. I know it's
19 going to get worse once this facility is
20 built. I'm just scared for our lives. Just
21 two days ago, I was sworn at and I was spat
22 at, I know that this happens many times and I
23 was shoved by an older man. I'm scared to
24 walk on the streets there, I can't do that, I
25 know I don't have that much time to speak.

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2 I'm with my kids now, now is bedtime
3 for us, but I just thought it was very
4 important for me to stop and speak. It's
5 already very dangerous and I know it's going
6 to get much worse if this continues. I'm
7 done.

8 MS. BAUER: Thank you, thank you so
9 much for your comment and taking the time out
10 to share your comment. Theodore Tatic, we
11 would invite you to make your comment. Please
12 remember to start your video if you wish to be
13 seen. Next up after Theodore is Deena
14 Lefkowitz and Avi Webb, and then David Ma.

15 MR. TATIK: Good evening, can you
16 hear me?

17 MS. BAUER: I hear you. If you wish
18 to be seen, you can turn your camera, if not,
19 that's okay.

20 MR. TATIK: I turned it on but it's
21 not going on. Anyway, yes, I want to speak, I
22 think this project and in general, what's
23 going on here in the Crown Heights area with
24 the need to -- seemingly need to solve all the
25 homeless problems right here in Crown Heights.

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2 The homeless problems, psychiatric and mental
3 health problems - it's a society problem.

4 New York City has five boroughs, I
5 don't see why all the problems of Brooklyn and
6 around have to be brought right to Crown
7 Heights, and it should be equally moved to
8 different areas, like other neighborhoods that
9 have space also for homelessness and mental
10 health department problems.

11 Further, I'm a resident, I moved here
12 in 2005, I see what the two -- the homeless
13 shelter that you have here with people hanging
14 around bothering people, traffic is atrocious
15 right on that corner. Also, you have 1,009
16 approximately units you want to -- you propose
17 to build. You already have 364 beds, that
18 1,009 units, which sounds nice, 63 percent of
19 that 1,009 you're devoting to homelessness.

20 It's not just homelessness, even from
21 your numbers, 121 with severe mental health
22 illness, like psychosis, et cetera,
23 schizophrenia, that's also homeless. Then you
24 have about 50 for 18 to 25 adults, young
25 adults from 18 to 25 who are homeless. Then

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2 have you 26 apartments for people who left
3 foster care. I mean, I don't see any of the
4 support services and why does Crown Heights
5 and East Flatbush have to take the brunt of
6 the need to help society's problems?

7 There's communities like Park Slope,
8 there's communities as Canarsie, there's
9 communities as Far Rockaway, and there's more
10 projects that are being proposed right here in
11 this area of Crown Heights and East Flatbush.

12 Lastly, you call affordable housing.
13 I read some of the literature and information
14 online, so you have seniors who are 55 and
15 older, I always knew seniors were 65 and
16 older, you have it down to 55 and older and
17 have you a very interesting statistic here;
18 for homeownership and rent assistance, 30
19 percent of average median income or below.
20 You don't say how much below, so if a senior
21 citizen or -- for rent assistance for what you
22 call affordable housing, it has to be -- 30
23 percent of the average median income, which I
24 would like to see how you figure that out, and
25 that could be below. How much below can that

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2 be? It could be up to one percent, according
3 to you.

4 There's no bottom line to that. It's
5 80 percent or below. Well 1 percent of 80
6 percent is below 80 percent also. So I think
7 it's a terrible planned project, there are
8 other better uses for this community and you
9 do not look at this community's needs and see
10 how this could work. Thank you.

11 MS. BAUER: Thank you. The next
12 speaker is Deena Lefkowitz, followed by Avi
13 Webb and David Ma. Deena, you can begin
14 speaking.

15 MS. LEFKOWITZ: Hello, can you hear
16 me?

17 MS. BAUER: I can hear you.

18 MS. LEFKOWITZ: Hi, I'm Deena
19 Lefkowitz, I'm a local resident and I want to
20 publicly oppose the building of this project.
21 It's going to be right next to a local park,
22 Rutland Park, where I bring my toddler, and
23 the type of people that are going to be moving
24 in are going to make the area even more unsafe
25 than it already is. It's extremely unsafe

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2 around here now, the traffic is bad, there's
3 lots of reasons why this project should not be
4 built right here. Thank you, that's all.

5 MS. BAUER: Thank you. Avi Webb,
6 followed by David Ma and then Ya'akovah W.
7 Avi, you can begin speaking when you're ready.

8 MR. WEBB. Hi, thank you very much
9 for giving us the opportunity to speak. I do
10 hope as others had mentioned that it's not
11 just not an opportunity to use our voices, but
12 that you actually appreciate as others have
13 said. We understand how on paper and the
14 state has a responsibility to solve society's
15 problems in many ways and there's a need for
16 housing homeless people, and that's I think,
17 nobody is really objecting to the concept.

18 As others have said, the fact on the
19 ground right here, the infrastructure in East
20 Flatbush does not support really anything
21 that's being proposed, and we're really
22 setting ourselves up -- those that are
23 planning this for not solving the issues that
24 are trying to be solved.

25 So as others had said, the status quo

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2 does not work, so just replacing, for example,
3 364 beds with 364 beds, what's happening here
4 is already going from bad to worse, and this
5 includes direct issues like rampant and
6 increasing car break-ins, home break-ins,
7 street harassment, and it includes a huge lack
8 of infrastructure like sewage capacity, public
9 transportation, emergency service access,
10 electric and energy, traffic and all those
11 things.

12 So, I really, really, really urge you
13 to acknowledge and look at how this will not
14 only be a scourge for the community that's
15 really trying to build and rebuild in the area
16 that has historically had a lot of problems
17 and a lot of young families now are putting
18 our necks out to move to this area and try to
19 make it a little more safe, a little more
20 family friendly, and by building this project
21 as proposed, it will set this area back a half
22 century or more and will almost guarantee not
23 solve what you're trying to solve.

24 I do also see that though the current
25 plan is a nightmare, it could become a real

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2 dream, it could be one of the most visionary
3 projects arriving in New York in decades and
4 that will take working with the community and
5 acknowledging that the scale of what's being
6 propped is just not going to work, but there
7 ways to, for example, change mens shelters to
8 perhaps women and children, to use a lot of
9 space, that open space alongside from Troy all
10 the way to Utica, and there are things that
11 can be done that will solve those things the
12 state is looking to solve. The current
13 proposal is not it and is really setting up
14 the area, the borough and the city for
15 disaster. Thank you.

16 MS. BAUER: Thank you. Next speaker
17 up is David Ma, followed Ya'akovah W. and then
18 Zalman Abraham.

19 MR. MA: Yes, hi, thank you for
20 giving me the opportunity to speak. Do you
21 hear me?

22 MS. BAUER: Yes, just state your name
23 just so that we have it.

24 MR. MA: Hi, I'm David Ma, and I
25 wanted -- there's a few things I wanted to --

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2 first of all, a few people already mentioned,
3 there are a few other homeless shelters that
4 are being proposed, that already were a few
5 built, there are more being proposed on
6 Rutland Road with hundreds and hundreds of --
7 adding more, bringing in more, more homeless
8 people besides this project, some of them are
9 by state and various governments including by
10 the same -- by ESD and, you know, as someone
11 mentioned earlier, it's not fair that our
12 community has to take all the homeless from
13 all around.

14 The second thing is, this community
15 here, the closest train station is about 15,
16 20 minute walk, people are dependant on their
17 cars and they're adding hundreds of units,
18 there's already a hard time finding parking.
19 That means it will cause -- it will be even
20 harder for people and new people will start
21 competing over already a limited parking
22 spaces here, and people are dependant on their
23 cars, and, you know.

24 We don't want this project at all and
25 even if -- you know, if they do make a project

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2 that they do speak with the community, one of
3 things should be is for each unit that they
4 build there should be a parking space. We
5 don't want any project at all, but just -- we
6 do want to mention about -- there's a big
7 problem with parking spaces. Another --
8 especially because we're missing our mass
9 transit.

10 Also we mentioned in last meeting, my
11 kids were harassed while they were waiting for
12 the bus in the morning and they were harassed
13 by some people -- apparently it's from the
14 already existing homeless shelter, and it
15 makes the place unsafe and unpleasant for
16 people to live here and we know from the past,
17 this is years ago when the city would put up
18 projects in areas like similar to this, but
19 what they call -- they call it public housing,
20 it did not help the community.

21 We've seen history showed that the
22 residents just fled. Back then it was easier
23 for people to find houses, now it's very hard
24 to just go and relocate yourself, it's very
25 hard to find affordable housing and it's not

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2 fair for generations to come to build these --
3 to build this thing.

4 And the last thing I want to say is,
5 if -- any future meeting, it's very unclear,
6 if you could please specify to the people of
7 the community what they could do and who they
8 could contact if they oppose these projects.
9 It should be clear all the meetings that are
10 happening and what input the people of the
11 current community have for these projects.
12 Thank you very much, that's what I wanted to
13 say.

14 MS. BAUER: Thank you. I just want
15 remind everyone, this isn't question and
16 answer, you know, we will be taking the
17 comments tonight and they'll be taken into
18 consideration for the environmental review of
19 the proposed project. If you have additional
20 comments, you can e-mail kpceis@esd.ny.gov, or
21 you can send something by mail. The addresses
22 will be posted again later -- they've been
23 posted, perfect, the address is on the screen
24 so we encourage you to do that.

25 Next up is Ya'akovah W., followed by

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2 Zalman Abraham and then Raul Rothblatt. Can
3 you state your name?

4 MS. WEBBER: Yeah, Ya'akovah Webber.
5 I didn't get an option to display my video, I
6 would have if I had gotten that option, so I
7 will just have to suffice with audio here.
8 Let's start by taking a close look at the
9 euphemism "mixed-use" that describes this
10 project. Realistically speaking, how many
11 quote-unquote "other users of this project"
12 are going to be eager to live or do business
13 where so many of hundreds of homeless will be
14 located?

15 The homeless are a trenchant
16 population at best because a small percentage
17 of them actually do make it out of
18 homelessness, but the vast majority, or at
19 least many, many of them, have untreated,
20 unofficial psychiatric conditions and they
21 will be concentrated in this development. At
22 least once upon a time, this property that the
23 project is proposed in housed inpatient
24 psychiatric cases with locked gates and other
25 security measures in place. Now it's

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2 basically a shiny new free-for-all for the
3 same population, unfortunately.

4 That's an environmental review in my
5 book and that's another euphemism, is
6 environmental review. If many of us who are
7 here to speak tonight are reasonably
8 able-bodied and well, I feel very concerned
9 about locating vulnerable senior citizens in
10 such a guaranteed even more dangerous
11 development. It just seems like common sense
12 not to not do that combination. And how many
13 more untreated psychiatric cases do you feel
14 this neighbor deserves beyond the numerous
15 ones this community already houses?

16 This will make the already untreated
17 psychiatric population's presence here not
18 just worse it will go up exponentially above
19 the already objectionable level this community
20 has already gotten to. The many illogical
21 aspects of this proposal frankly makes me
22 wonder whether this is deliberately planned to
23 use taxpayer dollars to disproportionately and
24 severely badly impact -- or, let's not mince
25 words here, more likely truly destroy the

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2 family community character of the
3 neighborhood, where many fine, hard-working
4 Caribbean-American families and Orthodox
5 Jewish families are the predominate population
6 along with many young professionals here.

7 This is really quite, dare I say, a
8 racist anti-Semitic plan, given the impact on
9 the population here that were after all, here
10 first. And the big question that many have
11 sort of mentioned, and I would like to really
12 hear more about this is, why can't this
13 population be housed in an unpopulated or much
14 less densely populated area upstate, which
15 also would be less expensive? That land is
16 less expensive.

17 I thank you for the opportunity to
18 speak up here and I think we need hard
19 answers, not just euphemisms. Thank you for
20 listening.

21 MS. BAUER: Thank you, and I,
22 apologize, I think we are having some
23 technical issues with the video, so we do
24 apologize for that. Next speaker is Zalman
25 Abraham, followed by Raul Rothblatt, the

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2 Director of Constituent Affairs for Assembly
3 Member Brian Cunningham, and then Eli Deitsch.

4 Is Zalman ready to speak?

5 MR. ABRAHAM: I live about a block
6 away from the proposed development. I want to
7 reiterate many of the concerns that were
8 raised before, specifically to point to the
9 issue of crime, and this is on the record,
10 those who live over here and follow the on the
11 Citizen app can see the 911 calls that are
12 placed from Albany, between Winthrop and
13 Clarkson, the disproportionate number of
14 violent activity at that takes place over
15 there.

16 And it's a no-brainer if you're
17 trying to figure out a trajectory of what's
18 gonna be in the future, that adding more of
19 what is already on both sides of the streets,
20 the supportive housing on one side of Albany
21 and the shelter and the other side of Albany,
22 increase that and you'll increase the violent
23 activity that's there. There's been a problem
24 with a rise in hate crimes and anti-Semitic
25 activity.

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2 Our kids are being punched walking
3 down that block, it's that block, and it's
4 very clear where the issues are coming from.
5 Our kids are not safe to walk in the streets
6 at night, this is even during the day. We
7 have people walking on our property wandering
8 in, absent minded, it could be they're coming
9 from the psychiatric center, could be they're
10 homeless, many of them are intermixed, but
11 there is already a huge problem, something
12 needs to be done about it before we can
13 consider bringing in more such people.

14 So, again, the crime, the
15 anti-Semitic hate crimes that this development
16 will contribute to, and as well as the parking
17 issue; adding a thousand new units in a place
18 that already has three hospitals, multiple
19 schools and has a very serious parking issue
20 already. Anyone looking for parking during
21 the day has to park many, many blocks away
22 because in this area, that area specifically,
23 congested at that point of Albany between
24 Winthrop and Clarkson, there are no parking
25 spaces in the nearby vicinity.

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2 So I would propose, if our say has
3 any weight, to stop the project altogether or
4 at least what interventions can take place to
5 address the crime and the parking issues.

6 Thank you.

7 MS. BAUER: Thank you. Raul
8 Rothblatt?

9 MR. ROTHBLATT: Good evening,
10 everyone. You can hear me?

11 MS. BAUER: Yes, we can.

12 MR. ROTHBLATT: Thank you for the
13 opportunity to speak, my name is Raul
14 Rothblatt, I'm the Director of Constituent
15 Affairs for Assembly Member Brian Cunningham.
16 I moved to Brooklyn in 1993 and I got into
17 civic engagement because of an Empire State
18 Development project called Atlantic Yards, so
19 I'm familiar with this process a bit and I
20 want to encourage -- I'm glad to hear people
21 here, I would love to get more participation.

22 Our office has gotten a lot of
23 concerns about public safety. I know other
24 people have spoken about that, I just want to
25 let everyone know that we hear that problem,

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2 we want to address that and make sure that
3 people feel safe and are safe.

4 Parking, I also do think that there's
5 -- there definitely is room for much more
6 parking here. This is a very complicated
7 project, so adding in parking space also means
8 taking away affordable housing from people, so
9 I think there's a lot to this project and, you
10 know, I hope also to the people listening that
11 we look at the whole thing in -- holistically
12 a little bit.

13 And I also just want to encourage
14 really the Empire State Development to really
15 go beyond what is required under the review
16 process. We definitely want to engage and we
17 will take advantage of that.

18 The design, I think there's
19 definitely room to improve the design
20 elements, something people haven't brought up
21 today. The configuration of the open space,
22 we have an architect who contacted the office
23 who called the project ugly. I'm not sure if
24 that's correct or not, but, you know, I
25 definitely want to make sure that the ESD is

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2 flexible in the design process and that we
3 take a look at that.

4 One thing -- there's a lot of ways, I
5 think -- I want to make sure that the
6 governance of the project is also in place, we
7 think about that, so we want to make sure
8 there's community control after the project is
9 set up in that there's some really strong
10 incentives for the developer, because
11 eventually the state is not going to own the
12 property. We want to make sure that future
13 owners of it also have a very strong
14 requirement to connect with the community and
15 listen to the concerns in the future.

16 I have more to say but I do look
17 forward to staying in touch, I want to thank
18 the members of the Empire State Development
19 for listening to us and we will take advantage
20 of that. Thank you very much.

21 MS. BAUER: Thank you. Next speaker
22 up is Eli Deitsch, followed by Chaya Pape, and
23 then Rozee Spiegel. Eli, are you there?

24 MR. DEITSCH: Hello?

25 MS. BAUER: Yeah, Eli.

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2 MR. DEITSCH: Hi. First of all,
3 thank you to the organizers of this Zoom and
4 giving us the opportunity to voice our
5 concerns. It's also my understanding that
6 this project is coming from Albany, so I'm not
7 really sure what there could be done about
8 this and putting a total stop to this disaster
9 of a project, but I hope at least the
10 developers will take our concerns seriously.

11 So with that, just a few notes. One
12 is, it was mentioned many times before, the
13 serious safety concerns with the mentally
14 unstable people and homeless. If they took
15 the existing project the same amount of beds
16 and made a beautiful campus for the people
17 living there, it would already be too much,
18 but I understand, you know, it's just
19 upgrading and perhaps putting some new
20 affordable housing, but this new project seems
21 like just putting more and more mentally
22 unstable people with different names and
23 different descriptions, homeless and all the
24 different titles that are in the proposal.

25 I can give you some personal stories

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2 but I'm not gonna give you all of them. My
3 kids come home from school, somebody was
4 relieving themselves on my front steps. The
5 other day someone else was doing hard drugs,
6 so just a couple of practical concerns I hope
7 that the developers can consider to make it
8 easier and safer for the community and the
9 people around.

10 Number one is to keep the homeless
11 and mentally unstable people to the bare
12 minimum, not to squeeze in as many as possible
13 and make more affordable housing.

14 Number two, there is a serious
15 infrastructure problem with the sewer, every
16 time there's a significant rain, many
17 basements with blocks around it in the area
18 are flooded, it's a disaster. And also the
19 power is very limited, I hope that's taken
20 into consideration seriously. Another issue
21 is the parking, I mean, anyone from this
22 neighborhood, and this is to all you guys
23 running this project, if you just come down
24 here any day you will see how many people, the
25 traffic, the parking.

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2 And finally, the opening to Troy
3 Avenue on Winthrop, closer to Troy, is a
4 terrible idea. You're bringing the entire
5 safety issue that's limited to Albany, now
6 you're bringing it to Troy as well. So it's
7 very concerning about this environmental
8 review, because last time on the last meeting,
9 it seemed like nobody was aware of where Troy
10 Avenue was and nobody spoke to anyone about
11 the safety issues, saying that there will be
12 security on the property is not a benefit to
13 the people around.

14 It's a shame because to have such a
15 beautiful park and open area and a grocery
16 with organic foods and a beautiful
17 development, if it can't be used and enjoyed
18 by the people around because of open air drug
19 zones and violence, things going on around, it
20 just won't work.

21 One more thing, nobody said this but
22 I'll have to say just the way it is, homeless
23 people, mentally unstable people in a Jewish
24 neighborhood is just a recipe for disaster.
25 So thank you.

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2 MS. BAUER: Thank you. Next speaker
3 up is Chaya Pape, followed by Rozee Spiegel
4 and Chaim Shabtai. Chaya?

5 MS. PAPE: Hi, thank you so much for
6 the opportunity to speak. I, like all our
7 neighbors are very disappointed and really
8 upset about this proposed housing plan. We
9 have a homeless shelter on our block that just
10 moved in about a couple of years ago. We've
11 been living here before the shelter came so
12 we've seen the progression and we've seen how
13 the crime has gone up.

14 People park their cars on the street
15 at night, you don't know if you're going to
16 come back tomorrow with a smashed window
17 because the people at the homeless shelter can
18 get violent, they're fighting between each
19 other but sometimes they throw their bottles
20 and throw their things and then, you know,
21 some windows get busted or things like that.

22 Also it's a big safety issue for the
23 kids walking to and from school. These people
24 are inappropriate, they sometimes remove their
25 clothes, they've been yelling inappropriately

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2 to my children, so I'm very concerned with
3 having more of these people. We already have
4 them on our block and now they're in Albany,
5 but the ones from Albany don't really come all
6 the way to our block, which is East 46th
7 street between Rutland and Whinthrop.

8 And if you're going to be opening
9 this up at Troy, then these people will be
10 coming more to our block, plus, you're making
11 it possible for -- you're bringing in more
12 people than there is already. The ones that
13 are there, the homeless shelter that is there
14 on Albany is dilapidated and not in full use,
15 and if you're gonna make it beautiful and make
16 it more tempting and all these people will
17 come there and want to stay there.

18 You're making it easier for them to
19 live in this area and we don't want that, we
20 have enough homeless people here. This is a
21 area where it's the middle class trying to
22 live peacefully, respectfully between each
23 other and bringing these people into our
24 community actually makes is it -- it leaves a
25 bad taste and actually makes us want to leave

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2 as opposed to stay here.

3 I don't think it's fair to build this
4 in our community, I think it's fair to take
5 it, like somebody suggested, maybe Upstate New
6 York where it's cheaper. We work very hard
7 for our money to buy a house in this location
8 and to -- we feel that we don't want the
9 property value to go down because of all of
10 this.

11 If they're building a homeless
12 shelter on Rutland and Schenectady, and you're
13 planning one on Albany and Winthrop, their
14 housing value will go down drastically, and
15 like others have mentioned also, I want to say
16 about the parking issue and the sewer issue.
17 Last year there was a hurricane, it backed up
18 in all of our houses because the sewer system
19 is just not equipped, building all those units
20 is going to make it even worse.

21 I really, really, really beg of you
22 to please reconsider and try to do this
23 project elsewhere, it's not fair to our
24 community, it's not fair for our children,
25 it's not fair for anybody. The only people

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2 that are going to benefit from this is the
3 people doing the project that are going to be
4 raking in the cash, but us simple people,
5 hardworking individuals that are paying our
6 tax money for this project to be built are
7 really upset about it. Please reconsider.
8 Thank you.

9 MS. BAUER: Thank you. Next speaker
10 is Rozee Spiegel, followed by Chaim Shabtai
11 and then Chaya Loewenthal. Rozee, are you
12 there?

13 MS. SPIEGEL: Yes, hi. I'm sorry,
14 I'm just a busy mom of six in the midst of
15 bedtime but I'll quickly say my thoughts.
16 Thank you for the opportunity. I am strongly,
17 strongly opposed. I've been living in the
18 neighborhood for a number of years, I've
19 watched the homeless shelter that's in
20 existence really close in the vicinity of the
21 proposed plans.

22 We've been target of quite a few
23 incidents resulting from residents at that
24 facility. My children have been exposed to
25 public nudity, there are people who, in front

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2 of our home which is a few blocks away from
3 that facility, quite a few blocks, five or so
4 blocks away from the existent facility, people
5 come there, pull down their pants and freely
6 relieve themselves. They're not mindful about
7 where they are. We've had someone come up our
8 front steps and try to burn our religious
9 articles on our front door, our mezuzah.

10 Where the facility is being proposed
11 right now, there's already enough people
12 hanging out there, it's already unsafe to
13 drive there. Recently I was driving and while
14 trying to turn a corner, someone who was not
15 in the right state of mind tried throwing a
16 garbage can right as we were turning and
17 nearly careened with us, causing us to go into
18 oncoming traffic. I was in the car myself
19 with all my children.

20 There are so many better uses for
21 this land, it's a good idea to take down these
22 abandoned buildings. As a mom of a special
23 needs child I can think of a number of ways it
24 can benefit other families like myself. It
25 doesn't need to be yet another homeless

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2 shelter. It makes in worry when I watch
3 what's happening in Chinatown, where the sixth
4 homeless shelter was just built -- I mean, not
5 just built, where there are six homeless
6 shelters and recently an Asian woman was
7 unfortunately killed. It just increased in
8 interracial fighting and disharmony.

9 And like many before me have
10 mentioned, there's a lack of public
11 transportation nearby, we all have cars, we
12 all have young children, our car should be
13 safely parked, our children safe to go to and
14 from school, there's a playground nearby,
15 there's so many reasons why putting this
16 facility up would not only not benefit those
17 who are already here for a while, it seems
18 that it's, like, on paper a really great idea
19 and maybe beneficial for the furtherance of
20 money making of the people in charge, but it
21 really would actually negatively affect us and
22 the values of our homes we already have.

23 My husband being in real estate would
24 be negatively impacted by that factor as well.
25 So not just our actual safety but also our

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2 actual financial well-being will be affected,
3 and we strongly oppose. Thank you, thank you
4 for the opportunity to share.

5 MS. BAUER: Thank you. Next speaker
6 is Chaim Shabtai.

7 MR. SHABTAI: Hello, hi, how are you
8 doing? There is Mr. Chaim Shabtai, and I live
9 on East 46th between Winthrop and Rutland
10 since 1960. I live on this block and by the
11 past few years, they're making homeless
12 shelter on our block and I have a lot of crime
13 everyday. They're knocking on the door, they
14 bother my neighbor and all the stuff. I have
15 a carry license, so I have no problem with
16 that, but these other people have problem with
17 that.

18 Besides that, the hospital, they're
19 coming everyday and they're taking all the
20 parking spots. You don't find a place to park
21 your car and now they're building something
22 big project, and I don't know if it's going to
23 be a parking spot at all. It's going to be
24 like Manhattan.

25 Besides that, you have another place

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2 into Troy Avenue and Albany Avenue. You have
3 gated for people with mental problems and they
4 have not gated place. Those people can go
5 outside they want from Albany Avenue. They're
6 knocking on doors everyday and it's a problem,
7 but we still need to have a place for them to
8 be. I know that's where they live now, but if
9 they're going to make something bigger, it's
10 going to be a bigger problem.

11 This is New York, I know we welcome
12 everybody. I coming from the Asian, from the
13 1960's, and since then I live on the block, I
14 live in Brooklyn, I love Brooklyn. I love
15 everybody, I have no problem with everybody
16 and I have a lot of Jewish friends on the
17 block also, they're suffering for this people.
18 I see that everyday; the anti-Semites, what
19 they have on our block alone, it's enough.

20 I don't think it's supposed to be
21 like this. Maybe the state has a lot of
22 place, a lot of land, maybe they can put them
23 somewhere else, a different place or
24 something. Not that we don't like them, I'm
25 coming from the Asian and we don't have

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2 problem with nobody, but maybe we should find
3 a different place. Thank you very much.

4 MS. BAUER: Thank you. Next speaker
5 up is Chaya Loewenthal followed by Sandra
6 Roberson, and then Chaya Leiter.

7 MS. LOEWENTHAL: Hi, thank you for
8 giving us a chance to speak and I hope you
9 guys all take our words to heart and actually,
10 you know, do something with our voices. I
11 live right next to the homeless shelter, like,
12 a block away, and I just have a question; the
13 State has two responsibilities, you know, one
14 responsibility is to keep our children safe.
15 Another responsibility is to take care of the
16 homeless. Both are important and I don't
17 understand why one has to compromise the
18 other.

19 By building this project right here
20 with so many more homeless and mentally
21 unstable people, you're compromising the
22 safety of our children and I think there's
23 other locations. Thank you God this world is
24 very big, especially because we already have
25 so many mentally unstable people here, right

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2 here. I think it's going to be a massive
3 issue to add more.

4 I'm going to tell you a little bit
5 about my experience living a block away from
6 the homeless shelter. First of all, the
7 things that my children have seen, no one has
8 ever seen -- I mean most, not no one. Most
9 children have not seen the things that my
10 children are growing up with, it's not healthy
11 for kids to see these things.

12 People have said, someone made right
13 in front of my house, going to the bathroom
14 publicly, touching themselves inappropriately,
15 many times without doing anything, we've
16 gotten anti-Semitic statements towards us and
17 it's scary living here.

18 Another thing is that my children
19 cannot walk themselves anywhere. We don't
20 get, like most kids, you go outside, you play,
21 you run around, we don't get to do that here,
22 it's not safe for our kids to be outside. So
23 this is really, you know, compromising on the
24 safety of our kids. That's really my main
25 concern as a mother.

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2 And I would like to ask; it's
3 interesting because people come with really
4 good feelings and then they want to make a
5 difference to the world, they want to take
6 care of the homeless, and to be honest with
7 you, I am actually quite empathetic, you know,
8 towards people who are homeless now, watching
9 them and seeing what their lives are like, and
10 I do feel for them. I think it's a massive
11 mistake to bring more mentally unstable people
12 to the same area.

13 But I will say what's interesting is,
14 there was a number of times that we've walked
15 past the homeless shelter and I saw groups of
16 people coming to help out, coming to give
17 gifts and they have these huge smiles on their
18 faces as if they're shining the greatest light
19 to the world, making the biggest difference,
20 and they feel like, whoa, we have made a huge
21 difference in these homeless people, unstable
22 people's lives, and I just wonder, that's my
23 feeling toward these project organizers.

24 You know, if you really want to make
25 a difference in the world, maybe take a

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2 homeless shelter next to your house, you know?
3 Do any of them have a homeless shelter a block
4 away from their house? Do they know what it
5 feels like? I'm okay with what's here right
6 now but I don't feel like it's fair. For the
7 safety of our children, I want to know, I want
8 to ask each of the project organizers, who has
9 it on their shoulders and who is taking
10 responsibility.

11 And last thing is, they're trying to
12 entice us with a park. By the way, the public
13 school park, we can't use it; it gets locked
14 because it's not safe, and that's right near
15 my house and that's right near the homeless
16 shelter. So I don't know, you know, like,
17 it's not going to work, it's a really bad idea
18 and I want to know which of the project
19 organizers is taking responsibility.

20 MS. BAUER: Thank you for your
21 comment. Again, all comments here tonight
22 will be considered and we appreciate you
23 taking the time. Next up is Sandra Roberson,
24 followed by Chaya Leiter, and then Zeesy
25 Piamenta. Sandra, when are you ready please

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2 begin speaking.

3 MS. ROBERSON: Yes, hi, good evening,
4 can you hear me?

5 MS. BAUER: Yes.

6 MS. ROBERSON: My name is Sandra
7 Roberson, an I'm a community activist from
8 Midwood Street and Albany Avenue. I've lived
9 in this house for 37 years, I've raised my son
10 in this house and now I babysit my grandson
11 here, and was looking forward and looking
12 forward to living in a safe, secure
13 environment so that, not only my grandson can
14 feel safe, but I, as a senior citizen now, can
15 age in place gracefully and without worry of
16 all of the issues that homelessness brings to
17 a community, such as the lack -- the parking
18 will be effected, it's already an issue in
19 this area, that parking spaces are limited.

20 I've already been negatively impacted
21 just walking down the street and panhandlers
22 coming to me and being very disrespectful to
23 me as a senior, so these things are all
24 concerning to me, that this homeless shelter
25 has been proposed.

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2 And one of the questions, I know you
3 said that you can't answer right now, is this
4 legal? Isn't community input supposed to be
5 gathered before the project is proposed? This
6 seems to be the afterwards, I don't know if
7 it's already approved or whether you're taking
8 our concerns into consideration on whether you
9 build this or not, but this should have been
10 done preemptively before this shelter was
11 proposed.

12 As several people have already said,
13 there are several shelters here already, there
14 are several homeless shelters here, there's a
15 lot of mental illness in the community from
16 Clarkson and Albany Avenue, and it's just
17 intolerable at this point. And the
18 infrastructure has already been stated, cannot
19 support that. We already have flooding in the
20 area, I go to community board meetings often
21 and these issues already come up.

22 To all on this call, also, if there
23 is someday that we can gather, I just finished
24 with a meeting with the city council on a
25 medical issue that just came up and we were

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2 able to stop that, so this is already in
3 action and going forward, we can possibly do a
4 legal action because it has been done, so I'm
5 willing to be on any committee or involved in
6 getting this rescinded because our community
7 doesn't need this.

8 My home value, I've lived here 37
9 years, I'm seeing it crumbling before my eyes.
10 I say no, unequivocally -- I say in no
11 uncertain terms that I do not want these
12 homeless shelters in this neighborhood. Thank
13 you.

14 MS. BAUER: Thank you, Sandra. I
15 just wanted to point out it is 7:30, so
16 speaker registration for all those in
17 attendance will be closing in about
18 15 minutes, so if you need to register to
19 speak, please raise your hand or enter star
20 nine or your keypad so that you can have a
21 chance to make a comment before we close out
22 the meeting at 8:00 p.m.

23 So we won't be able to add any
24 additional speakers beyond 7:45 p.m. We thank
25 you for that. Let's go back to the speakers

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2 clock, and I'm going to -- I see that Assembly
3 Member Brian Cunningham is on the list to
4 speak. I would put Assembly Member Brian
5 Cunningham, respectfully, you know, call him
6 from the 43rd Assembly District to make a
7 comment. Who is next, who is on line? All
8 right, let's -- yes, yes.

9 MR. CUNNINGHAM: Thank you again for
10 having me come back on as I came on earlier,
11 and hearing to just express to my constituents
12 I'm here listening to their concerns and
13 wanted to echo that I am still here on the
14 line, have heard many of your concerns and
15 wanted to, again, thank everyone for their
16 participation tonight, for expressing their
17 concerns and for exercising what I consider
18 the hallmark of Democracy, which is speak your
19 peace.

20 I just wanted to highlight, I did
21 hear a few folks say on this call earlier, and
22 let me just say one, that I was elected in
23 March of 2022, and a conversation for this
24 project began, I believe, sometime in 2018,
25 2019, so thi is a project that has been long

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2 on its way prior to being elected and it's
3 kind of fallen into my lap to shepherd through
4 the final stages of this project.

5 I do want to say there has been a
6 number of community conversations on this with
7 my predecessor, Assembly Member Diana
8 Richardson, who was in the seat prior to me,
9 and I do also know that many of those
10 conversations took place on a Saturday and
11 probably wasn't on a night like tonight where
12 more people had an opportunity to participate
13 in the conversation.

14 As I mentioned earlier, this is an
15 ongoing conversation. My office is ready to
16 listen to your concerns, I am on the call,
17 I've been on the call since the beginning,
18 I've heard your concerns and we will continue
19 to have a conversation with the community, but
20 again, I want to thank the group tonight for
21 giving the community an opportunity to lend a
22 voice to the conversation and see how we can
23 shape this project in a way that's going to be
24 in the best interest of all the residents in
25 the 43rd Assembly District.

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2 But again, I just wanted to reiterate
3 that I am here, I am listening, my team is on
4 the call as well and we are taking extensive
5 notes. My number is 718-771-3105, and we
6 welcome your feedback and your comments over
7 the next coming days as we have come in
8 January 1st to our first full term as your
9 Assembly Member and looking forward to working
10 with the community to help get the best
11 outcome, not just for this project, but all
12 projects moving forward in our community. So
13 again, I just wanted to thank folks for being
14 on tonight.

15 MS. BAUER: Thank you. I appreciate
16 your comments and also wanted to let Chaya
17 Leiter that she is back on, followed by Zeesy
18 Piamenta and Jay Sorid and Rachel Gold, just
19 to get folks ready. Chaya, are you there?

20 MS. LEITER: Yeah, I'm here.

21 MS. BAUER: Thank you so much for
22 your patience. Go ahead.

23 MS. LEITER: Hi, my name is Chaya
24 Leiter. I just want to point out a few
25 things, number one is, I am a young mom, I

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2 have young kids, my children go to synagogue
3 there, they go to play with friends there, I
4 live a couple a couple of blocks away from the
5 proposed location and it is extremely unsafe.
6 We go into the synagogue and I'm nervous for
7 my child to go out even for five minutes, even
8 holding the door open because of the existing
9 homeless that are there, the existing mentally
10 unstable that are there already.

11 It's not safe, there's a pre school
12 in the vicinity, there are numerous schools in
13 the vicinity of the proposed location. On
14 their proposed documents, they listed about
15 four or five schools catering to thousands of
16 children. How is that safe to bring more
17 mentally unstable and homeless people to that
18 area, especially that they want to cut a
19 pathway to Winthrop and Troy, which will make
20 Troy unsafe?

21 There are children who walk to
22 school, there is a big Jewish -- a large
23 Jewish girls' school on Troy and East New
24 York, children walk there. It is not safe to
25 have these type of people around the

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2 neighborhood.

3 That's regarding safety. Regarding
4 infrastructure, I looked at some of the
5 proposed documents, they are taking 7.2 acres,
6 I believe, that currently have roughly two
7 acres that are impermeable, which means that
8 the stormwater will not able to be absorbed.
9 They now want to up that to five acres of
10 impermeable land. We are going to see more
11 and more and more flooding. We already have
12 an infrastructure problem.

13 I did not see any sewer holding tanks
14 on the proposed documents. Our sewer system
15 cannot handle it. We didn't used to have
16 flooding in this location, in this area, now
17 we do. Our sewers cannot handle it, they
18 cannot take another thousand units. Our
19 electric infrastructure cannot handle it,
20 there is no public transportation. This
21 community cannot support this type of
22 building.

23 It's looking to be proposed 150 feet,
24 there are no buildings in this area that are
25 150 feet high. Most of the buildings in this

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2 neighborhood are one to two, to max, four
3 story buildings. We don't want it, we're
4 opposed to it, we don't want it. It does not
5 fit. We already have enough homeless, our
6 infrastructure cannot handle this.

7 On their documents they say that,
8 yes, it's not going to affect the incoming
9 infrastructure, they're not planning on adding
10 more, they're going to be using existing city
11 infrastructure, water, sewer, electric, but we
12 have already issues with our infrastructure
13 here and we can't handle another thousand
14 units. We don't want this. Figure out
15 something else to do with this land.

16 The proposed public spaces will not
17 be used if it is not safe. So if they really
18 want to do something here, put townhouses up,
19 affordable, four, five bedroom houses. There
20 are young families that will move in with kids
21 and we are opposed to the plan the way it is
22 now. It is not what this community wants or
23 needs. Thank you.

24 MS. BAUER: Thank you. The next
25 speaker is Zeesy Piamenta, followed by Jay

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2 Sorid, and Rachel Gold. Zeesy, are you ready?

3 MS. PIAMENTA: Yeah, thank you.

4 Hello?

5 MS. BAUER: Hi, go right ahead.

6 MS. PIAMENTA: Thank you for
7 listening. I hope that this information will
8 be taken seriously. Thank God I -- I'm living
9 right now in an apartment with nine children,
10 we just bought a house right in that location
11 on Albany, and we're really conflicted, you
12 know, if this is, like, a safe move. We've
13 been waiting for this, to move into a home and
14 be able to have space, and my -- we're just
15 scared for our children to be able to move
16 around for there to actually be a space.

17 Where we are now, we're grateful that
18 the kids can get outside, be a little bit
19 independent, walk around a bit, and as it is
20 -- we actually belong to the synagogue that is
21 right in that area on Albany, and it happened
22 more than once, that people walked into the
23 synagogue and it was -- we realized the
24 danger, like, you know, we had, for a while,
25 felt secure over there and realized that

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2 actually there is so much going on that I have
3 to say that, like, right now I live on the
4 other side of town --

5 MS. BAUER: Zeesy, we just lost some
6 audio for you.

7 MS. PIAMENTA: I'm --

8 MS. BAUER: Your connection isn't
9 that great. We hear you -- let's try again, I
10 think you might be back?

11 MS. PIAMENTA: Okay, am I on?

12 MS. BAUER: Yes, go right ahead.

13 MS. PIAMENTA: Thank you. I'm not
14 sure what part -- at what point I muted, but
15 I'm saying that I'm definitely concerned for
16 the safety of our children. We've been
17 waiting and we so badly want to move into a
18 home that we just bought in that area, and
19 these concerns are definitely very real
20 knowing that already now there have been
21 issues at the synagogue on Albany right near
22 there.

23 And we also have children in the
24 school that's right in that area on East New
25 York and Troy, and it's hard for me to

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2 conceive what the threat is of how we would be
3 keeping -- this area is just so full of so
4 many young families with so many children and
5 institutions that are filled with so many
6 children, and it's hard for me to fathom what
7 the logic -- you know, how people are thinking
8 that they would be keeping everybody safe with
9 this proposed project. Thank you for
10 listening.

11 MS. BAUER: Thank you for your
12 comment. Next up is Jay Sorid, followed by
13 Rachel Gold.

14 MR. SORID: First, can you hear me
15 clearly?

16 MS. BAUER: Yes.

17 MR. SORID: Okay, great. Starting
18 with the comment, number one is, the public
19 scoping has to be done over -- there has to be
20 a second opportunity on the second hearing to
21 have a public scoping, because as you can see
22 from this hearing, there's a lot of Jews, a
23 lot of my fellow Jews are on it because I
24 basically put this in the papers. There's
25 only or two, maybe, African-Americans; why?

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2 Because you guys didn't tell them about it.

3 CB17, no one told them at CB17, which
4 is south of Clarkson Avenue, and you guys did
5 not follow the correct laws. Here's the
6 correct laws, I'll state it: CEQR, C-E-Q-R,
7 Section 245.1, you had to put this in the City
8 Record and also advertise it in a newspaper of
9 general circulation. I checked the City
10 Record, it was not in there under the EIS for
11 the public scoping. Please check it, if it's
12 not there, you violated it and you have to do
13 it again.

14 SEQR, S-E-Q-R, the state regulation
15 617.12, also referenced that it has to be
16 published in a newspaper of general
17 circulation, and there's a question of whether
18 you did it in a newspaper of general
19 circulation, it would fall back to the CEQR
20 from -- the C-E-Q-R, from the CEQR. Question
21 is, did you do it in a newspaper of general
22 circulation. And state agencies that apply
23 statewide, if it's a statewide -- state agency
24 actions that apply statewide.

25 This is not a state agency action

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2 that applies statewide, this is a local
3 action, at best, a regional, so according to
4 S-E-Q-R, 617.12, because you didn't put it in
5 the -- the City Record, you to redo it.

6 The SEQRA talks about what -- how
7 you're supposed to notify people. You're
8 supposed to put a sign out, you're supposed to
9 do a mailing of a quarter mile. This is in
10 the dark, you kept people in the dark on this,
11 and the project, they won the proposal in July
12 of 2021, they came to the community board
13 hearing in January of 2023. They purposely
14 hid this from the community, not just this one
15 in New York State, but on every one of the
16 vital Brooklyns [sic].

17 I'm on the Community Board 9, the
18 housing committee, they did this on every
19 project. They didn't come right away, and in
20 the proposal it said they were supposed to
21 come right away. New York State Attorney
22 General Letitia James has to be an involved
23 agency on this because she has to sign off on
24 this and she has to decide the issue of
25 whether the problem with the deed that you

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2 guys have, the right of reverter, entitled
3 this to go to the city council.

4 That action, whether it's a right of
5 reverter in the deed, has to be involved.
6 There's massive segregation issues. There's a
7 lot of civil rights issues, you need to put
8 HUD involved with this, and there's tremendous
9 -- there are housing concerns with how many
10 bedrooms, it discriminates against families,
11 the list goes on. Put it at Riker's Island,
12 it's an alternative place, and build three
13 bedroom apartments. There's not enough
14 information that you had here, and I tell all
15 my friends, if I can just conclude this with
16 just five seconds if I can, Ms. Bauer?

17 MS. BAUER: Very briefly.

18 MR. SORID: The answer of what you
19 need to do is, my Jewish friends, who I put
20 this in the papers, you need to speak to your
21 non-Jewish friends, which is the Black
22 community, get together and look over all of
23 the different issues and put pressure on New
24 York State Assemblyman Cunningham, who is a
25 very fine gentleman, and he has to open up an

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2 investigation to all the segregation issues.
3 This is segregation of the homeless, of
4 disabled, of mentally ill, all over Clarkson.

5 You do this in a black neighborhood,
6 you dump the mentally disabled in black
7 neighborhoods, and it's a civil rights issue.
8 It wasn't allowed in the 60's. East Flatbush
9 is a --

10 MS. BAUER: Thank you.

11 MR. SORID: -- QRIE neighborhood,
12 it's a low income minority track neighborhood,
13 so I need you to add on New York State
14 Attorney General as an involved agency, I need
15 to --

16 MS. BAUER: Thank you very much for
17 your comment.

18 MR. SORID: Okay, I'll send my
19 written stuff to you guys as well, thank you
20 very much.

21 MS. BAUER: Please do. The e-mail
22 address is kpceis@esd.ny.gov In addition, we
23 have another speaker, Rachel, Rachel Gold.

24 MS. GOLD: Hi, can you hear me?

25 MS. BAUER: Yes.

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2 MS. GOLD: Hi, I live on East 43rd
3 and Lennox, which is about a block away from
4 the proposed shelter. I just want to say a
5 couple of things. First of all, my nine and
6 thirteen-year-old sons were walking a couple
7 of weeks ago, my nine-year-old son got smacked
8 in the face by some young person that was
9 mentally unstable, came home shaking. Number
10 one.

11 Number two, I was just outside
12 driving my older son to a birthday party that
13 he has tonight, and I couldn't let him walk
14 alone because of the safety issues, number
15 two, there is a huge amount -- it's raining
16 now, there is a serious flood outside in my
17 backyard, I had to go probably 30 feet around
18 the big puddle of water that already exists to
19 get to my car.

20 More units, more people, it's just
21 going to add to the flooding issues that we
22 have here. There are people here that roam
23 the streets, come to my children, try talking
24 to them, doing illicit drugs in front of
25 everybody's faces, it is a dangerous proposal.

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2 Thank you.

3 MS. BAUER: Thank you, I appreciate
4 your comment. I don't think that we have any
5 speakers signed up, but speaker registration
6 is now closed, it's 7:45. So for those in
7 attendance, if you've already signed up to
8 speak, we have your information but it doesn't
9 look like anyone is on the list at the moment.
10 What I would recommend doing is taking a
11 five-minute break and, you know, we'll resume
12 in about five minutes. Thank you.

13 (Whereupon, a recess was taken at
14 7:45 p.m.)

15
16 (Time noted: 7:51 p.m.)

17 MS. BAUER: Hi, welcome back, we
18 don't have anymore registered speakers from
19 the attendees that registered before 7:45. I
20 just wanted to, you know, before we take
21 another short break, I just wanted to remind
22 you that we are accepting comments until
23 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on Tuesday,
24 February 21st, 2023, by e-mail or mail.

25 The e-mail address is

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2 kpceis@esd.ny.gov, and for more information as
3 well as a transcript of this meeting, you can
4 visit the website in a few weeks at
5 esd.ny.gov/Kingsboro. I do think that there
6 were some speakers that may have been
7 overlooked, so we're going to go back to the
8 speakers clock and see who's been registered
9 there.

10 I think that maybe -- gonna wait and
11 see if somebody has -- just waiting for my
12 team in the back to let me know if there was
13 some information, but what we will do is just
14 repeat the information on how to submit a
15 comment.

16 You can do so via e-mail to
17 kpceis@esd.ny.gov, or you can mail your
18 comment to Empire State Development,
19 Attention: Stacy Teran, 633 Third Avenue,
20 37th floor, New York, New York 10017, and
21 certainly visit the project website at
22 esd.ny.gov/Kingsboro, so that would be our
23 recommendation. What we might do is get ready
24 to close out the meeting. I'd like to hand
25 everything back to Doug McPherson to say some

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2 closing comments.

3 MR. MCPHERSON: Thank you, Marlene.
4 I'm happy to offer a couple of closing words,
5 but I did want to offer the opportunity for --
6 I think there were two people who decided to
7 speak, there were Chaim who I'm not sure,
8 dropped off the call, and I think Avi Webb
9 squeezed in right at the last minute. So I'm
10 happy to hand the floor to Avi for some quick
11 comments and then we can close the meeting
12 out.

13 MS. BAUER: Terrific, thank you.

14 MR. WEBB: Thank you very much, do
15 you hear me?

16 MS. BAUER: Yes. Could we have the
17 speakers clock back for three minutes, please?
18 Thank you.

19 MR. WEBB: Thank you very much, and
20 Doug, I really just want to commend you for
21 listening intently, screen on, writing notes.
22 You seem like a standup guy, truly, and as
23 you've heard a lot of passion, a lot of
24 concern, a lot of fear, you're also hearing a
25 lot of interest in working together in

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2 figuring out something that is a win for the
3 State, a win for the people who need help, and
4 a win for the community.

5 Many have characterized this project
6 as a money grab by greedy developers, and it
7 does seem to be -- have, like, the only real
8 logical reason to just push ahead considering
9 the real concerns that all of us have said
10 about the facts on the ground, but I'm also
11 not a knower of hearts, I don't think any of
12 us is.

13 What I do know is that the project
14 being discussed is not about a handful of
15 buildings. If you've heard the passion and
16 the fear and concerns, you understand there's
17 something much larger at stake here, and
18 that's what we're asking, you at the ESD and
19 from state level to acknowledge and
20 understand.

21 The issue at stake is the future of
22 middle class Brooklyn, okay, the issue at
23 stake is a community that's watching and
24 asking, have we made a huge mistake by
25 investing in this community. You're not

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2 talking about developers, you're not talking
3 about people who have extra money to put up --
4 you know, there are all young families who
5 have scraped together for years.

6 You heard a mother who said she's got
7 nine kids in a two bedroom apartment and
8 scraped together for years to make it and try
9 to stay in this community where her kids
10 schools are, where the synagogues are, where
11 we depend so greatly because of culture and
12 our religion, on walking, on safe walking on a
13 Friday night. We don't carry cellphones with
14 us, we don't carry any ability to contact
15 somebody should something go wrong, right?

16 If your ten year old goes to a
17 friends house on a Friday night, you're
18 sitting with your heart beating because you
19 don't have contact with her. That's not the
20 case for many communities, and that's unique
21 to this community right here, so we're asking
22 ourselves, did we sell ourselves a bridge that
23 decades of neglect in this area can be won
24 back with our blood, sweat and tears?

25 That's what's happening. We've been

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2 banding together, talking to each other and
3 saying we can do this, we can buy some of
4 these beautiful small homes that,
5 unfortunately, people have run away from in
6 the past, and we can make it safe again, and
7 we can, of course, accommodate to a certain
8 degree, those who are not in our socioeconomic
9 -- those who do need help.

10 As you see, there are hospitals
11 there, and if it's made safe, we can
12 accommodate and hopefully everyone can live
13 and rise together, but if the project goes
14 forward as planned, some buildings will go up,
15 some hands will be shook, some money will be
16 made, and a community will die.

17 If the project goes forward as
18 planned, and I think, and I fear the planners
19 will carry the burden of knowing that, as I
20 said, you shocked the community a half century
21 into the past. I really hope you consider
22 this and realize this is not a win. Thank
23 you.

24 MS. BAUER: Thank you.

25 MR. MCPHERSON: I'm being told that

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2 our last speaker tonight will be Jerome
3 Jackson, members of the team have said that he
4 also tried to sign up before.

5 MR. JACKSON: Hello.

6 MS. BAUER: Hello, we can hear you.

7 MR. JACKSON: Hi, how are you?

8 Hello?

9 MS. BAUER: Yes, you have three
10 minutes, you can go ahead and speak, make your
11 comment.

12 MR. JACKSON: Thank you, thank you
13 very much. Hi everybody, how are you? This
14 is Jerome Jackson, I'm a member of the
15 community for over 50 years. I've been living
16 with the Jewish people and we live together,
17 everything is okay, and we all stand for what
18 I see, like you see in the comment, what the
19 people speak, they only see the Jewish people
20 and the chat, the Zoom.

21 We're not using -- we are coming here
22 to work for the hospital, that's what they're
23 building, the place for all those legal
24 houses, twin house, two-family houses and
25 one-family house, all this they build for us

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2 when we used to work in the hospital. Now
3 it's our time for retirement.

4 After the many, many, many years that
5 we working for the hospital, now it's our
6 time, and we don't have the power anymore like
7 we used to be -- when we used to be young, so
8 you cannot fight back all the time, and what
9 happened is, we have numbers of shelters and,
10 you know, the place for the people, you know,
11 the G Building over there, and people mental
12 health, it's not a problem, but the problem
13 is, the problem is now the -- sorry, the
14 problem is now -- I'm sorry, one second.

15 The problem is now the building
16 became -- it became even more and more problem
17 for the community because the crime went up
18 and we cannot protect ourself, and everyday
19 they're coming, they're knocking on our door,
20 and they make the problem and they're stealing
21 -- they break the window. And it's only what
22 you have now, it's the legal, the small place
23 that you have for the shelter and for the
24 mental health.

25 But the problem is now, I don't know

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2 where you plan to put them. The bigger
3 problem is bringing a lot of crime and a lot
4 of anti-Semites, and every day the police, the
5 police come in again and again and again. You
6 can see police waiting over there all the
7 time, and they're fighting with the people.
8 And I see my friend in the Jewish community
9 and also the people in our African community,
10 they say, no, we have to stop it because they
11 give us the crime and we are already retired
12 from it. Thank you.

13 MS. BAUER: Thank you.

14 MR. JACKSON: Thank you.

15 MR. MCPHERSON: Thank you to everyone
16 who came. I'll shout out sort of just to
17 three groups. First of all, the community, I
18 understand that this is a Thursday night and
19 people have other things do to do, taking care
20 of their kids, et cetera. I do appreciate
21 folks who came out to this meeting to make
22 their voices heard and to give ESD and our
23 team a lot to think about.

24 I'd also like to thank the Assembly
25 Member and his staff for being present here

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2 for the entirety of the meeting and we look
3 forward to working with them in the months to
4 come on how we can shape this project for the
5 community.

6 Finally, I want to thank our
7 engagement team for making this come together
8 on multiple platforms, we're on Zoom tonight,
9 we're on YouTube tonight, I think that there
10 wasn't anyone who was denied the ability to
11 participate as a result of a technical issue
12 and for those of us who have been doing these
13 meetings remotely during the COVID and
14 post-COVID era, that's something that we know
15 we can't take for granted, so I appreciate
16 Marlene, the interpreters and everyone for
17 their professionalism and expertise.

18 As Marlene has mentioned, I think a
19 couple of our members as well, the record for
20 this meeting will be kept open, which is
21 another way of saying that we'll continue to
22 accept comments in written form until
23 February 21, 2023. Folks can feel free to
24 make comments using instructions in the draft
25 scope of work, and as mentioned before,

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2 comments can be sent to kpceis@esd.ny.gov via
3 e-mail and, you know, using the other avenues
4 described on the slides to my left. That's
5 all I have to say, thanks everyone, again, and
6 Marlene, I'll hand it over to you to close
7 out.

8 MS. BAUER: Thank you so much, Doug,
9 and thank you to everyone who has spoken today
10 and everyone who's listened and participated
11 in this meeting. This was a very productive
12 opportunity to garner public comment on the
13 draft scope of work. It is now 8:04 p.m. and
14 we'll be closing the public scoping meeting.

15 Just to repeat one more time, we
16 welcome to you provide any comments on the
17 draft scope of work, we are accepting comments
18 until 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on
19 Tuesday, February 21st, 2023, by e-mail or
20 mail. The addresses are on the screen. I'll
21 repeat them for anyone participating by phone
22 only, the e-mail address is kpceis@esd.ny.gov,
23 and the mailing address is Empire State
24 Development, Attention: Stacy Teran, 633 Third
25 Avenue, 37th Floor, New York, New York, 10017,

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2 and to get more information about the project
3 and to view the transcript of the meeting,
4 please visit the project website at
5 esd.ny.gov/Kingsboro, and have a good evening.
6 Thank you.

7 (Whereupon, the public scoping
8 meeting concluded at 8:05 p.m.)

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2 C E R T I F I C A T I O N

3
4
5 STATE OF NEW YORK)

6 SS.

7 COUNTY OF NASSAU)

8
9
10 I, DAVID GORDON, a Shorthand (Stenotype)
11 Reporter and Notary Public within and for the State
12 of New York, do hereby certify that the foregoing
13 pages 1 through 103, taken at the time and place
14 aforesaid, is a true and correct transcription of my
15 shorthand notes.

16 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my
17 name this 19th day of January, 2023.

18
19 

20 -----
21 DAVID GORDON
22
23
24
25

1

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