

2 EMPIRE STATE DEVELOPMENT
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3 **KINGSBORO PSYCHIATRIC CENTER**

4 MIXED-USE PROJECT

5 **PUBLIC HEARING**

6 -----X

7 Held Remotely Via
8 Zoom Videoconferencing
9 November 30, 2023
10 6:00 p.m.

11
12 **BEFORE:**

13 Ron Marsico, InGroup, Moderator

14
15 APPEARANCES:

16 Eram Qadri, ESD

17 Douglas McPherson, ESD

18 Anthony Semancik, ESD Special Counsel

19 James Wade, STV

20 American Sign Language Interpreters

21 Other Staff and representatives

22

23

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Reported by:

Kari L. Reed

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2 THE MODERATOR: Hi, everyone. We're just
3 taking a few moments to admit participants from the
4 waiting room. We will be starting in just a few
5 minutes.

6 Everyone is currently in listen-only
7 mode. Please use the "raise hand" feature in Zoom
8 or email careteam@ingroupinc.com for help with
9 technical issues. An American Sign Language
10 interpreter will be available for the duration of
11 this hearing.

12 Please note that we will walk
13 participants through a phone and Zoom overview after
14 the hearing begins. If you have any technical
15 questions, please use the "chat" feature on your
16 Zoom toolbar, or again, send an email to
17 careteam@ingroupinc.com and a member of the team
18 will assist you.

19 Good evening and welcome to the public
20 hearing on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement
21 and General Project Plan for the proposed Kingsboro
22 Psychiatric Center Mixed-use Project that is being
23 conducted by the project's lead agency, the New York
24 State Urban Development Corporation, doing business
25 as Empire State Development. Empire State

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2 Development will sometimes be referred to during
3 this hearing by its initials, "ESD".

4 Thank you all for joining. Welcome. My
5 name is Ron Marsico. I'm a project team
6 communications consultant on behalf of Empire State
7 Development. Welcome to the public hearing to
8 present and obtain comments on the Draft
9 Environmental Impact Statement, or "DEIS", and the
10 General Project Plan, or "GPP", for the Kingsboro
11 Psychiatric Center Mixed-use Project.

12 Tonight I am joined on screen by Eram
13 Qadri, ESD Senior Director, Planning and
14 Environmental Review; Douglas McPherson, ESD's
15 Assistant Vice President, Real Estate and Planning;
16 Anthony Semancik, ESD's Special Counsel; James Wade,
17 STV consultant deputy project manager; American Sign
18 Language interpreters, who will take turns
19 interpreting; and off-screen by various
20 representatives from ESD and the project team.

21 Today's or tonight's public hearing for
22 the Kingsboro Psychiatric Center Mixed-Use Project
23 is being held pursuant to the New York State
24 Environmental Quality Review Act, or SEQRA,
25 S-E-Q-R-A. The purpose of this hearing is to

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2 present to the public, and give the public an
3 opportunity to make comments on the Draft
4 Environmental Impact Statement, or DEIS, and the
5 General Project Plan, or GPP, for ESD's proposed
6 project.

7 My purpose as moderator is to run the
8 hearing in a fair and impartial manner, and to try
9 to make sure everyone who wishes to comment on the
10 DEIS and the GPP has an opportunity to do so during
11 this hearing. All members of the public can also
12 comment by written submission, as will be explained.

13 Please understand that this is not a
14 question and answer session. It is instead an
15 opportunity for you to present your views so that
16 ESD can consider them in preparing the Final
17 Environmental Impact Statement, or FEIS, and making
18 recommendations to ESD's Directors for final
19 affirmation for the GPP.

20 Aside from oral public comments made
21 during tonight's hearing, comments may also be
22 submitted in writing by mail to KPCEF, CEIS, sorry,
23 kpceis@esd.ny.gov, or by mail or delivery service to
24 the address shown on the screen. Comments must be
25 received before the end of the public comment

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2 period, which is five p.m. Eastern Standard Time on
3 Monday, January the 8th, 2024.

4 For more about the project, including the
5 full DEIS and GPP, you can visit the website at
6 esd.ny.gov/kingsboro. You'll see this information
7 again periodically throughout the hearing if you
8 need to take note of these addresses or instructions
9 again.

10 Before we go into some housekeeping
11 items, we would like to share a brief Zoom overview
12 for those unfamiliar with the software.

13 PRE-RECORDED INFORMATION:

14 For those of you joining via Zoom, when
15 you entered the meeting you were greeted with a film
16 strip of presenters on one side with the
17 presentation on the other. As you move your mouse
18 over the bottom portion of your screen, you will
19 find controls. There are "chat", "raise hand",
20 "live transcription", and "leave meeting" buttons.
21 "Chat" is a way for participants to communicate with
22 our staff if you are having any technical
23 difficulties. Click on "raise hand" to sign up to
24 make a public comment during the public comment
25 portion of the hearing. Click on the "live

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2 transcription" button to turn on or modify settings
3 for closed captioning. To leave the meeting, click
4 on the "leave meeting" button. Live transcripts via
5 voice recognition technology are enabled. To view
6 captions or adjust font size, click the "live
7 transcription" button to view setting options.

8 Next, this screen provides instructions
9 for providing public testimony during today's
10 hearing. For those of you joining this hearing from
11 your computer or mobile Zoom app, you can sign up to
12 speak by using the "raise hand" feature. Our staff
13 will add your name to the speakers list and will
14 confirm that you are being placed on the speakers
15 list in the order you signed up. Displayed on
16 screen you will see a list of upcoming speakers.

17 THE MODERATOR: So please note that a
18 stenographic transcript of this hearing is being
19 made. In addition to this online Zoom hearing,
20 these proceedings are being recorded. By
21 participating in this hearing, you are granting
22 permission to have your name, voice and likeness
23 recorded.

24 We expect a full copy transcript of this
25 hearing to be posted on ESD's website,

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2 <https://esd.ny.gov/kingsboro>, K-I-N-G-S-B-O-R-O,
3 within two weeks after the hearing.

4 Tonight's public hearing is for the
5 Kingsboro Psychiatric Center Mixed-Use Project.
6 Comments should be focused on the Draft
7 Environmental Impact Statement and General Project
8 Plan for this proposed project only.

9 Registered speakers will have three
10 minutes each to provide their comments. We will ask
11 that speakers exercise civil conduct during their
12 public comments. Speakers who use inappropriate
13 language or act inappropriately will be cautioned or
14 may be muted before being allowed to continue.
15 Continued uncivil behavior will result in removal
16 from the hearing.

17 As you can see, American Sign Language
18 interpretation is being provided on screen.

19 Again, please email
20 careteam@ingroupinc.com with any technical issues
21 you may be experiencing tonight.

22 Aside from oral comments made during
23 tonight's hearing, comments may also be submitted in
24 writing to the email address onscreen or to the
25 physical address provided here tonight. Comments

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2 must be received before the end of the public
3 comment period, which is five p.m. Eastern Standard
4 Time on Monday, January 8th, 2024.

5 I will now turn it over to Doug
6 McPherson, ESD's Assistant Vice President, Real
7 Estate and Planning. Doug.

8 MR. MCPHERSON: Good evening. Thank you,
9 Ron.

10 My name is Doug McPherson, and I am a VP
11 of Real Estate and Planning at Empire State
12 Development or ESD. I'm the Project Manager for the
13 Kingsboro Psychiatric Center Mixed-Use Project. We
14 appreciate all of the stakeholders and members of
15 the public who are attending tonight's virtual
16 hearing.

17 The purpose of tonight's public hearing
18 is to describe and obtain comments on ESD's Draft
19 Environmental Impact Statement, or DEIS, and the
20 General Project Plan, or GPP, for the Kingsboro
21 Psychiatric Center Mixed-Use Project. As Ron
22 previously stated, the DEIS and GPP are available on
23 ESD's project website at esd.ny.gov/kingsboro, or
24 upon request to ESD by sending an email to
25 kpceis@esd.ny.gov, or by calling (212)803-2248. All

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2 comments that are made by commenters at tonight's
3 hearing and all written comments received by ESD
4 during the public comment period that ends at five
5 p.m. on January 8th, 2024 will be considered by ESD
6 and included in the hearing record.

7 Please note that tonight's public hearing
8 is to hear your comments on the DEIS and GPP. This
9 is not a question and answer session. The comments
10 provided on the DEIS and GPP, either at this hearing
11 or in writing during the public comment period, will
12 be considered in preparing the Final Environmental
13 Impact Statement and in making recommendations to
14 ESD's Directors for final affirmation of the GPP.

15 The proposed project is part of New York
16 State's vital Brooklyn Initiative, a comprehensive
17 strategy to address chronic social, economic, and
18 health disparities in central Brooklyn. The Project
19 envisions the redevelopment of approximately 7.2
20 acres to provide affordable housing in East
21 Flatbush, which has long suffered from disinvestment
22 and marginalization that have hindered the
23 well-being of its residents. Residents have
24 historically experienced measurably higher rates of
25 obesity, diabetes and high blood pressure, and

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2 limited access to healthy foods or opportunities for
3 physical activity.

4 The proposed project seeks to ameliorate
5 these conditions by creating a health-centered
6 community that provides open space, walkable access
7 to retail destinations, and proximity to a large
8 concentration of healthcare infrastructure,
9 including Kingsbrook Jewish Hospital, Kings County
10 Hospital, SUNY Downstate Hospital, and of course the
11 Kingsboro Psychiatric Center. Further, the Project
12 would provide up to approximately 389 permanent jobs
13 for area residents. As such, the proposed project
14 would provide affordable housing to an underserved
15 portion of Brooklyn, including supportive housing
16 and housing for senior citizens, and improved
17 wellness and economic opportunities as part of the
18 Vital Brooklyn Initiative.

19 In collaboration with New York State
20 Homes and Community Renewal, or HCR, ESD published a
21 Request for Proposals, seeking high-quality
22 mixed-use, wellness-oriented redevelopment proposals
23 with affordable and supportive housing components
24 for the site. A team consisting of Douglaston
25 Development, Breaking Ground, Almat Urban, the

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2 Andrew Velez Organization, Jobe Development and
3 Brooklyn Community Services, was selected to acquire
4 and redevelop the site.

5 The Kingsboro Psychiatric Center is
6 located in the East Flatbush area of Brooklyn. It
7 is operated by the New York State Office of Mental
8 Health, or OMH, and is owned by the Dormitory
9 Authority of New York, or DASNY. Of the five
10 buildings on the portion of the campus proposed to
11 be redeveloped, one building currently sits vacant,
12 two buildings are used as storage for OMH, and two
13 other buildings are utilized as single adult men's
14 homeless shelters. Two new single adult men's
15 homeless shelters would be reconstructed on the
16 site, replacing the two existing facilities. The
17 remainder of the Kingsboro campus to the east of the
18 portion proposed to be redeveloped would remain an
19 active psychiatric care facility.

20 Construction of the proposed project is
21 expected to occur in three phases, with the first
22 phase of construction beginning in 2024, and the
23 final phase completing in 2031, with full occupancy
24 anticipated by the end of 2031.

25 The Kingsboro Psychiatric Center

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2 Mixed-Use Project is classified as a Land Use
3 Improvement and Residential Project under the New
4 York Urban Development Corporation Act, or UDC Act.
5 The GPP has preliminarily been approved by ESD's
6 Directors and the GPP is posted on ESD's project
7 website for public review. I will summarize the
8 contents of the GPP in another slide.

9 ESD is also creating design guidelines
10 for the project to be applied in lieu of zoning,
11 which would establish a physical neighborhood
12 compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. The
13 design guidelines would allow for the development of
14 more affordable housing than would be permissible
15 under the current zoning as well as other components
16 consistent with the project's goals.

17 The proposed project includes the
18 demolition of the existing buildings on the site,
19 and the construction of between 992 and 1,090 new
20 units of affordable housing, including up to 337
21 units of senior housing and 326 units of supportive
22 housing. Two new state-of-the-art single adult
23 men's homeless shelters, containing 364 shelter
24 beds, will fully replace the existing 364 shelter
25 beds currently available on the site.

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2 The project also includes an
3 approximately 8,092 square foot grocery store.
4 Additionally, it includes approximately 63,000
5 square feet of community facility space, including
6 an SEIU 1199 facility, an emergency food provider, a
7 ballet studio, and social service space. The
8 project will also provide approximately 2.1 acres of
9 public open space.

10 For the purposes of the Environmental
11 Impact Statement, the maximum allowable number of
12 units and gross floor area is assumed to present a
13 conservative analysis of potential environmental
14 effects.

15 As alluded to previously, ESD is
16 sponsoring the Proposed Project in collaboration
17 with the New York State Homes and Community Renewal,
18 or HCR, as part of the Vital Brooklyn Initiative.
19 ESD and HRC's primary roles as part of Vital
20 Brooklyn are to expand affordable housing
21 opportunities and open the door for more current and
22 future central Brooklyn residents to avoid the
23 excessive housing costs and instability that can
24 make it difficult to prioritize maintaining a
25 healthy lifestyle. In addition, the Project

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2 advances other pillars of the Vital Brooklyn
3 Initiative, including, but not limited to,
4 introducing new open space, creating new youth
5 development programming, expanding access to healthy
6 food and creating jobs.

7 To address the substandard and
8 underutilized conditions on the project site and
9 redevelop it in accordance with the goals and
10 objectives of the Vital Brooklyn Initiative, ESD
11 would acquire the project site from DASNY and
12 reconvey it to a private developer to facilitate its
13 redevelopment. The project provides a unique
14 opportunity to make the surplus state-owned property
15 available for other uses that will better serve the
16 needs of the community, while avoiding the
17 maintenance costs and potential liabilities to the
18 State associated with holding title to depreciating
19 and obsolete facilities.

20 The UDC Act, through the GPP, authorizes
21 ESD to override New York City zoning to provide more
22 housing than otherwise -- that otherwise could be
23 constructed on the project site.

24 The Project's design guidelines will
25 govern development of the site, including site

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2 planning, land uses and densities, and will
3 establish design controls for the Project's
4 buildings, open space, and other features.

5 The GPP contains:

6 General information about the Project and
7 Project site;

8 A summary of essential business terms for
9 the proposed development;

10 Land Use Improvements and Residential
11 project findings under the UDC Act;

12 An explanation of the proposed zoning
13 override;

14 An explanation of ESD's environmental
15 review process under SEQRA; and

16 Nondiscrimination of contractor and
17 supplier diversity requirements for the Project.

18 The New York State Department of City
19 Planning has been advised of and has given input on
20 the Draft Design Guidelines for this Project. ESD
21 will continue to consult with the Department of City
22 Planning as the Project advances.

23 ESD first issued a Notice of Lead Agency,
24 Positive Declaration, Public Scoping and Intent to
25 Prepare a DEIS on December 19th of 2022, which was

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2 distributed by email and posted on ESD's website
3 along with the Draft Scope of work. A public
4 scoping meeting was held on January 19th, 2023, and
5 the comment period on the Draft Scope of work ended
6 on February 21st of 2023. Tonight, November 30th,
7 is our public hearing on the Draft Environmental
8 Impact Statement and the General Project Plan. We
9 will accept comments on those documents until
10 January 8th, 2024. We expect to issue a final EIS
11 and commence construction in 2024. Construction of
12 the proposed project is expected to occur in
13 multiple phases, with the first phase of
14 construction beginning in 2024 and the final phase
15 completing in 2031, with full occupancy anticipated
16 by the end of 2031, as we mentioned earlier.

17 To describe more about the SEQRA process,
18 I'll turn it over to James Wade from STV
19 Incorporated to discuss the Draft Environmental
20 Impact Statement.

21 MR. WADE: Thank you, Doug.

22 Hello, and good evening, everyone. My
23 name is James Wade of STV Incorporated, and we are
24 here supporting ESD's environmental review efforts.
25 As Doug explained, I'll be spending a few minutes

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2 this evening summarizing key aspects of the recently
3 completed Draft Environmental Impact Statement or
4 Draft EIS. This is also called a DEIS. Over the
5 next few slides I'll review the technical analyses
6 conducted and summarize their key findings.

7 The Proposed Project, which involves the
8 redevelopment of a portion of Block 4833, Lot 1, in
9 Brooklyn, New York, which Doug just described, is a
10 Type I action per the New York State Environmental
11 Quality Review Act or SEQRA, spelled S-E-Q-R-A. An
12 Environmental Impact Statement, or EIS, is being
13 prepared to assess potential environment impacts of
14 the Proposed Project, to present mitigation
15 measures, and to explore alternatives that can avoid
16 or reduce potential impacts.

17 This evening I will discuss the Draft EIS
18 or DEIS, which was published on October 20th, 2023,
19 and is available for public and agency review and
20 comment. All comments on the Draft EIS and the
21 General Project Plan must be received by ESD at 5:00
22 p.m. on Monday, January 8th, 2024.

23 Because the Project is located in New
24 York City, ESD, as the lead agency for the
25 preparation of the EIS, has followed the guidance,

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2 methodologies and thresholds presented in the New
3 York City Environmental Quality Review, or CEQR,
4 spelled C-E-Q-R, Technical Manual. The Final Scope
5 of Work to Prepare an EIS, which ESD published in
6 October, following public and agency review and
7 comment on the Draft Scope of work, explains the
8 technical areas examined in the EIS.

9 As explained in the Final Scope of work,
10 the Draft EIS includes some analyses that are
11 sufficiently complete at a screening level, which
12 determines that no significant adverse impacts would
13 result and that no further analysis is warranted.
14 These include socioeconomic conditions; community
15 facilities and services, specifically analysis of
16 healthcare and police and fire services; solid waste
17 and sanitation services; and energy.

18 For other technical areas, ESD has
19 conducted detailed analyses, which are described in
20 the Draft EIS. These include:

21 Land use, zoning and public policy;
22 Community facilities and services,
23 specifically analyses of schools, childcare and
24 libraries;
25 Open space;

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2 A direct impact to an architectural
3 resource, specifically the KPC campus and buildings,
4 or sorry, a portion of the KPC campus and buildings,
5 which is eligible for listing in the State and
6 National Registers of Historic Places;

7 Direct impact to a visual resource,
8 specifically KPC buildings and a portion of the KPC
9 campus, which is also considered a visual resource
10 per the guidance of the CEQR Technical Manual; and

11 Impacts to traffic, transit, and a
12 parking shortfall.

13 In addition, the analyses of potential
14 construction period effects resulted in a
15 determination that there could be significant
16 adverse impacts as follows:

17 Temporary indirect impacts on early
18 childhood programs between approximately November of
19 2027, when Phase 1 of the Proposed Project is
20 anticipated to be occupied, and June of 2030, when
21 on-site childcare space will be made available;

22 Impacts to traffic and transit, and a
23 parking shortfall during the construction period;
24 and

25 Lastly, construction noise, which would

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2 be significant in magnitude though not in duration.

3 Based on these findings, as presented in
4 the Draft EIS, ESD has explored practicable and
5 feasible mitigation measures to eliminate or reduce
6 these impacts to less than significant levels. ESD
7 would require the implementation of mitigation
8 measures as part of the Proposed Project as follows:

9 ESD is currently in consultation with the
10 New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and
11 Historic Preservation, or OPRHP, to identify
12 suitable mitigation measures for the adverse effect
13 on the architectural resource. It is anticipated
14 that a Memorandum of Agreement, or MOA, or a Letter
15 of Resolution, or LOR, would be executed, providing
16 for specific mitigation measures to address the
17 adverse impact. The mitigation may include
18 undertaking photo documentation of existing
19 structures to specific standards, and/or reuse of
20 historic elements of buildings and structures on the
21 Project Site. If mitigation measures identified in
22 consultation with OPRHP prove infeasible, this
23 impact may remain unmitigated and unavoidable.

24 The significant adverse impacts to the
25 KPC campus as a visual resource would be

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2 unavoidable. However, to mitigate the adverse
3 impact to visual resources, the Proposed Project
4 would introduce a new visual resource in the form of
5 publicly accessible open space as part of the
6 improved design of the Project Site. The
7 introduction of this new publicly accessible open
8 space would maintain and improve upon the character
9 of the overall campus and complement the urban
10 design of the surrounding area.

11 In order to mitigate traffic impacts,
12 which would be the reduced level of service at seven
13 intersections, the developer will implement traffic
14 engineering improvements in consultation with the
15 New York City Department of Transportation, or
16 NYCDOT. Impacts at four of the seven intersections
17 would remain potentially unmitigated and unavoidable
18 during certain time periods.

19 To mitigate impacts to bus service, the
20 MTA could increase the number of buses on the B12
21 bus route during peak hours, and, as a result, this
22 impact could be fully mitigated.

23 A parking shortfall would result during
24 the full build condition, though this is not
25 considered a significant adverse impact, per the

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2 guidance of the CEQR Technical Manual. No
3 practicable mitigation measures have been identified
4 to ameliorate this parking shortfall.

5 As described previously, a temporary
6 shortfall of early childhood program space is
7 anticipated to occur between November of 2027 and
8 June 2030, which is the period of time between the
9 completion and occupancy of Phases 1 and 2 of the
10 Proposed Project. No practicable mitigation
11 measures are identified to alleviate this temporary
12 shortfall of early childhood program space during
13 that time.

14 Phase 2 of the Proposed Project would
15 include early childhood program space. Through
16 consultation with the New York City Department of
17 Education, the developer would ensure the provision
18 of enough publicly funded early childhood program
19 capacity to avoid a significant adverse impact.

20 During the construction period, traffic
21 levels of service would be reduced at seven
22 intersections. To mitigate these impacts, the
23 developer will implement traffic engineering
24 improvements in consultation with New York's -- New
25 York City DOT. With this mitigation in place, three

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2 of the seven intersections -- intersection impacts
3 would be mitigated, while impacts at four
4 intersections may remain unmitigated and unavoidable
5 during certain time periods.

6 The Proposed Project would also result in
7 a construction period impact to bus service along
8 the B12 bus route. This impact could be fully
9 mitigated with the MTA's increase in the number of
10 buses along the B12 bus route during peak hours.

11 The Proposed Project would also result in
12 a parking shortfall during the construction period.
13 As described for the full build condition, no
14 practicable mitigation measures have been identified
15 for this parking shortfall; however, this is not
16 considered a significant adverse impact per the
17 guidance of the CEQR Technical Manual.

18 Finally, the Proposed Project would
19 result in short-term construction noise impacts.
20 These would be significant in magnitude, though not
21 in duration. To partially mitigate these temporary
22 noise impacts, the developer will implement noise
23 control measures during construction.

24 In summary, ESD is in consultation with
25 OPRHP to develop mitigation measures to address the

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2 impact to the KPC campus as an architectural
3 resource;

4 The provision of a new visual resource in
5 the form of publicly accessible open space would
6 provide mitigation for the adverse impact to the
7 campus as a visual resource;

8 Traffic impacts are expected to be at
9 least partially mitigated for both the full-build
10 condition and the construction period, with three of
11 seven impacted intersections expected to be fully
12 mitigated;

13 Impacts to the bus service along the B12
14 bus route in both the full-build condition and the
15 construction period are expected to be fully
16 mitigated;

17 The parking shortfall in the full-build
18 condition and construction period would remain
19 unmitigated;

20 The temporary shortfall of early
21 childhood program space would remain unmitigated
22 between the full occupancy of Phase 1 and the
23 provision of early childhood program space as part
24 of Phase 2 of the Proposed Project; and

25 Lastly, the short-term construction

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2 period noise impacts are expected to be partially
3 mitigated through noise control measures.

4 Finally, as explained in the Final Scope
5 of Work, ESD evaluated one alternative to the
6 Proposed Project, the No Action Alternative, which
7 essentially is just what the project site would be
8 in the future if the Proposed Project did not occur.
9 This No Action Alternative serves as the baseline
10 point of comparison for analyses presented in the
11 Draft EIS. While the No Action Alternative would
12 not result in any significant adverse impacts, it
13 would not meet the purpose and need of the Proposed
14 Project.

15 The Draft EIS also considered alternative
16 development scenarios prepared for New York State
17 OPRHP documentation. These include a rehabilitation
18 and adaptive reuse scenario, which assumes the
19 rehabilitation and reuse of existing buildings on
20 the Project Site, and a partial redevelopment
21 scenario, which would include the rehabilitation and
22 reuse of some of the existing buildings and the
23 redevelopment of the remaining portion of the
24 Project Site for residential, community facility,
25 commercial and open space. These alternative

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2 development scenarios are not considered viable
3 alternatives to meet the purpose and need of the
4 Proposed Project.

5 Thank you again, everyone, for joining
6 today's hearing. I'll hand it back over to Ron to
7 explain some procedures for submitting public
8 comment.

9 THE MODERATOR: Thank you, both Doug and
10 James, for tonight's presentation and overview of
11 the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and General
12 Project Plan for the proposed Kingsboro Psychiatric
13 Center Mixed-Use Project.

14 We will now move to the public comment
15 portion of tonight's hearing to give members of the
16 public a chance to provide feedback on the Proposed
17 Project's DEIS or GPP.

18 For those attending tonight's virtual
19 session, everyone may sign up once tonight to
20 provide oral comments by using the raise hand
21 feature, and a member of the team will place you in
22 the speaking cue in the order in which your hand was
23 raised. Please leave your hand raised until after
24 you have spoken. I will provide instructions and
25 ground rules for the public comment period, but

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2 please know there are also there are other ways of
3 providing comments if you do not wish to speak
4 tonight. Public comments also can be submitted by
5 email to kpceis@esd.ny.gov, or by mail addressed to
6 Empire State Development, attention Vanessa
7 Calizaire, 633 Third Avenue, 37th Floor, New York,
8 New York 10017. Public comments must be received by
9 5:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time on Monday, January
10 the 8th, 2024.

11 If you want further information on the
12 project and/or the DEIS or GPP, please go to the
13 project website at esd.ny.gov/kingsboro, or call
14 (212)803-2248. Again, that's (212)803-2248.

15 Before we get started with the public
16 comment portion of the hearing, let's review some
17 technical aspects so you can get ready to make a
18 public comment.

19 For those of you joining via Zoom from
20 your computer or mobile app, you can sign up to
21 speak using the raise hand feature to get on the
22 speakers list. Again, please leave your hand raised
23 until after you have spoken. Our staff will
24 initiate a chat with you to confirm that you are
25 being placed in the speakers list in the order in

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2 which you signed up.

3 Just before your turn to speak, a Zoom
4 pop-up window will ask you to join the hearing as a
5 panelist. Please hit "okay" to accept. The Zoom
6 platform will then restart. So you're not being
7 kicked out of the meeting, it will restart. When
8 you rejoin the hearing, you will have the ability to
9 start the video if you wish people to see you. If
10 not, it's fine to leave your video off.

11 A member of our team will unmute you. I
12 will then ask if you are ready to begin, and only
13 then will the timer be started to provide three
14 minutes for your comment. Additionally, please also
15 state your name and spell it out for the record so
16 that the stenographer is able to get your name
17 accurately, and please announce any affiliation you
18 may have.

19 If you happen to be using a dial-in only
20 function from your phone, you'll need to enter star
21 9 to let a member of our team know you wish to make
22 a comment, and you will be added to the speakers
23 list as well. Since there is no way to modify your
24 Zoom profile, if you are accessing by phone, you
25 will automatically be added to the speakers list.

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2 And I will identify you by the area code and last
3 four digits of the telephone number you are calling
4 from.

5 Please note for all those in attendance
6 we are accepting speaker registrations up until 7:45
7 p.m. tonight.

8 There will be a countdown clock visible
9 on the screen and it will be set to three minutes.
10 Additionally, the clock will indicate when you have
11 30 seconds remaining.

12 Elected officials will be provided the
13 courtesy of speaking first.

14 Periodically your screen will show a list
15 of the next four speakers so you can prepare for
16 your time to speak. When your name or telephone
17 number is called, we will make sure you have time to
18 turn on your video if you wish to be seen, and are
19 ready to speak before we start the time clock.

20 Following your public comment your audio will be
21 muted again, and you will be placed back in the Zoom
22 meeting in listen-only mode.

23 Please, please remember this is a public
24 hearing for the Kingsboro Psychiatric Center
25 Mixed-Use Project only. Comments should be focused

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2 on the DEIS and the GPP for this Proposed Project.

3 Again, just a reminder that this hearing
4 is being recorded.

5 we do ask that speakers exercise civil
6 conduct while making a public comment. Speakers who
7 use inappropriate language will be cautioned or
8 possibly be muted before being allowed to continue.

9 Please also note again this is not a
10 question and answer session. This is time for
11 public comment only. We will display the time clock
12 to begin the public comment portion of the hearing.

13 I will now begin calling the names of the
14 first few people who are registered to speak.

15 All right. Our first, our first speaker
16 will be Zeng Jean-Jacques. All right.

17 MR. JEAN-JACQUES: Hello. Good evening,
18 everyone.

19 First and foremost, I want to clearly
20 state on the record that I oppose this project. I'm
21 a constituent in the East Flatbush community and
22 I've been living here, next year makes 30 years.

23 I find that a lot of these people who has
24 been spearheading this project directly in my
25 community does not live in my community but are from

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2 other parts and aren't taking into account what's
3 going on within this community.

4 I'm part of a group that's named Say No
5 To Less. We are almost a hundred families within
6 the community. And we have advocated to elected
7 officials, whether it's Brian Cunningham or the
8 community board and all of our frustrations. Has, I
9 mean, all of our comments and frustrations has fell
10 on deaf ears, so I don't understand what's the point
11 of this community hearing if anything we say is not
12 being truly considered. You're hearing us, but
13 you're just plowing through everything we're saying
14 and continuing this project although we're voicing
15 our objectives vehement.

16 This project we really know what's going
17 on, especially with the security situation of these
18 individuals that are undesired by this community.
19 we don't know how they're going to affect us. And I
20 think the, one of the biggest problems is that we're
21 opening a Pandora's box. And once this Pandora's
22 box is open, we will not be able to close Pandora's
23 box. But because the developers are making a
24 lucrative amount of money off this project, they
25 don't care what Pandora's box is open because they

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2 themselves do not live in the community and they're
3 detached from the community and are just enjoying
4 the plunders of destroying this community.

5 And that's all I have to say.

6 THE MODERATOR: Thank you, sir, for your
7 input tonight.

8 Our next speaker will be Yosef Blau.

9 MR. BLAU: Hi. I've been walking the
10 streets in East Flatbush. I'm a resident here.
11 I've been walking these streets in the proposed area
12 for development. For at least 15 years I've been
13 walking around those streets, with me, with my wife,
14 with my friends. We've had many different
15 experiences safety-wise with the residents that are
16 currently living there. And unfortunately the, the
17 resources in the community are not sufficient to
18 take care of the safety and security needs of the
19 residents.

20 I'm also concerned about a minority
21 community, East Flatbush, being oversaturated with
22 this construction, with so many buildings, so many
23 apartments, so many more people being added. I
24 understand that there's concerns about early --
25 several years of early childhood services that are

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2 not going to be there. There's many, many other
3 concerns about parking, about police response, and
4 many other concerns that we have.

5 I'm also concerned about an area like
6 this where the attorney general is not involved, the
7 attorney general is not reviewing this process. And
8 as a minority community we need to have the attorney
9 general involved and to review this with this
10 development that's coming up.

11 That's all I have to say.

12 THE MODERATOR: Thank you for your input
13 tonight.

14 Next speaker will be Allen Kraus. And
15 I'd like to remind everyone that if you turn on your
16 video, you can be seen. Not a, not a requirement,
17 but certainly your option to, to turn on the video
18 when you're speaking.

19 with that, we'll have Mr. Kraus speak.

20 MR. KRAUS: I'm Allen Kraus. I'm a board
21 member of Brooklyn Ballet. I want to share Brooklyn
22 Ballet's experience working with Breaking Ground for
23 many years in Downtown Brooklyn, and for the last
24 three on the Sparrow Square project.

25 A little bit about Brooklyn Ballet.

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2 Brooklyn Ballet is a non-for-profit dance company,
 3 dedicated in artistic excellence and education. It
 4 reflects Brooklyn's diverse communities, and it's in
 5 the people that it serves and the people it hires
 6 and the people who come to our performances. The
 7 ballet radically recast who makes ballet, who
 8 performs ballet and who gets to see ballet. We
 9 marry it to hip-hop, Afro-Caribbean, classical
 10 Chinese, Middle Eastern and other dance forms with
 11 the treasured art of ballet. We reach across
 12 cultural and class divides in doing this. We have a
 13 professional dance company, a school that offers
 14 ballet, hip-hop and other dances to students from,
 15 from three to 80 years old, and a program called
 16 Elevate that teaches ballet, hip-hop and other dance
 17 styles in Brooklyn public schools including some in
 18 central Brooklyn. In East Flatbush we present our
 19 Brooklyn Nutcracker each year at the Kings Theater.
 20 And this year to everybody, you should come,
 21 December 16th, Saturday. Please buy tickets.

22 Brooklyn Ballet recruits and trains
 23 serious ballet students from neighborhoods
 24 throughout the borough. Again, including East
 25 Flatbush, Central Brooklyn. We provide children and

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2 youth with opportunities to learn and appreciate all
3 that dance offers. And for some we prepare them for
4 careers as professional dancers. Our students go on
5 to study with the city's professional companies in
6 performing arts groups schools, and several now
7 dance with professional companies around the world,
8 including Houston Ballet, Norwegian Ballet. Two,
9 two young people who we met in teaching them in
10 public school in East Flatbush are now premiere
11 ballet -- ballet dancers in these programs.

12 we have been in business more than 20
13 years. For the past 13 years we've called Breaking
14 Grounds 160 Schermerhorn House our home.
15 Schermerhorn House residents include formerly
16 homeless individuals with special needs, and thus
17 supportive housing, and just artists in the
18 community who need affordable housing to be able to,
19 you know, pursue their career. It's not your
20 typical tenant mix in a residential building, but
21 it's one that works remarkably well for all, due to
22 Breaking Ground's management skills.

23 our school has a steady stream, our
24 school at 160 Schermerhorn has a steady stream of
25 children, parents and caretakers day and night,

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2 seven days a week. Breaking Ground provides a safe,
3 clean and welcoming environment for our staff and
4 for those we serve. They have always been
5 responsive, compassionate and generous with us.
6 Amazingly so during Covid.

7 In 2020 Breaking Ground asked Brooklyn
8 Ballet to become the anchor community arts program
9 in its new Sparrow Square development proposal. We
10 signed on. We plan to --

11 THE MODERATOR: Mr. Allen, if I can ask
12 you to wrap up.

13 MR. KRAUS: Oh, yeah.

14 We, we -- we will build a 7,000 square
15 foot studio. I'm sorry, I'm over it. From our
16 beginning as tenants, in, in -- as Breaking Ground's
17 tenants in 2009 through today's work with them on
18 Sparrow Square, Breaking Ground has been a most
19 trusted neighbor, partner and supporter of Brooklyn
20 Ballet and the children, families and communities we
21 serve.

22 THE MODERATOR: Thank you, sir. I
23 appreciate your comments and your input tonight.

24 Next up is Max Yeaton. And Max, we'll,
25 we'll queue you up.

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2 MR. YESTON: Thanks. I think somebody
3 might have gotten the one letter wrong. It's Yeston
4 actually.

5 THE MODERATOR: Oh.

6 MR. YESTON: No worries.

7 THE MODERATOR: I apologize, sir.

8 MR. YESTON: Don't worry --

9 THE MODERATOR: Max Yeston.

10 MR. YESTON: -- about it.

11 All right, hello. My name is Max Yeston,
12 and I live in Assembly District 43 in which the
13 project is located. I hold a dual masters degree in
14 historic preservation and urban planning from
15 Columbia University. And I support all aspects of
16 the proposal, including bringing the arts to the
17 community as was just mentioned by Mr. Kraus.

18 New York is in the worst housing crisis
19 since the Great Depression. In 2022, over a hundred
20 thousand New Yorkers, a third of them children,
21 slept in the shelter system. This proposal will
22 help mitigate homelessness and end -- and address
23 the legacy of red-lining and racist healthcare
24 disparities of Black and brown communities in East
25 Flatbush, which COVID only made worse. The site's

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2 location is ideal for access to mass transit.
3 Having senior and supportive housing makes sense
4 because residents will be within walking distance of
5 multiple hospitals.

6 All parking should be made optional to
7 maximize housing construction. The buildings are
8 the appropriate size because they will be across
9 from two seven-story apartment buildings as well as
10 near hospitals anywhere from seven to twelve floors
11 high.

12 There will always be those who are
13 physically or mentally unable to be so-called
14 productive members of society. These are our
15 neighbors, and we cannot simply whisk them away to
16 somewhere out of sight, out of mind. We have a
17 moral obligation to provide our fellow New Yorkers
18 decent housing and health care so they don't die
19 from neglect.

20 The way to solve the city's intersecting
21 crises of homelessness, mental health, addiction and
22 crime is to provide more facilities like this for
23 impacted individuals to live, not less. Permanent
24 housing and treatment centers will alleviate the
25 conditions that often lead to crime in the first

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2 place. A vote for this project is a vote against
3 crime. It's worth repeating that in no way are
4 Crown Heights and East Flatbush absorbing the
5 entirety of new housing and wellness development,
6 because under the vital Brooklyn Initiative is being
7 carried out across the borough, from Bushwick to
8 Bedford Stuyvesant to Brownsville.

9 Just on a personal note, as a Jewish
10 American I'm sympathetic to concerns raised at the
11 January hearing about reports of anti-Semitic
12 attacks experienced by local residents, often
13 carried out by potentially members -- residents of
14 the shelters. However, preventing this development
15 from going forward will not end the scourge of
16 anti-Semitism or any other kind of bigotry. Hatred
17 of minorities, especially Jews, tends to spike in
18 periods of severe economic hardship. By supplying
19 stable housing and healthcare to individuals who
20 might be more prone to poor impulse control and
21 disordered thinking because of mental illness, this
22 project may achieve considerable success in reducing
23 anti-Semitism in the long run.

24 My only critique is that the proposal
25 isn't larger. The city should end the current

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2 shelter system as we know it and instead finance
3 permanent social housing for those who need it. If
4 we do not cater to the housing needs of every
5 demographic, then the great city of New York will be
6 accessible only to oligarchs who use their empty
7 apartments to launder money.

8 And that's it.

9 THE MODERATOR: Thank you. Thank you
10 very much, Mr. Yeston, for your comments tonight.

11 Next up is Sara Blazevic. Ms. Blazevic,
12 if you could just raise your hand to let our people
13 know. There's a, there's a few Saras listed as
14 speaking, so if you can just raise your hand and our
15 staff will get you up momentarily. Thank you.

16 (No response.)

17 THE MODERATOR: Okay, Sara, we'll put you
18 down since we're not hearing back from you right
19 now, and we're going to go to Rashad Moore. But
20 Sara, if you raise your hand, our people will put
21 you back in the queue where you were.

22 Rashad.

23 (No response.)

24 THE MODERATOR: Okay, all right. Sorry,
25 Mr. Moore, you're up and we'll get you going and

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2 you'll have your full three minutes.

3 REVEREND MOORE: Hello.

4 THE MODERATOR: Hi, Mr. Moore. We can
5 hear you.

6 REVEREND MOORE: Good evening. Can you
7 hear me?

8 THE MODERATOR: Yes, yes, we can.

9 REVEREND MOORE: Thank you. Sorry that
10 my travel does not allow -- sorry, my travel does
11 not allow me to be on video, but I want to go on
12 record. My name is the Reverend Rashad -- I am
13 Reverend Rashad Raymond Moore, and I am the pastor
14 of the First Baptist Church of Crown Heights in
15 Brooklyn, in the Crown Heights area. We are
16 neighbors to East Flatbush. I am a native New
17 Yorker, native from Brooklyn, grew up in Bed-Stuy.
18 I spent my entire life in Brooklyn.

19 And I want to go on record in my support
20 of this project, not just as a native of Brooklyn,
21 but most importantly as a pastor in the community.
22 As a pastor who also works with East Brooklyn
23 congregations, part of a larger campaign for public
24 land for public good, I want to commend the state
25 for this project, because it shows that we can use

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2 state-owned property to provide affordable housing
3 for New Yorkers.

4 As a pastor in Brooklyn in the Crown
5 Heights area, of a congregation that's now 70 years
6 old, I can tell you that the majority of our
7 congregation has been able to maintain their living
8 in Brooklyn because of affordable housing projects
9 like the one that is proposed. Many of our seniors
10 live in affordable housing developments that were
11 also supported by state efforts in the past, through
12 our local development corporation.

13 I want to know -- I wanted to let you
14 know that as a pastor in Brooklyn I see every
15 Sunday, every week families that have to relocate to
16 the south, families that have to uproot their
17 children out of our wonderful school system in order
18 to live in Connecticut because the rent is too high.
19 Many families cannot pursue home ownership
20 possibilities in New York. This project would allow
21 us to do that with the amount of the small part of
22 the home ownership aspect of this project. Even to
23 hear the, the -- the rejection of the housing -- of
24 the shelter part of this, phase of this project, I
25 know many of our members who are struggling for

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2 housing, many of our members who are living in
3 shelters, many who have City SEPS letters, but they
4 don't have the units that are available.

5 And so as a pastor of this community, the
6 First Baptist Church of Crown Heights, I just want
7 to go on record of my support of this project and to
8 commend the state to -- for this idea, but also
9 knowing that we can use state-owned property in
10 order to provide housing for many, many New Yorkers.
11 Thank you.

12 THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Reverend.

13 We are now going to Sara Blazevic, and
14 then we'll go to Sara Mahpour. So Sara Blazevic is
15 next up.

16 (No response.)

17 THE MODERATOR: Sara, whenever you're
18 ready.

19 Sara, if you can unmute yourself and if
20 you'd like to turn on your screen, that would be
21 great. If not, that's great also.

22 REVEREND NEIL: One, two, one, two, one,
23 two, one, two.

24 THE MODERATOR: Sara?

25 REVEREND NEIL: Can you hear me?

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2 THE MODERATOR: Yes, we can hear you now.

3 REVEREND NEIL: Okay. My name is the
4 Reverend Clive Neil. I'm the pastor of the Bedford
5 Central Church in Brooklyn, I'm also a dean, as one
6 who has served this community for 35 years and have
7 watched the tremendous migration of my members to go
8 to the Carolinas and to Georgia.

9 I am in full support of this project,
10 because I'm a member of the EBC Brooklyn churches,
11 and because of the, for the first time in this area
12 we are going to see a real up for the housing being
13 done by the, the state. We are well aware of the
14 work of Breaking Ground and how comprehensive their
15 projects are, the safety that they provide. We are
16 well aware of the support services that they have.
17 We are well aware of the tremendous impact they have
18 had in their various sites in New York, and we felt
19 very, very comfortable having them be part of the
20 infrastructure of this project. The -- this is a
21 major, major opportunity that we have, and we are
22 hoping that there be other state lands that can be
23 used for the purpose of accommodating the vast
24 amount of, of not only the homeless, but people who
25 have a desire to purchase homes or to rent homes and

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2 presently cannot afford it.

3 So we are deeply, deeply in support of
4 this as a pastor of several hundred families, as one
5 who have served this community in so many different
6 ways over these last 35 years. I believe we have an
7 opportunity that we can't afford to lose at this
8 time. And there -- there's a tremendous amount of
9 expectations we have to people hoping that both --
10 each of us in this community will be space setters
11 about what can be happen -- can happen in this
12 country of ours.

13 So my support is with them as a pastor,
14 my support is with them as a community activist, and
15 my support is with them as one who loved this
16 community for the last 40 years.

17 Thanks so much.

18 THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Pastor.

19 Our next speaker will be Sarah Mahpour.

20 (No response.)

21 THE MODERATOR: No, we're going to go
22 actually to Menachem Blau, Blau next.

23 All right, I apologize. It's actually
24 going to be Menachem Moskowitz next. I apologize
25 for that confusion.

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2 Mr. Moskowitz, whenever you are ready.

3 Turn on your screen if you want.

4 MR. MOSKOWITZ: Yeah, hello, do you hear
5 me?

6 THE MODERATOR: Yes, sir.

7 MR. MOSKOWITZ: I put on the video but it
8 doesn't show. You see me as a video?

9 THE MODERATOR: No, yeah, we see you on
10 the video, sir, and we also hear you well.

11 MR. MOSKOWITZ: Okay, thank you.

12 THE MODERATOR: Okay.

13 MR. MOSKOWITZ: I'm a resident of the
14 East Flatbush, I'm a resident here since for at
15 least eight years. And I bought a beautiful -- I
16 love this neighborhood, it's a very quiet
17 neighborhood, very peaceful neighborhood. I just,
18 by the way, during your presentation you were saying
19 there was no -- there won't be no problems or
20 parking issues while construction or even after the
21 construction. But we have a problem with -- if
22 you're not making parking lots for this housing,
23 we're going to have problems with the, with the --
24 with the parking issues.

25 The second issue is that we, if you don't

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2 do a major sewer construction, we have a lot of
3 times floods backing up our sewer departments.
4 Every time there's a major rainstorm, we get flooded
5 in the basements. So if you, if you are making all
6 these new projects and you don't redo the sewer, the
7 development, we have a major problem here. Every --
8 all these houses are going to be major floods.

9 And the third issue is also, I mean,
10 another issue is for security. I'm, I'm one of the
11 person, I was attacked in 2018. But in this
12 neighborhood I'm just saying I was -- since it's a
13 small, quiet neighborhood I like to say hello to
14 people, not like in other neighborhoods nobody says
15 hello. I like to say hello, how are you, how's it;
16 friendly. But then I got attacked for just saying
17 hello. The guy didn't like I was Jewish or
18 whatever.

19 So I'm, I am really scared of these new
20 developments that I'm getting new neighbors and I
21 don't even know who they are. Especially if you're
22 going to make, how do you call it, for the low
23 income, or not low income, the -- the housing,
24 the -- for the, the shelter housing. I'm still
25 scared in this neighborhood to walk. Every time I

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2 walk by, anybody behind me, I'm jumping to see who
3 that person is, because the guy jumped me and he
4 almost tried to strangle me to death twice within
5 five minutes. And, and but thank God that the, the
6 DA District was able to convict the person. That
7 was another -- that was an issue.

8 Another, another issue is that, that we
9 are going to -- I forgot what I wanted to say. But
10 it's going to be overwhelmed, this whole
11 neighborhood of all these new people and all these
12 neighborhoods.

13 By the way, NYCHA also put up a lot of
14 these buildings, and now we see the problems with
15 NYCHA. So I hope all these new buildings are not
16 going to become like another NYCHA with all these
17 major projects that now they are having problems
18 with, with the heating and this and all the problems
19 with security and that. So I hope it's all taken
20 care of that it's not going to become another NYCHA
21 projects around these neighborhoods.

22 And thank you very much.

23 THE MODERATOR: Okay. Thank you, Mr.
24 Moskowitz, for taking the time to speak with us
25 tonight.

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2 Our next speaker will be Joan
3 Alexander-Bakiriddin.

4 (No response.)

5 THE MODERATOR: I'll give it a moment for
6 Joan too.

7 Joan, if you could unmute, and if you
8 like, you can turn on your screen.

9 MS. ALEXANDER-BAKIRIDDIN: Thank you so
10 much.

11 THE MODERATOR: Thank you. We can hear
12 you, Joan.

13 MS. ALEXANDER-BAKIRIDDIN: All right.

14 Good evening everyone. I am Joan
15 Alexander-Bakiriddin, the second vice president of
16 the Brooklyn branch of the NAACP. I live in East
17 Flatbush, the 58th Assembly, and Community Board 17,
18 which this project abuts.

19 I have dropped the correct spelling of my
20 name, so let me just go ahead and do that because
21 it's easier. Because my last name is Bakiriddin,
22 and most people have trouble spelling that. So I
23 would drop the correct spelling of my name in the
24 chat, which I've just done.

25 And I unmute to speak in appreciation for

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2 the concept of truly affordable housing. I would
3 like to amplify a note that I shared during the
4 recent town hall hosted by Assembly Member
5 Cunningham, Community Board 9, and Community Board
6 17.

7 As this project continues to be
8 developed, I ask that you center the needs of our
9 East Flatbush community. We are already
10 overburdened by the out of context building of
11 market rate housing, which has forced a displacement
12 of our neighbors and resulted in some of our
13 neighbors being under water and sewage when Henri
14 and Ida hit in 2022. I ask that you be innovative
15 and collaborative regarding how you envision our
16 community benefits. Increase the, the concepts. I
17 saw a lot of great confirmation happening earlier
18 today where you were talking about infrastructure
19 improvements, et cetera. But I also ask that you
20 make it possible for some of our displaced community
21 members to return home through rental and home
22 ownership.

23 I ask that you increase the parking above
24 the currently noted about 20 plus slots. I ask that
25 you provide demographically appropriate arts and

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2 culture programming at a school, to help keep class
3 sizes within the legal levels. Look beyond the
4 usual capacity building, look beyond the usual
5 community-based organizations, and allow our
6 community members who are already doing the work to
7 utilize the space, the community space that we hope
8 will be developed, that we expect to be developed
9 and included in this project.

10 And we ask that you serve the entire
11 human who will reside in and around the complex by
12 including a mental health center. So we've heard
13 about the members who will be present. And I agree
14 that everyone is entitled to and deserves a housing,
15 equitable food situation, just -- just making sure
16 that everyone has everything they need to be
17 sustainable and to live a healthy and fulfilled
18 life. To that end, we require that everyone is
19 safe, that everyone has programming, and that we
20 create opportunities. Again, that word
21 "sustainability" in our community.

22 So I thank you for your time and
23 attention for listening to me. And I request one
24 more time that you consider the entire community as
25 you continue to develop this project, and that you

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2 host additional town halls before the deadline to
3 make sure that everyone has had the opportunity to
4 provide their insight in this moment where we're
5 developing something that will benefit all. Thank
6 you.

7 THE MODERATOR: Thank you very much for
8 your coming to speak tonight.

9 Our next speaker will be Nia Haggwood.

10 MS. HAGGWOOD: Hello, good evening,
11 everyone. My name is Nia Haggwood with two G's.

12 And yes, I am a member of Bedford Central
13 Presbyterian Church, PBC, and I am also a resident
14 of Crown Heights. And I lived in Brooklyn, New York
15 all of my life, and have raised three adult children
16 who live in Brooklyn as well.

17 The possibility of having affordable
18 housing is very important to not only me but to my
19 children. I've always wanted to own a home, but
20 trying to own a home here in New York is very
21 difficult, so I thought about leaving and moving out
22 of state. My daughter, who is now a registered
23 nurse, she has been looking for apartments, and
24 unfortunately has been coming up empty because the
25 rent is way too high. And, you know, you would

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2 think that, she's spent four years in college, two
3 years in nursing school, she would be able to afford
4 an apartment in her community, but it's not the case
5 without her having to live paycheck to paycheck.

6 So we have even gotten to the point where
7 I say I'll move, which will separate our family, and
8 I'll move to a state where I can afford housing or
9 afford a house, something that I want to do and have
10 ownership of something in my family, and then leave
11 my apartment to my daughter. But that will separate
12 my family, and we will be in two different states,
13 because my daughter, my daughter wants to stay here
14 in Brooklyn where she's close to work. And my son,
15 he's renting, but unfortunately he's renting with
16 roommates because things are just not affordable
17 here.

18 And for the possibility of a thousand
19 units to be -- or over a thousand units to be
20 available for my children or maybe the possibility
21 of someone else's children and family members, that
22 is great and I'm all for it. And I think we need to
23 put our fears aside and know that there are people
24 that need to have affordable housing, and there are
25 homeless people that need to be placed in homes.

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2 And it's not fair as a community that we are voting
3 against it. We should all be for it. And I stand
4 for it, before my family I stand for it. Thank you.

5 THE MODERATOR: Thank you for taking the
6 time to speak tonight, I appreciate that.

7 Next speaker, Jacynth Stewart, could you
8 please raise your hand so we can be sure we have you.

9 (No response.)

10 THE MODERATOR: All right, Jacynth
11 Stewart, if you're there we just need you to raise
12 your hand so we can identify you on the speakers
13 list.

14 (No response.)

15 THE MODERATOR: While we work that out
16 maybe we can go to Jay Sorid, please.

17 Jay?

18 MR. SORID: Yes. Can you --

19 THE MODERATOR: Yup.

20 MR. SORID: I'm just looking to --

21 THE MODERATOR: We can hear you and see
22 you.

23 MR. SORID: Okay. I can't see myself on
24 the screen.

25 THE MODERATOR: Okay. We can see you and

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2 we can hear you, so --

3 MR. SORID: Okay. So I just wanted to --

4 THE MODERATOR: -- the floor is yours.

5 MR. SORID: Okay. Okay, I think -- I, I
6 could see it right now. Okay, thank you.

7 My name is Jay Sorid. I'm a former
8 member of Community Board 9 Land Use Committee. I'm
9 a member of the Kingsbrook Jewish community. I also
10 advocate on community issues for the East Flatbush
11 community. I want to make three statements.

12 Number one, the reason why this is on
13 Zoom right now is because if this Empire State
14 Development had this in a more open format, like at
15 a high school, where you can hear the voice in the
16 community, you could see the voice of the community,
17 okay, and you could hear the comments, you would get
18 shouted down, because no one in the community of
19 East Flatbush -- the majority have strong feelings
20 against this. The people who live in the
21 neighborhood don't want it.

22 The people who have been here speaking
23 and who say I'm from the community, I'm from the
24 district, I encourage everyone to go to something
25 called whitepages.com, okay. I don't -- okay,

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2 whitepages.com, you could see where people live,
3 okay. The people who are the biggest cheerleaders
4 of this, when you look at their address, they don't
5 live near where this project is in East Flatbush.
6 They live in a different part of this.

7 This game has been played on Community
8 Board 9 where people on the other side of town
9 cheerleaded, and they're doing it here right now,
10 okay. The people who are the biggest cheerleaders
11 here now, I have never seen them at the Community
12 Board 9, I've never seen them at Community Board 17,
13 I've never seen them at all. I question what's
14 their specific address, how closer to they -- are
15 they, and do they live near the park, okay.

16 Number two. Who protects the people,
17 okay. Who? This is a taxpayer-funded project. Who
18 protects the people, all right. The initial RFP had
19 New York State Attorney General James as somebody
20 who is a, a party that had to approve this. That is
21 called an involved party. New York State Attorney
22 General James has to give in findings, written
23 findings, okay. There's no accountability of an
24 elected official who the people could say I'm voting
25 you out if you go against this. She's on the RFP.

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2 example of privilege, it's completely elitist. And
3 every single person who is in positions of power has
4 turned their back on the minority community, and
5 you're going to displace them because they're
6 intergenerational families that need parking. The
7 quality of life goes down, so they're going to move,
8 and they're going to South Carolina, and you wonder
9 why. And how many of you guys deal with the
10 project?

11 THE MODERATOR: Mr. Sorid, I'm sorry,
12 you're out of time. Thank you, sir, for
13 understanding. I appreciate your comments tonight.

14 And we'll go now to Johnny Bodden.

15 MR. BODDEN: Okay. I'm Johnny Bodden.
16 I'm Johnny Bodden. I'm from Breaking Ground.

17 THE MODERATOR: Sir, we're getting some
18 feedback.

19 MR. BODDEN: I heard two speakers before
20 prior to me --

21 THE MODERATOR: Mr. Bodden, could you
22 please turn your speaker down, because we're getting
23 feedback from your -- we can't hear you.

24 MR. BODDEN: What I'm saying is, I was
25 hearing a lot of the information that was passed

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2 prior to my turn. It has to be a two-way street
3 here. There's conflict where, you know, is that the
4 mentality is Not In My Backyard. But if you -- you
5 have to have housing. People need to have a roof
6 over their head, opposed to sleeping on the
7 concrete. You walk on concrete, not sleep on
8 concrete. And then when you have the support of,
9 sir, when you're building a development such as
10 this, the support system comes in with your case
11 managers, your case workers, the mental aspect of
12 it, whatever addiction and afflictions people come
13 up with. Didn't ask for that, you know. You can
14 say well, you know, this guy's on his butt, you know
15 he's out on his luck. The question, what you --
16 what you need to ask yourself is wow, how did that
17 person get here, because he wasn't born this way,
18 you understand.

19 There's a lot of intangibles that has to
20 be in place that needs to be recognized and
21 parameters have to be set for this to actually come
22 to fruition. You just can't just build it up and
23 then have, you know. And, you know, I get the
24 community doesn't want it in their backyard. But
25 you can't have them in, you know, you can't have

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2 them sleeping on the sidewalk neither. I'm not --
3 I'm not saying that they need to be directly next
4 door neighbors to each other, because you're not
5 going to have that, you see. This is not the world
6 we're living in.

7 we're, what we're looking at is
8 affordability. Everybody's not going to live in a
9 high end neighborhood. You live where you can,
10 where you can be affordable, what's affordable. And
11 everyone is not, you know, have that golden spoon or
12 platinum spoon in their mouth. Therefore, it is
13 still feasible with community support. And I agree
14 with the gentlemen prior who said your politicians
15 need to be on this as well, because these are the
16 ones that's supposed to be representing that
17 particular district or demographic, and they're
18 stood -- and they, and they got like there's nothing
19 being -- there's no input from them because it's not
20 going to go there. If it's not in their favor
21 they're not touching this, you see.

22 But you gotta have -- you have to put
23 people somewhere, you see. And this is not the
24 time -- and this is, this kind of weather here now
25 that's up and coming, this is not sleeping park

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2 weather, you see. This is not time, you know, you
3 have to have some type of balance.

4 THE MODERATOR: Thank you, sir. I
5 appreciate your comments tonight.

6 Our next speaker will be Rod Herbert.

7 MR. HERBERT: Yes, hello. Can you hear
8 me?

9 THE MODERATOR: Yes, sir, very well.

10 MR. HERBERT: Okay, great. Thanks for
11 having me.

12 I, first of all, I just want to start off
13 by noting an article that was in the -- that I
14 received an email. It says "New York City fails to
15 comply with fair share requirements for city
16 services and facilities." And this was an audit
17 that was performed by the comptroller.

18 So the problem that I have with this
19 project is that there are other projects that are
20 around in this neighborhood, and I've lived in this
21 neighborhood for 57 years, and we are oversaturated,
22 oversaturated with these developments, with these
23 affordable housing and with the homeless shelters.
24 And what should happen is that the state should fall
25 in line with this audit and the fair share should be

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2 distributed throughout the city. All right. If you
3 look at BK, Community Board 1, Community Board 2 and
4 6 and 4, they don't have the density that is going
5 to be placed upon us, all right.

6 And as far as the Breaking Ground and
7 talking about the security issues. We have security
8 issues currently with the existing facility there.
9 They've been a bad neighbor for many, many, many
10 years, all right. And this project is being touted
11 that it's going to be the euphoria and fix
12 everything. Well, no detailed security plan has
13 been provided. We don't know who is coming into
14 the -- into these residencies, no background checks
15 or anything such as this. And people will leave.
16 People will leave.

17 In addition to the parking, the parking
18 is very important. And why is it, because we have
19 two major athletic fields, which is Wingate Park and
20 we have Boys High Field, all right. People come
21 from out of state to go to the cultural events, the
22 sporting events, and the free music concerts that
23 are given. And the police officers, they shut down
24 the streets. Only the performers can go down
25 certain streets and whatnot. And the parking is

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2 crazy. How crazy is it? My driveway was rented out
3 by a homeless person. I saw the transaction on my
4 camera. Because when I came home there was a
5 vehicle that was parked there. And he rented it
6 out. The parking issue is real. For people who
7 think that it is not real, they have their heads in
8 the sand.

9 And what we're saying, the fair share
10 should be distributed throughout the entire city.
11 We are too oversaturated. We have a total of 11
12 buildings that are being constructed within two
13 blocks from where I live, all right. This can't
14 happen. If this is -- if this plan is to help the
15 city, then spread the wealth. Don't concentrate it
16 in one area.

17 Thank you.

18 THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Mr. Herbert.

19 Our next speaker will be Assembly Member
20 Brian Cunningham. Assembly Member.

21 ASSEMBLY MEMBER CUNNINGHAM: Good
22 evening, everyone. Good evening. Thank you so
23 much. This is Brian Cunningham. I'm playing two
24 hats tonight. One is a resident of the community,
25 obviously someone who lives in the District 43. A

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2 lifelong resident of Flatbush. But also one of your
3 elected representatives who represents you in
4 Albany.

5 Over the last few months, as many of you
6 know on this call, and some who have not
7 participated, our office has held numerous town
8 halls, listening to feedback about quality of life
9 issues throughout the 43rd Assembly District, and
10 specifically one specifically geared at listening to
11 the community's feedback on this vital Brooklyn
12 Project Initiative.

13 I want to thank HCR and ESD for coming
14 tonight again and making a presentation. And I want
15 to thank the residents for being engaged and for
16 participating both in town halls and tonight's
17 conversation.

18 I'm here to say that, one, I think anyone
19 who lives in New York State, specifically New York
20 City, understands the importance of housing at this
21 moment. New York State, and New York City more
22 specifically, is one of most affordable --
23 unaffordable places to live in the entire country.
24 And I think what this project is attempting to do is
25 to create some affordable housing. Many will

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2 criticize this project. And there are critiques
3 that I will make about this in the latter part of my
4 presentation, ways that we can improve this project.

5 But one thing I will say is that for many
6 years, when you look at some of the housing that's
7 gone up at market rates across the city, many of
8 those housing projects were not state-owned land.
9 This is the first time in a long time the state has
10 this opportunity to use state-owned land to provide
11 a need, an essential need for its constituents.
12 Obviously there are some concerns even with the good
13 of providing housing for people who are unhoused and
14 people who are in desperate need of affordable
15 housing.

16 I've heard the concerns of many of my
17 constituents as it pertains to parking. And
18 obviously this is something I think this project has
19 not fully addressed. And we need to ensure that we
20 increase the amount of parking spaces in the
21 neighborhood, given the fact that this neighborhood
22 is shared between both renters and homeowners,
23 people who drive and people who take public
24 transportation. And we want to make sure that we
25 are given a fair balance in making sure that we

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2 provide parking spaces that can assist those who
3 have automobiles.

4 The second thing we want the garages to
5 do is serve as a place for infrastructure, necessary
6 infrastructure. We talk about the state's
7 aggressive plan for 2035, moving cars to electric
8 vehicles, and allowing those parking lots to also
9 house electric charging stations for people who are
10 making that transition.

11 I've also heard the need from our
12 community residents as pertains to things like
13 schools. Last year in the state legislator we
14 passed a small class size bill, which will reduce
15 the size of classrooms. And when we consistently
16 increase the amount of students and families in a
17 neighborhood, there is certainly a need to look at
18 the opportunity to increase the amount of schools we
19 have. This project did not yet include that. As
20 well as additional recreational spaces, community
21 programming, and other vital services that are
22 needed.

23 Earlier this month, after our final town
24 hall with the community, District 43 residents, we
25 sent a letter to the Governor's office, expressing

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2 some of the promises of this project, but also some
3 of our concerns. We look forward to in the coming
4 days continuing to listen to our residents and
5 advocating for the best possible outcome.

6 At this time, I will say this housing is
7 essential. But also the necessary wraparound
8 services that were outlined in that letter, and the
9 concerns being brought by our constituents are also
10 as vital as this project for housing. I hope that
11 we can find a balance, common ground, and make our
12 neighborhood safe, affordable and a place resource
13 rich.

14 Thank you so much.

15 THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Assembly
16 Member.

17 Before we have our next speaker, just to
18 remind everybody please to, you know, if you wish to
19 speak, keep your -- raise your hand and then just
20 keep it raised until after you've spoken. This will
21 make it easier for our staff to make sure that
22 you're speaking in the proper order.

23 Our next speaker will be Barbara Davis.

24 Yeah, Barbara, if you please unmute.

25 MS. DAVIS: Hi. Can you hear me?

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2 THE MODERATOR: Yes.

3 MS. DAVIS: Great. I'm Barbara Davis. I
4 am the chief operating officer at the Entertainment
5 Community Fund, a national human services
6 organization for people in the performing arts.
7 Since its founding, I've worked closely with
8 Breaking Ground on multiple affordable housing
9 residences. They are the property managers for a
10 residence that we own in Manhattan. We're partners
11 with them on the Schermerhorn residence in downtown
12 Brooklyn. And after 27 years of working together, I
13 can comfortably say how confident as -- with them as
14 affordable housing developers and service providers.

15 I co-chaired the Housing Health and Human
16 Services Committee of Community Board 4 here in
17 Manhattan for eight years, and have worked very
18 closely on multiple, many types of affordable
19 housing, supportive housing and shelter projects.
20 Seeing when things are done very poorly, without
21 community input, without community involvement, and
22 seeing how it can be done well by strong, capable
23 nonprofits participating in outreach and in dialogue
24 on an ongoing basis with the community.

25 So I also would, would note we've also

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2 been working with Douglaston Development, also a
3 great affordable housing developer, and just want to
4 share our support of this project.

5 Thank you.

6 THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Ms. Davis, I
7 appreciate your taking the time tonight.

8 Our next speaker will be Menachem
9 Mahpour.

10 MR. MAHPOUR: Yes. Do you hear me?

11 THE MODERATOR: Yes, sir. Yeah, if you'd
12 like to turn on your video, fine. If not, fine.

13 MR. MAHPOUR: Yes, I do. Hold on,
14 please. Trying to see how to do that. Okay.

15 THE MODERATOR: We'll give Mr. Mahpour a
16 second to rejoin as a panelist.

17 MR. MAHPOUR: Yes, good evening. I'm
18 here to speak up for all the people who cannot
19 speak, to be a voice for all those who know they
20 won't be heard. And I have spent the last eight
21 months walking around the streets of this
22 neighborhood. Behind Clarkson, north of Clarkson,
23 Winthrop, Troy, 46th, 45th. I'm a resident here for
24 the past two and a half years. And as soon as we
25 heard about this, I just wanted to go out and hear

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2 what people have to say.

3 And from speaking to about four to 5,000
4 people over the past two years, I have it
5 documented, all the people living here are
6 minorities, and they don't want this project to be
7 to the scale that it is. They feel that it's being
8 overly constructed and it's going to be way too
9 much, and it -- and, and -- and they know what the
10 future is going to be from other projects in other
11 places. This is going to destroy the minority
12 communities, Black communities that are here, Jewish
13 communities that are here. And people here who
14 spend their lives, who bought houses, raise their
15 families, are going to be the ones suffering, are
16 going to be the ones paying the price for this huge
17 project that's going to be.

18 If the city and state, you know, and
19 people bought houses here, and now the state is
20 coming and the state is taking away their right to
21 have a house. That's exactly what's happening.
22 People are -- bought houses, they spent their time,
23 they raised their kids, they raised families. And
24 the state and all the people who are behind this
25 project to the scale that they want it to be,

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2 without considering the people, are taking away what
3 the -- what the simple person has and saying that
4 no, you're privileged, you have a house, you don't
5 deserve it, you have to care for X, Y, Z and you
6 have to give up what you have. That's not the way
7 how we help people. We're all in for helping
8 people, but you cannot take away and force people to
9 lose what they have.

10 If the city and state of New York does
11 not have enough money and needs to close down
12 public school -- close down libraries and cut down
13 hours and stop funding police and stop hiring new
14 police, where then do they get the \$445 million to
15 do these projects? You're destroying a peaceful
16 area that's a very nice, quiet, peaceful
17 neighborhood, and they're taking it and they're
18 taking it away. Like the Prophet Nathan told King
19 David when he went -- when, when the incident
20 happened with the -- with Bacheva. He said why are
21 you taking away small sheep that the person, that
22 this man has. That's exactly what's going on here.

23 why doesn't the city, if the city is
24 concerned with affordable housing, why doesn't the
25 city and the state lower property taxes so people

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2 can afford homes, can make housing laws a little
3 more easier so people will not shelve apartments.
4 People are shelving apartments. A lot of people I
5 know who live where I live, they don't want to rent
6 apartments, because they know if they rent
7 apartments to people and the person stops paying
8 rent, it will take them two years to get them out.
9 Make the city and state should consider easing
10 restrictions for people who abuse the system and
11 then a lot of apartments will become available.
12 Just the method that the city is doing is not
13 working. The method that the state is doing is not
14 working. And only the poor and the innocent people
15 who live here and these people who worked hard to
16 live here are going to -- are going to suffer.

17 THE MODERATOR: Okay. Thank you, Mr. --

18 MR. MAHPOUR: One more thing I want to
19 say.

20 THE MODERATOR: -- Mahpour.

21 MR. MAHPOUR: One more thing I want to
22 say. One more can I say?

23 THE MODERATOR: We're at the three
24 minutes now. We are going to have to keep everybody
25 to the three minutes, I'm sorry.

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2 MR. MAHPOUR: well, the state is taking
3 taxpayer money and using against them, that's what
4 they're doing. They're taking people who pay taxes,
5 they're for money, and they're using it against
6 them. And that's really not right. So all these
7 people need to think of what they're doing and get
8 the community involved to work out a resolution to
9 make this work.

10 THE MODERATOR: Okay. Thank you, Mr.
11 Mahpour. I appreciate your comments tonight.

12 It's about 7:30 now. I just want to
13 remind everybody that you can sign up until 7:45
14 this evening, which is about 15 minutes from now.
15 And that, you know, if you sign up by that point, we
16 will -- we will hear you tonight, even if it means
17 us going past the 8 o'clock end time for this
18 meeting. So please, if you want to speak, if you
19 want to make a comment, there's an opportunity to
20 sign up. Raise your hand. If you are on the phone,
21 then just hit star 9 and we will get you on the
22 list.

23 So our next speaker will be Regina
24 Clarke.

25 MS. CLARKE: All right, so thank you for

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2 taking this time to have this moment. I appreciate
3 Menach's comments as well as Rod's earlier, and many
4 other who oppose this project as it stands.

5 Now, if I didn't live in this
6 neighborhood mere steps away from this project and
7 many other projects that have already been completed
8 and that are slated to be completed, I would
9 question our opposition in itself. But I live close
10 to here around this project, and I have seen the
11 significant changes, especially over the past really
12 three years, that the safety is of a great concern.
13 I know others -- I don't have a car. Parking is
14 also of a concern. Parking is not luxury over here.
15 People mention trains. You have to go a little bit
16 further to get to trains.

17 I've been a resident of this neighborhood
18 for approximately ten years, but family has resided
19 around here for many years. I am a huge walker. I
20 walk throughout Brooklyn. I will go over the
21 bridge. I will go up to the park. I will go walk
22 everywhere. And I can tell you, that little
23 corridor where this is going, it is already a
24 question mark.

25 So we definitely all believe that

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2 affordable housing is important for New York. I was
3 a renter. I lived in probably ten apartments before
4 I got this heart house. I'm a veteran. That made
5 it easier for me to get this house. But we want
6 that problem solved. But as these plans are created
7 right now, it doesn't make sense for us residents
8 who actually live here.

9 Sure you live in Crown Heights. That
10 doesn't matter. Bless your hearts pastors who have
11 spoken, but you don't live in the neighborhood every
12 single day. A weekend is not enough to know what we
13 endure and the oversaturation of people who need
14 more help than what East Flatbush can give them. We
15 don't have enough supportive services.

16 Breaking Ground, you sound fabulous, but
17 you don't keep people on the premises. And what we
18 have is people who freely walk the streets and do
19 what they will. And I have empathy for people with
20 mental illness, and you are not setting them up for
21 success in this vicinity.

22 So I think I got all my points. But at
23 the end of the day, I oppose this project. You need
24 to rethink what you're doing. You need to
25 potentially place it elsewhere. Sure we need

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2 affordable housing. But the way this is structured
3 as it is, doesn't make any sense for those who live
4 here. We cannot pick up our homes and just leave.
5 We bought here, we're invested in here, we built
6 this neighborhood. So to just do what you want is
7 crazy. A renter can come in and go as they please.
8 We cannot. We're invested in this neighborhood.
9 And you should do what's right, period, point blank.

10 Thank you for your time, I really
11 appreciate it.

12 THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Ms. Clarke. I
13 appreciate your coming tonight to speak.

14 The next speaker will be Marlene Gordon.
15 Would you unmute, please?
16 Cheryl?

17 MS. BERNARD: Yes, I'm here.

18 THE MODERATOR: I apologize, we'll go
19 with Cheryl first and then we'll go back to Marlene.
20 I apologize for that. Cheryl.

21 MS. BERNARD: Good night. My name is
22 Cheryl Bernard, and I oppose the non vital Brooklyn
23 project. I understand that housing is needed. But
24 why do we have to have 13 apartment buildings being
25 built within a five block radius of our area. Are

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2 we to solve all of the city's problems? Please show
3 me what area in New York City has ever had or will
4 have this amount of tall, ten to twelve story
5 buildings within an area among two to three family
6 homes.

7 There are so many reasons this project
8 will be -- should be given or should not be given,
9 but we don't have enough time to go through it. But
10 I'm hearing so many people that are for this
11 project, but it's okay to displace the residents who
12 have been here this long, that's okay, right? No,
13 it's not.

14 But according to the CEQR assessment,
15 will the proposed action result a change in the use
16 or intensity of the, of the use of the land? Yes,
17 it will. will the action negatively impair the
18 character or quality of existing community? Yes, it
19 will. will the proposed action result in an adverse
20 change in existing level of traffic? Yes, it will.
21 will the proposed action impact existing water
22 supplies? Yes, it will. will the proposed action
23 cause a parking issue in an area already saturated
24 with three hospitals and a health university? Yes,
25 it will.

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2 Everyone that is for this project acts
3 like this is going to solve the rent and home crisis
4 for the whole of New York City. It is not. So stop
5 it.

6 Everyone that is for this project, why
7 don't you ask for an underground or roof parking to
8 supply your parking needs. If you can't afford to
9 buy a home, you can't afford to buy a car? Of
10 course you can't. Are you for housing? Yes, you
11 are for housing. And we're for housing. But do you
12 care about how this will affect the long-term
13 constituents that have lived here, who have built
14 this community for all these years who already have
15 to deal with as much as we have to deal with?

16 In this project description, the present
17 men's shelter is in the front on Albany Avenue, but
18 now you want to move it to the back where, where --
19 where the private homes are, so we could be like
20 sitting ducks and already deal with what we deal
21 with? You are proposing to build this project in a
22 street that is so narrow, the cars have to park two
23 wheels on the sidewalk to prevent from being hit,
24 and you want to put a row of houses? How is this
25 possible?

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2 Has the traffic study been done in this
3 area, has anyone spoken to the constituents? Do you
4 think a traffic study or a DOT that stands on a part
5 on the side of the street can understand what we go
6 through?

7 And who's the part that is not considered
8 important? I heard Doug speak about diabetes in the
9 area. You care about diabetes in the area, but you
10 don't care about our safety? Are you all aware,
11 based on a recent -- their act that was recently
12 done, that BK, BK 9 is number one in Brooklyn with
13 the worst police response time for in crime
14 progress. That is not a fair share. We are living
15 in a lawless time. Does anyone listen to the news?

16 New York City has now given renters the
17 okay to not pay rent. And we recently heard about a
18 landlord that committed a heinous crime and then
19 turned himself in, okay. Are we also -- we also
20 heard about the news of a man that went to kill
21 someone because they was making noise on top of his
22 mother's. She called 311 six times and nothing was
23 done. He took matters in his own hand. Now, I'm
24 not saying that these things will happen, but you
25 cannot guarantee that it will not.

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2 Everyone is just hearing us. Is that all
3 you're going to do is hear us? What is someone
4 going to do about it? Are we speaking and telling
5 you how we really feel, and we can't even do it in
6 three minutes. Are you going to stop this project?
7 Are you going to cancel this project? Are you going
8 to edit this problem? Or you just want to hear what
9 we have to say? According to CEQR, you're doing
10 things wrong.

11 THE MODERATOR: Thank you. Thank you,
12 Cheryl, I appreciate your taking the time to speak
13 tonight with us.

14 Our next speaker will be Alicia Boyd.

15 MS. BERNARD: I can unmute and speak
16 again. You unmuted the wrong person.

17 THE MODERATOR: Well, we want to give
18 everyone a chance to speak tonight.

19 MS. BERNARD: Right, but they asked me.
20 Ask Alicia Boyd to unmute, please.

21 MS. BOYD: Hello.

22 THE MODERATOR: Hi, Ms. Boyd? Ms. Boyd?

23 MS. BOYD: Can you hear me?

24 THE MODERATOR: Yes, we can hear you.

25 MS. BOYD: Thank you, Cheryl, for making

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2 sure, because I'm sure they would have just kept on
3 going and considered I was not available.

4 Okay. My name is Alicia Boyd, and I'm a
5 community activist in Community Board 9. And I
6 really object to this proposal. One, because you
7 are violating the SEQRA that is the State Quality
8 Review Act, which demands that you do not segregate,
9 separate proposals. You've got 11 buildings going
10 up in a five block radius over the last decade. You
11 are aware of all of these buildings being proposed,
12 and yet what you've done is you've actually
13 separated these proposals and done environmental
14 reviews for -- separately, so that you're not
15 sitting there combining them and understanding the
16 full environmental impacts that all of these 11
17 buildings will have that are existing within a five
18 block radius. That's a violation of SEQRA. And yet
19 you continue to come to the community and say oh, we
20 did an environmental review, but we're separating
21 them so we don't feel the impact.

22 Your promises of, you know, upgrades, you
23 should do the upgrades first. But of course you
24 don't do the upgrades first. You promise the
25 upgrades like sewer upgrades, but then you do the

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2 project without the upgrades, and then watch the
3 community flounder, especially the private homes
4 underwater.

5 And, and the oversaturation is also a
6 violation. There is a law, a city law that says you
7 cannot oversaturate a community with social
8 services. And yet, 11 buildings within a five block
9 radius is definitely oversaturation. And, as the
10 previous speaker said, you can't find that anywhere
11 else in New York City. And yet you have chosen our
12 community. And you chose our community because it's
13 a Black and brown community.

14 And look at our representative who just
15 came before us with his little weak ass position
16 about oh, but we need affordable housing. No, we
17 don't need affordable housing if it's going to
18 destroy the existing population. Yes, you are going
19 to change the demographics, you're going to change
20 the character of this neighborhood. And yet you
21 refuse to go back, you refuse to scale down. You
22 want to sit here and do these hearings because you
23 want to do a checkoff box. "Oh, yes, we heard from
24 the community, yes, we were able to, you know,
25 convince outsiders to come and speak and talk about

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2 what a great project this is," who are not affected
3 by the project, who don't live in the community.

4 Yes, we can do all of that fake stuff.

5 But what people really are expecting and want is for
6 you to reduce this project or end it completely, and
7 go back to the drawing board and actually create
8 something that the community can support with the
9 community residents, not with developers and
10 politicians, but with community residents sitting
11 down with you and saying okay, this is what we can
12 tolerate, this is what we'll accept. You have not
13 done that, you've never done that. You always come
14 with these projects and then you have these hearings
15 and then want to "hear from us", quote, unquote, so
16 you can check off a box and say we created a
17 hearing.

18 I say ditch this project, go back to the
19 drawing board, come to the community, have a
20 discussion with the residents who live in the
21 community, and start this project all over again.
22 Thank you.

23 THE MODERATOR: I apologize. Our next
24 speaker will be Alicia -- Shanika Gordon.

25 MS. GORDON: Hi, good evening.

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2 THE MODERATOR: Oh, you can turn your
3 camera on if you like.

4 MS. GORDON: No, that's okay.

5 So my name is Shanika Gordon, and I've
6 been living in this neighborhood for about 20 years.
7 I actually live down the block from where this
8 project, the construction for this project will be.
9 And I oppose this project because it's just too many
10 buildings in one location. We will be severely
11 overcrowded. And, you know, my main concern is
12 about our safety, especially with the influx of
13 homeless and mentally unstable people that it will
14 bring into this neighborhood, because we've already
15 been having issues with them for years.

16 I also, also this is already a flood zone
17 area, as a gentlemen early mentioned. So I'm
18 concerned that all these years of construction will
19 just make it worse.

20 Parking as well, as you've heard, will be
21 a huge issue. And how unfair will it be for all of
22 the residents and the property taxpayers to not be
23 able to park in front of their homes.

24 My family bought this house 20 years ago,
25 because it was a quiet and residential area. And

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2 with this project that will all change. And, once
3 again, we're not -- I'm not against affordable
4 housing. But just not to this scale. And you guys
5 are not thinking about the people already living
6 here.

7 Thank you.

8 THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Shanika.

9 Our registration is, it's now 7:45 p.m.,
10 the registration to speak is now closed. You can
11 still provide written comments at the various
12 locations that you see on the screen there. And we
13 will, again, anybody who has signed up will have the
14 ability to speak.

15 So with that we will go to the next
16 speaker, and that will be Marlene Gordon.

17 Ms. Gordon, if you would like to turn off
18 your camera, or turn on your camera, that would be
19 great. If not, that's fine as well.

20 If you can unmute your microphone, that
21 would be great as well. Okay.

22 (No response.)

23 THE MODERATOR: Okay, I guess Ms. Gordon
24 is not here. We'll go to Beri Ma.

25 MR. MA: Hello? Yeah, hi.

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2 There was a few, a few things that I
3 wanted to discuss here. I was here earlier. I
4 noticed that there were some people from Crown
5 Heights and from other communities that, that --
6 that were speaking, you know, that, that want the
7 project and were speaking pro the project, but it's
8 a little bit different for the people that live here
9 that are going to be impacted, that are actually
10 going to be impacted by the project. And, as we've
11 seen, the people that came physically, I was by the
12 meeting on, on Empire Boulevard, and there's,
13 there's a few things that I wanted to say, a few
14 things I wanted to bring out.

15 The first thing I wanted to bring out is
16 they're called affordable housing, but they're not
17 really affordable in most of them. The majority of
18 these houses, these what they call affordable
19 housing are over 3,000 a month rent.

20 The next thing is, most of the people
21 that will living in the houses are homeless. I
22 mean, a combination of homeless and affordable
23 housing is divided from people all over the city
24 that are brought here. So it's only a small
25 percentage the people that actually live here will

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2 gain out of it. Now, what I'm saying is, once we're
3 importing people from other areas to this area, so,
4 number one, if you're already taking people from
5 other areas and bringing them here, you, you could
6 just build such a project even outside of the city,
7 like, for example, Upstate New York, because it's a
8 state project, and there it costs about a third or
9 even less than a third the cost to build a house
10 there. There's a lot less regulations, the land
11 there is cheaper. They build their houses made out
12 of wood, out of other things. It's much, much
13 cheaper, the sewage, everything is -- I think it's
14 about a third the price or even less to build
15 outside of New York City. You could take that same
16 amount of money and help so many more people, three,
17 four, three or four times the amount of people could
18 be helped by that project.

19 Not only that, you could even sell this
20 land to a private builder who would build not 13
21 story buildings but would build smaller buildings,
22 and the amount of property tax you're going to get,
23 tens of millions a year, you could even build a
24 bigger project than this outside of the city.
25 There's so many -- there's so many other things that

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2 you could do with this money, rather than, than --
3 than, you know, building it here. You're not
4 getting -- you're not getting good for your money,
5 you're, you're -- and you're hurting very much the
6 community.

7 The next thing is, these things do not
8 cause property value to go down. We've seen, over
9 and over we've seen, we -- with that, with that, the
10 more these high buildings are built, the higher the
11 cost of housing goes. I don't know why that is.
12 But just like Manhattan or anywhere where you put up
13 these buildings, it does not cause affordable
14 housing, it causes -- it actually, it increases the
15 house.

16 I'm almost out of -- and the third thing
17 is that these things actually destroyed so many
18 buildings. Look what it did in East New York, these
19 projects that they built. It's, it's dangerous to
20 live there. And it affects particularly the
21 minorities and the, the communities that live around
22 them, and it's, it's -- it gets dangerous to walk in
23 and they've completely destroyed the community.

24 So, therefore, if the state instead
25 reassesses to have I don't know how many millions of

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2 square miles of empty land a little bit outside of
3 the city or even in some places in, in -- in, you
4 know, in less saturated places in, in -- within the
5 city, and, and they could get so much more, so much
6 more for their, for their value instead of
7 destroying the community. And the people here don't
8 want it.

9 THE MODERATOR: Mr. Ma.

10 MR. MA: They're not -- they're not going
11 to follow all the promises, all the things that they
12 say, because they're against cars, they're against
13 parking. They're going to do it, and then once its
14 done, it's too late. And I don't believe that
15 they're going to follow up with any of their
16 guarantees that they tell you.

17 THE MODERATOR: All right.

18 MR. MA: The environmental is also --

19 THE MODERATOR: Thank you, sir.

20 MR. MA: Yes.

21 THE MODERATOR: All right. Our next
22 speaker is David Beer.

23 MR. BEER: I'm David Beer from Breaking
24 Ground.

25 Breaking Ground will be the operator of

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2 all the proposed supportive and affordable housing
3 created by the Kingsboro project, as well as the two
4 replacement shelters. Just to clarify, Breaking
5 Ground is not the operator of the existing shelters
6 and has no involvement with them. But once the new
7 purpose built shelters are created, Breaking Ground
8 will operate them.

9 The new shelters will have 24/7 on-site
10 security and an extensive security camera system to
11 monitor inside and outside the shelters. The
12 affordable and supportive housing will also have
13 24/7 on-site security and security camera systems.
14 Also, after the public park is constructed, there
15 will be roving security to patrol open spaces.

16 Currently, residents of the existing
17 shelters are usually required to leave their
18 buildings during the day. Breaking Ground will
19 allow and encourage residents to stay on the
20 premises during the day by providing recreational
21 and educational programming. The new purpose built
22 shelters will be much more inviting and comfortable
23 for residents. The existing shelters are in
24 substandard condition and do not have air
25 conditioning. In the new shelters, residents will

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2 have semiprivate rooms, which will make it more
3 appealing to stay on site.

4 As it as successfully done for other
5 projects, Breaking Ground will create a community
6 advisory board for this project. The purpose will
7 be to provide community stakeholders with a forum to
8 meet and discuss the impact of the new development
9 on the neighborhood. The perspectives and
10 information provided by stakeholders regarding
11 quality of life issues will enable Breaking Ground
12 to minimize negative impacts, especially from the
13 shelter operations.

14 Community advisory board members will
15 include representatives from local electeds and the
16 community board, police officers from the 71st
17 Precinct, as well as representatives from Black
18 associations and other local stakeholders.
19 Community advisory board members will also have a
20 Breaking Ground point of contact to reach out to
21 directly for issues that require immediate
22 attention.

23 Thank you.

24 THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Mr. Beer.

25 Our next speak will be L. Tracy.

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2 You could unmute your phone or your mic.

3 MS. TRACY: Good evening.

4 THE MODERATOR: Good evening.

5 MS. TRACY: Thank you for the opportunity
6 to bring out my thoughts to the table.

7 I am a resident of the area. I was born
8 and raised in East Flatbush. This is my home. My
9 parents purchased their first home, and where I
10 purchased mine. And it is meaningful for me to
11 speak up on behalf of the current conditions in our,
12 in our community.

13 I am not without feelings and empathy for
14 the need for affordable housing. I actually feel
15 it's absolutely needed. But I think we also need to
16 realign and redefine what affordable is in this
17 community in this present day, because what's being
18 proposed really won't be affordable for the average
19 family still.

20 But I also have a really big concern
21 about the saturation of people and influx that will
22 come into the neighborhood. I know it's a theme
23 that's been mentioned throughout tonight's
24 conversation, but it is a quality of life issue.

25 we already have problems with not having

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2 adequate social services, proper streets,
3 infrastructure. We don't have quality groceries and
4 things of that nature already. I think there should
5 be some reviews and putting in funding towards
6 improving our neighborhood right now, in addition to
7 looking for ways to introduce the project and have
8 more housing.

9 I think the plan as it is needs to be
10 revised. I support what was stated earlier in that.
11 We could come up with better plans for a community
12 that meets the needs for, for our homeless people
13 and people who need housing, and as well as for the
14 residents that are already there. Quality of life
15 is very important. We're introducing buildings that
16 are several stories high, reducing some light into
17 homes and in neighborhoods. All of these things
18 need to be revisited.

19 I think there really should be an
20 opportunity for the constituents in the neighborhood
21 to speak now, as compared to after the fact when the
22 project is finished, to talk about their concerns
23 and needs. Now is the time that we should be able
24 to bring to the forefront our concerns and needs.

25 I think there should be funding into the

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2 local hospitals that we already have in the area.
3 Those need dramatic, dramatic funding as it is. We
4 have a state hospital and a city hospital. And
5 those things are impacting our immediate
6 neighborhood, and supposed to be a resource for this
7 new project. But we need funding for those things
8 as it is right now.

9 So I just think the project and plan as
10 it is needs to be revisited one hundred percent, and
11 allow for the constituents of the area to really
12 bring their thoughts and needs to the forefront and
13 have a holistic viewpoint of this project going
14 forward.

15 THE MODERATOR: Thank you very much for
16 taking the time to speak tonight.

17 The next speaker will be Sarah Mahpour.

18 MS. MAHPOUR: Hi. Can you hear me?

19 THE MODERATOR: Yes, we do. Thank you.

20 MS. MAHPOUR: Okay. So, as the previous
21 speaker said, number one, I'll follow up on that, is
22 that I don't know if you've even ever been in, into
23 Downstate or Kings County. Those hospitals are not
24 equipped to sit and handle thousands of more people
25 that are coming, okay. So it would be nice to put

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2 some funding towards that to at least make the base
3 of what we have now. There's no supermarket. The
4 hospitals, it looks like it's from the 1900s. First
5 make that stronger, put some money towards that, and
6 then sit and bring new things. That's number one.

7 Number two is that it's very nice that
8 the man from Breaking Ground, Mr. Beer, has, has all
9 these solutions to all the problems that he thinks
10 are going to happen. But as someone who lives here
11 and grew up here and works here and bought a house
12 here to establish my family here and we all live
13 here, and this is not easy place to live, but we do
14 it, you know, because we're connected to the
15 community and we lived here for a long time, rather
16 than importing other people is -- let's say
17 something happens. My own brother walked through my
18 house at 9 o'clock at night with his child, a two
19 year old child, at gunpoint, okay. What happened,
20 the police comes, oh, he's not mentally stable so,
21 you know, they can't do anything to him. It's very
22 nice that there's security on site over there. But
23 what, are you going to call the guy from Breaking
24 Ground, oh, I'm sorry, it happened a block away,
25 it's out of our jurisdiction. That's, that's what's

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2 going to happen. What's the answer to that?

3 And, number three, I have to tell you,
4 you're targeting a minority community, and I'll say
5 it outright, it's disgusting. You wouldn't do this
6 in Park Slope. This wouldn't fly somewhere else.
7 why over here, and why -- and why at such a big
8 expense? You have no shame, no shame at all?

9 Everyone sits here and is so, is so happy
10 to talk about the homeless and, and provide
11 certain -- provide mental health to this one and to
12 that one. Start from the beginning. The root of
13 the problem here, it's disgusting what's happening.

14 And -- hello, excuse me?

15 THE MODERATOR: Yeah.

16 MS. MAHPOUR: Do you still hear me?

17 THE MODERATOR: Yes.

18 MS. MAHPOUR: And I'll tell you something
19 else. I'm on the list for New York City Housing
20 Authority since 2000, more, 2000 I don't know when.
21 Since I'm 18, okay. I'm now 35 years old. So
22 that's more than ten years that I'm on the list.
23 More than ten years and I'm on the list waiting for
24 affordable housing. And you're sitting on importing
25 other people without lists, without anything, that

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2 they get affordable housing. what about the
3 taxpayers right here?

4 This whole project is disgusting,
5 anti-Semitic, and wrong on all accounts. And it's
6 very nice that everyone sits here and says we're
7 here, we understand it. Thank you for your time, I
8 appreciate you giving us a platform, but we need
9 real action. Afterwards to say yeah, come be on the
10 board, come do this, come do that, we're not
11 interested, nobody has time. Take care of the
12 problems from now. Listen to what we're saying from
13 now. We've been working on this for months, we're
14 telling -- we're trying to tell everyone what's
15 going on. And all I hear is, I hear thank you, we
16 hear, we hear, we hear. I want to see, I want to
17 see one, one change that was made to accommodate
18 what everyone is sitting and saying across the
19 board.

20 Thank you Ms. March.

21 We'll go now to Maxine Barnes.

22 MS. BARNES: Yes. Can you hear me, am I
23 unmuted?

24 THE MODERATOR: Yes, you're unmuted.

25 MS. BARNES: Hello. Yes, a thousand

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2 dwelling units. Based on our community frontline
3 experience, we must ask, affordable for who? We
4 have seen over and over again broken promises and
5 never any affordability. It is, I just have to say
6 it, with any due respect, it is just
7 incomprehensible that our alleged public advocates
8 in the New York State Development alleged planning
9 apparatus would let a proposal of a development of
10 this magnitude in a community, CD 9 and CB 17, that
11 is already overly dense, overpopulated,
12 overdeveloped, with more than our share of shelters.
13 To even be considering this is ludicrous. Worse,
14 and without any upgrades or talk of improving our
15 infrastructure. Worse, the community has been for
16 the most part kept in the dark and out of the
17 process. It had to take protesting to get this
18 forum to at a minimum to be heard. And input
19 allegedly recorded. And as the previous speaker
20 said, Alicia Boyd, it has been our experience, I'm a
21 homeowner for 40 years, and I've seen it, frontline,
22 it has been our experiment that now you're going to
23 just check off a box formality and said "oh, we
24 heard the community." Well, the community has
25 spoken loud and clear, we don't want it. This is

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2 unacceptable. We the community are entitled to be
3 fairly represented, equitable resources, and not
4 pushing on the oversaturation of development and
5 shelters in our neighborhood. We must be heard and
6 our best interests must be manifest.

7 Thank you, community, for coming and
8 standing up and speaking up. Rise up, because this
9 is getting out of hand. As a previous speaker said,
10 this city is completely lawless, it is sinking, and
11 you still want to compensate businesses and not the
12 people. Four hundred 40 million dollars of our
13 taxpayer money, and nothing equitable, no resources
14 for minority Black and brown community. It is
15 absolutely unacceptable.

16 This proposal needs to be ditched and you
17 need to start again and bring the community. Who
18 knows our community better than us. No one. No
19 one.

20 And, as it's been said, you're bringing
21 people from outside, and oh, it's a wonderful thing.
22 And still, the never to be, all elusive and never to
23 be heard of affordability. I have -- I do -- does
24 anyone here know anybody that got an affordable
25 place to live? No.

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2 Thank you, community. Stay on it.

3 THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Ms. Barnes.

4 Our next speaker will be Theresa

5 Westerdahl.

6 MS. WESTERDAHL: Hello. Can you hear me?

7 Hello? Can anybody hear me? I can't hear you.

8 JOHN B (InGroup): We can hear you.

9 THE MODERATOR: Yes, we can hear you.

10 MS. WESTERDAHL: Okay. Hi. My name is
11 Theresa Westerdahl. I live in Crown Heights, over
12 near Ebbets Field. I'm a member of Community Board
13 9 Environmental Protection Committee. But here I am
14 representing my, my own voice and opinion on this
15 project. I have listened to my fellow residents in
16 East Flatbush and heard what they have to say about
17 this project, and I have deep concerns for them,
18 considering the development that's happening in my
19 neighborhood.

20 we've had I think three sewer collapses
21 in the past month, on Empire Boulevard, Bedford
22 Avenue, Sullivan Place. And these all were likely
23 due to overdevelopment and lack of oversight from
24 our city agencies, including the DOB and the DOT.
25 we've seen like huge cracks happening in our

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2 sidewalk. You could see it's like an earthquake has
3 happened there. We report it, nothing gets done, it
4 gets brushed aside. City agencies are not following
5 up. And allowing for collapses. And this is going
6 to happen, I fear, in that area. In fact, I know
7 it's going to happen.

8 It's like I've had to become an expert in
9 illegal activity by developers and construction
10 crews because of what they're doing. Like nobody,
11 nobody follows through, nobody does anything in our
12 city agencies to make sure that we're safe, that our
13 streets aren't collapsing underneath us. And this
14 is what's going to happen to them. Our -- the grid
15 is not ready, our sewers are not ready for this type
16 of development.

17 The, the way that the building is being
18 built so close to the sidewalk, there's no --
19 there's no street access for safe garbage, bike
20 racks, all of that. The parking. All of the
21 necessities that we know we need and that people
22 need in the neighborhood, it's not being taken care
23 of.

24 We cannot trust our city to take care of
25 us. We've got to do it ourselves. I'm tired of

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2 doing other jobs, you know, I'm tired of it. And I
3 don't want my neighbors to have the same problems
4 that I'm having right now. And that's what's going
5 to happen.

6 And it's too much of one thing, of too
7 much -- homeless and mentally ill people need to be
8 spread out, every neighborhood needs to take a
9 little, and we need to take care of each other. Not
10 all put in one area. That's just, you know, going
11 to be a problem. I, I think you can all see that.

12 So I hope I made my point, and thank you
13 for letting me talk. And I do hope some of our
14 issues are heard, but I suspect this is fruitless.

15 Thank you.

16 THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Ms.
17 Westerdahl.

18 Our next speaker will be Laurette Brown.

19 MS. BROWN: Good night.

20 THE MODERATOR: Yes.

21 MS. BROWN: Can you hear me?

22 THE MODERATOR: Yes, Laurette, we can
23 hear you.

24 MS. BROWN: Okay. I live in the East
25 Flatbush area, and I have lived in this neighborhood

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2 over 45 years. And I am highly opposed to this
3 project and what is going on. There has been so
4 much violence. Just my neighborhood alone. We're
5 talking about one of my major concerns is parking.
6 where -- when you live you can't, cannot park as one
7 of the panelists said already, you can't park with
8 your four wheels on the street. You have to have
9 two on the sidewalk. It is not a good thing. They
10 personally they have hit my car, damaged it so bad.
11 It was in front of my house, 5 o'clock in the
12 morning. Now, what are they going to provide for us
13 with parking? There's going to be less parking. It
14 is not getting any better.

15 The increase of people harming each other
16 has gone up. There has been an accident where they
17 spray, spray pepper in my daughter's face. It's not
18 getting better. It's getting worse. I'm outside,
19 and during Labor Day you have people coming. And I
20 see a young man and woman, and they hold onto one
21 another hand. He stops, one gives one a tissue, she
22 rolls it on her hand, she just walks in someone
23 backyard and like is anyone looking. She goes back
24 there, she do what she have to do, she come out, she
25 holds onto his hand. People are just walking in the

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2 backyards, they're doing what they want. They are
3 taking things from outside. They're taking
4 packages. It's not getting safer. Now you're
5 talking about the soliciting of garbage. Now they
6 have different garbage that they put outside.
7 There's going to be plenty more garbage.

8 I heard them talk about the B12 bus. How
9 much access, how much buses are they going to be
10 putting in place? Now that I'm taking the bus more,
11 it's going to be more overcrowded. As they stated
12 before, the hospital, all these are supposed to be
13 emergency people going back and forth. How freely
14 is it? This is not good. Who is this benefiting?

15 Yes, homes should be for everyone. But
16 when it's costing the people in that neighborhood,
17 this is not good. We have to look at the overall
18 picture. We want everyone to be happy. I don't
19 believe everyone will be happy. And when things are
20 happening in the neighborhood, we should not know
21 after. We need to be informed before it happened.
22 We need to have a say-so. This needs to stop. I do
23 not approve of this at all.

24 THE MODERATOR: Okay. Thank you, Ms.
25 Brown --

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2 MS. BROWN: Thank you.

3 THE MODERATOR: -- for taking the time
4 tonight.

5 Our next speaker is Joseph Lebovic.

6 Mr. Lebovic, if you could unmute your --

7 MR. LEBOVIC: Can you hear me?

8 THE MODERATOR: -- mic.

9 Yup, we can hear you now.

10 MR. LEBOVIC: Okay. I just wanted to
11 reiterate some of the things that other people said.
12 Like the amount of homeless already here is already
13 overwhelming. You already see them all over. And
14 then if you add more and more, they're just going to
15 get more out of hand, not less. So now it's
16 somewhat controllable, but not really. But if you
17 add now another I don't know how many, whatever the
18 number is, it's just going to make them feel more
19 not comfortable but comfortable in a bad way in the
20 sense where they get more comfortable to do things
21 that are not appropriate. And we have a lot of kids
22 around here, and they, they don't have that type of
23 sense not to do things around children and stuff
24 like that.

25 And number two, the idea that the

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2 transportation, more buses, I mean it's just
3 ridiculous because, anybody who actually takes a
4 public transportation knows that to walk to the
5 train is at least 20 minutes. The buses to get to a
6 train is another 20 minutes. It doesn't really help
7 you that there's another bus there. It's, it's
8 laughable to think that people could take public
9 transportation over here. Some can, but it's going
10 to be a big problem if you have so many people.
11 Most of them won't be able to, and they'll have
12 cars. And they're going to -- if you actually drive
13 down the avenue, you'll see how much traffic there
14 already is. And then forget about all the
15 ambulances trying to get by. It's already
16 trafficky. So getting another -- that many people
17 in that small space, it's just, you know, calling
18 for a really bad environment and a lot of unsafe and
19 not productive for the community over here.

20 That's all I have to say. Thank you so
21 much for listening.

22 THE MODERATOR: Thank you, thank you for
23 speaking tonight.

24 Our next speaker is Donald Matheson.

25 MR. MATHESON: Good evening, everybody.

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2 Can you hear me?

3 THE MODERATOR: Yes, sir. Yes, sir. The
4 floor is yours, sir.

5 MR. MATHESON: Okay. Good evening,
6 everybody. My name is Donald Matheson. I'm a
7 principal of Almat Urban, a part of the
8 development -- development team with Breaking
9 Ground, Douglaston and Job Development, and a long
10 member of this community.

11 So I grew up, I went to school at 219.
12 My uncle lives on 39th Street, my aunt lives on 45th
13 street, so I'm in that community all the time and
14 over the past 40 years.

15 I would like to tell the community that
16 both the owner, Douglaston and myself, both went to
17 219. So this project is being developed by people
18 from the community. I'm actually there. Jeff I
19 think is there sometimes. But we are both from the
20 community. As well as some other members of the
21 community.

22 I ardent, ardently support Sparrow
23 Square, which we named after the world renowned
24 Calypso singer the Mighty Sparrow, who actually also
25 lived within this community.

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2 The project, along with redeveloping,
3 I'll say it begin, redeveloping the existing
4 shelters into a better organized, managed property
5 is going to be building supportive housing. We
6 build also senior housing for our seniors,
7 affordable cooperatives, and other rentals. Housing
8 that will serve regular folks and also those
9 essential workers from the city, our police, our
10 nurses -- as one woman said, her daughter is a
11 nurse -- our teachers, among others. And we're
12 going to be gearing the project towards people who
13 make between \$38,000 and \$84,000. So, as everybody
14 knows, you could say it's not affordable. What's
15 affordable; 38,000 to 84,000. That's an entire
16 spectrum of this community which we think it's going
17 to serve.

18 we have already, Urban have developed
19 affordable ownership throughout the city, and
20 completed Habitat for Humanities, largest project in
21 the world in the Bronx. So we are excited to be
22 part of the development team that is bringing
23 design, a well-designed and thought out project for
24 the community with needed housing, a large park, to
25 get -- to take some of that access away from wingate

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2 Park and the other park during the, during the
3 cultural festivals, and to program other activities
4 around that. We also built the 8,000 square foot
5 grocery store.

6 So I would like to ask the community to
7 also support this project because, as some of you
8 say, oh, they're not going to do what they're saying
9 they're going to do, we are actually from the
10 community. And, like my cousin owns a store on
11 also, on, on Maple and Dorfman. So we -- we're in
12 the community, and we are going to make it for the
13 best of the community.

14 That's all I have to say.

15 THE MODERATOR: Thank you, Mr. Matheson.
16 I appreciate your speaking tonight.

17 We have one other person signed up under
18 the Sarah Blazevic's name. If that person is ready
19 to speak we will call on them.

20 Yeah, if you're unmuted, please go ahead
21 and speak.

22 Are you there? Give it a moment.

23 (No response)

24 THE MODERATOR: This person under Sarah
25 Blazevic's name there?

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2 (No response)

3 THE MODERATOR: All right. That was our
4 last speaker of the evening.

5 So we want to thank everyone who has
6 spoken today, and to everyone who has listened to
7 and participated in this public hearing. Since
8 there are no additional speakers at this time, I
9 will turn the hearing back over to Doug McPherson of
10 ESD for some closing remarks. Doug.

11 MR. MCPHERSON: Hi, Ron.

12 I just wanted to acknowledge that, you
13 know, we recognize this is a Thursday night, and so
14 many people have a lot of things going on, taking
15 care of kids, et cetera. And we appreciate folks
16 take time out of their weeks to make their voices
17 heard on this project, and to give us a lot of food
18 for thought.

19 I also wanted to thank the Assembly
20 Member and his staff for being present for the
21 entirety of the meeting, and look forward to
22 continued partnership with his team.

23 As Ron mentioned, the record for this
24 meeting will be kept open, which is just another way
25 of saying that we'll continue to accept comments in

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2 written form until January 8th, 2024. So again,
3 thank you everyone. And I'll hand it back to Ron to
4 close the hearing out.

5 THE MODERATOR: Thank you.

6 It's now 8:17 p.m., so we will close the
7 public hearing. The comments on the DEIS and the
8 GPP will be accepted although until 5 p.m. Eastern
9 Standard Time on Monday, January 8th, 2024, by email
10 or mail. The addresses are on the screen.

11 For those participating by phone only,
12 the email address is kpceis@esd.ny.gov. And the
13 mailing address is Empire State Development,
14 Attention, Vanessa Calizaire, 633 Third Avenue, 37th
15 Floor, New York, New York 10017. To get more
16 information about this project, or to review the
17 transcript of this hearing, please visit the project
18 website at <https://esd.ny.gov/kingsboro>.

19 Thank you, and have a good evening. And
20 we appreciate everyone who participated tonight.

21 (Time noted: 8:18 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE

STATE OF NEW YORK)
) SS:
COUNTY OF ORANGE)

I, KARI L. REED, a Shorthand Reporter
(Stenotype) and Notary Public within and for
the State of New York, do hereby certify:

I reported the proceedings in the
within-entitled matter and that the within
transcript is a true record of such
proceedings.

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

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my
hand this 5th day of December 2023.

Kari L Reed

KARI L. REED