BROOKLYN BRIDGE PARK'S COMMITTEE ON
ALTERNATIVES TO HOUSING PUBLIC HEARING

November 30, 2010
6:00 p.m.

HELD AT LONG ISLAND COLLEGE HOSPITAL
339 Hicks Street
AVRAM Conference Room
Brooklyn, New York 11201
A P P E A R A N C E S:

PATRICK O'SULLIVAN for Seth Pinsky

PAUL NELSON, Brooklyn Bridge Park

ASHLEY COTTON for Robert Steel

REGINA MYER, President,
Brooklyn Bridge Park

KEI HAYASHI, BAY AREA ECONOMICS

LEIGH TRUCKS, TIME KEEPER,
Brooklyn Bridge Park

JOHN RASKIN, Brooklyn Bridge Park

DAVID LOWIN, Brooklyn Bridge Park
MS. MYER: Good evening.

Welcome to Brooklyn Bridge Park's Committee on Alternatives to Housing Public Hearing. This is the first of two scheduled hearings. I am Regina Myer, President of Brooklyn Bridge Park. I would like to introduce a few of the members or their representatives of the Committee on Alternatives to Housing that are here this evening.

Starting on my right, Patrick O'Sullivan.

MR. O'SULLIVAN: I am Patrick O'Sullivan. I'm the Senior Vice President for the New York City Economic Development Corporation. And I'm here this evening representing Seth Pinsky, the President of NYCEDC.

MR. NELSON: I am Paul Nelson. I am Assemblywoman Joan Millman's Chief of Staff and her Appointee to the Brooklyn Bridge Park Corporation
Board of Directors and on the CAH. She thanks you all for coming. She is still up in Albany. They're in session as we speak.

MS. COTTON: And I am Ashley Cotton. I am a Senior Policy Advisor in the mayor's office working for Deputy Mayor Bob Steel.

MR. RASKIN: I am John Raskin. I am a Chief of Staff for State Senator Squadron. He's over there check my job performance. You'll probably hear from him as well.

MS. MYER: I would like to take a moment to review the purpose of tonight's hearing. In 2002, the City and State of New York entered into a Memorandum of Understanding, which outlined conditions for the creation and operation of Brooklyn Bridge Park.

This MOU required that the park be financially self-sufficient with annual operation and maintenance
expenses funded by revenue generated from within the project.

In addition, the MOU stipulated that development parcels were not allowed to exceed 20 percent of the project area.

The 2005 General Project Plan affirmed this requirement, and did identify five sites within the project's parameters occupying less than 10 percent of the project area that may be developed to provide revenue for maintenance and operation of the park.

The GPP also described height limits and allowable uses for those sites. A map of those development sites and a chart describing allowable uses can be found on the table outside.

In 2010, the City of New York took over control of the project, and under this agreement so pleased that we are moving ahead. Over 20 new
acres of beautiful parkland have been opened in this year. We must continue to maintain a financially self-sustaining model in order to continue to have this successful park.

In March 2010, the City of New York entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with assembly member, Joan Millman, and the state senator, Daniel Squadron. This MOU outlined a series of steps to be undertaken and to study park financing alternatives in regard to the Pier 6 and John Street development sites.

In accordance with this MOU, which is on our web site and it's available tonight as well, outside the room. Brooklyn Bridge Park has retained a consultant, Bay Area Economics, to conduct a park financing alternative study under the direction of the corporation's Committee on Alternatives to Housing.
The MOU stipulates that these hearings are to allow public input regarding alternative sources of financing. In the MOU, two threshold parameters for alternative sources have been established. These thresholds require that an alternative will not be considered unless it is concluded that such source is not in any way displacing revenue to which the City is otherwise entitled and the timing of and level of risk associated with the revenue projected to be generated by such source is consistent with the projected timing of and the level of risk associated with the revenue projected to be generated by the John Street and Pier 6 sites.

We will be conducting a second hearing on Thursday, December 9, at St. Francis College, 180 Remsen Street, in the Founder's Hall auditorium on the first floor, also,
from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

I would like to thank Long Island College Hospital for hosting our proceedings this evening. In particular, I want to recognize Tracy Ross, Natasha Burk, Katina Bryan and Alex Morales.

I'd also like to thank the New York City Parks Department for their assistance with tonight's hearing.

Kei Hayashi of Bay Area Economics will serve as our hearing chair and review the format in ground rules for tonight's hearing. These ground rules are to ensure that we take statements in an orderly fashion and that everyone who has attended this evening has the opportunity to speak on the record if they wish to do so.

We've also retained a stenographer for both hearings so that we have a complete and accurate record of the proceedings.
We will not be answering questions or posing questions this evening or on December 9th. The purpose of tonight's session is to collect recommendations and ideas from the members of the public on alternative sources of financing to replace revenue.

Next steps. Bay Area Economics and the Committee on Alternatives to Housing will be taking the testimony tonight, and at next week's hearing, and submit it in writing into consideration for the draft report that's expected to be released in mid-February in accordance with the time frame identified in the MOU.

After the draft report is released it'll be posted on the Brooklyn Bridge Park website and a public hearing will be scheduled to solicit feedback on the draft report and the recommendations.

Bay Area Economics will be
accepting written testimony until Monday, December 13th, at 5:00 p.m. Spoken and written testimonies are weighted equally. You may e-mail your testimony to BBPtestimony@BAE1.com. I'm sure Kei will go over those details. This information is available as a handout as well.

Thank you for attending tonight, and I will turn it over to Kei.

MS. HAYASHI: Thank you, Regina. And good evening ladies and gentlemen.

We have a request actually from one of the members of the CAH, Senator Squadron, who has to leave. If you would like to make comments first, that is fine.

MR. SQUADRON: Thank you very much. Thank you.

I actually don't have any suggestions on alternatives tonight,
so don't worry. I have had some in
the past and I'm sure to have some in
the future.

But really, I just wanted to
come before we get started in this
first meeting and thank all of you
for coming, first of all. I know
that it is not surprising to see lots
and lots of folks in the community
and citywide. We're really excited
about Brooklyn Bridge Park and really
engaged with it. I know that's been
proved for decades. But to watch it
continue in what is really a pretty
big evening for the park means a lot
and is very important.

I want to thank Regina who just
read verbatim. Other than my name,
she had forgotten briefly, but that's
okay. We should probably get more
involved in the issues -- resolve
that.

But Regina has dealt with the
transitions from the State to the
City -- or from mid-states to the -- to the City, and some of these new processes including the SAH doing business with the CAH, and has really been very helpful, so thank you very much.

And of course the Bay Area has taken on this path. I mean I know this is one of the easier jobs you will ever take on. So don't worry about it. It's going to be easy money for you. And of course, all of the members of the committee, the truth is, obviously, this is actually really serious and important stuff.

We have gained what's already open to Brooklyn Bridge Park, and a potential -- an extraordinary potential, almost unique, in this City to have something really, really special, a really great 21st century public work. And to link it to Governor's Island and to some of the waterfront really have -- Harbor
Park, Central Park in the center of the City.

And this part of it, how we finance it, what that looks like, how the community feels about how it is that we are financing -- making sure that it's something that's truly sustainable and truly as good as it could be moving forward is actually an enormously important part of that. It's enormously important if you live within an eighth of a mile or a quarter of a mile. Enormously important if you live anywhere in Brooklyn or anywhere in New York City, or if you care at all about New York City's future.

So this is a community meeting in hopefully the most grassroots sense. I hope it gives everyone an opportunity to speak, but not just speak, but actually be heard. But it does it in a way that has real meaning and significance for a long
time to come and in a very, very big way. So it really is very, very important to be involved and participate.

So thank you all very, very much. I look forward to it. When we created this committee I think we hoped that, best case scenario, we would have a meeting like this being taken as seriously as this with a turnout like this.

So you have exceeded even our highest expectations. So thank you and I hope this is a great meeting.

MS. HAYASHI: Thank you. My name is Kei Hayashi. I'm a representative from Bay Area Economics, BAE for short. We are a private consulting firm with offices in New York City and Washington D.C. and the Bay Area in California. BAE has been selected by Brooklyn Bridge Park Committee on Alternatives to Housing to prepare a study of
alternatives to housing for the funding of the Brooklyn Bridge Park operation.

I have been asked by the committee members to serve as an independent Hearing Officer for tonight's public hearing, which is being held pursuant to the March 8th, 2010 Memorandum of Understanding.

My purpose is to run the hearing in a fair and impartial manner and to try to make sure that everyone who wishes to speak has an adequate opportunity to do so.

This hearing will consider alternative funding sources to replace revenue from the Pier 6 and John Street development sites within Brooklyn Bridge Park. Pursuant to the March 8th, 2010 MOU, the purpose of this hearing is to allow public input regarding alternative funding sources before issuing a draft report describing any alternative sources
that are projected to meet the parameters.

In the MOU, as Regina stated, the two threshold parameters for alternative sources have been established. These thresholds require that an alternative will not be considered unless it is concluded that (A), such source is not in any way displacing revenue to which the City is otherwise entitled. And (B), the timing of and the level of risk associated with the revenue projected to be generated by such source is consistent with projected timing of and level of risk associated with the revenue projected to be generated by the John Street and Pier 6 sites.

Copies of the March 8th, 2010 MOU are available on the table outside. This document describes the park financing alternative process in more detail. The document is also on the BBP website. Also available on
the table outside is a description of the park's current financing plan as stated in the September 23rd, 2010 request for a proposal for external consultant.

This is not a question and answer session. It is instead an opportunity for you to present your views so the BAE and the CAH can consider them in making our final determination.

As mentioned in the notice for tonight's hearing, we are scheduled to continue this hearing until 8:00 p.m. For your information a stenographic transcript of this hearing is being made. We will be conducting a second hearing on December the 9th, at St. Francis College, on 180 Remsen Street in the Founder's Hall auditorium on the first floor from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m.

Written comments on alternative sources of funding, which is the
subject of this hearing are requested and will continue to be received and considered by BAE and the CAH after the conclusion of tonight's hearing. If you have written testimony, you can submit it in the box even if you do not present oral testimony tonight.

The closing of the written testimony period is December 13, 2010, at 5:00 p.m. And please note that written comments, if any, should be sent by e-mail to Bay Area Economics at BBPtestimony@BAE1.com. And slips of paper with this e-mail address are on the table outside.

All comments presented at this hearing and during the subsequent comment period will be reviewed by BAE in their consideration of alternative funding sources.

Pursuant to the March 8th, 2010 MOU, a draft report will be released in mid-February as within
approximately 120 days of the appointment of BAE. After the release of this report, which will be made available on the BBP website, there will be a 60-day comment period during which testimony and responses may be submitted by the public.

During this period there will be at least one public hearing to allow for public input and at least one public meeting of the CAH members, which hearing and meeting may be combined to provide feedback relating to the draft report.

Okay. We will now begin the public comment portion of the hearing. The procedures are as follows:

One, to testify in tonight's hearing individuals must sign up to speak, at the table outside in the auditorium.

And number two, as a courtesy public officials will be allowed to
speak as soon as possible after their arrival.

And number three, when a speaker is called I will also announce the subsequent speaker, who should take their place behind the current speaker.

Number four, all speakers will be given a maximum allotment of five minutes to speak. After four minutes, you will be given a one-minute warning to conclude your remarks.

Number five, speakers who have longer than the allotted time will be given the opportunity of concluding their remarks after all of the speakers have commented if time allows.

Number six, speakers at the December 9th hearing who have not previously testified will be given preference over those who have spoken at tonight's hearing.
And the last note is that please keep in mind that either in addition to or in lieu of an oral presentation you may submit written testimony in the box here tonight or at the website on the slip of paper outside on the table.

In order to ensure an accurate transcript and to enable all assembled tonight to hear your remarks, I ask that each speaker when called come to the microphone in the front of the room. Please state your name and address. If you are appearing as a representative of an organization or governmental entity, please identify the organization or entity and state its address.

Finally, I want to remind you that the purpose of this hearing is to afford you an opportunity to make statements and comments about alternative sources of funding in regards to the Pier 6 and John Street.
development sites. This is not a question and answer session. It is instead an opportunity for you to present your views so that BAE and the CAH can consider them in making a final determination.

Again, I'd like to stress that there are no limitations on your submission of written statements, comments or materials at tonight's hearing or at any time prior to the close of the written comment period on December the 13th.

At this time I would like to ask our first speaker to approach the front of the room. That would be Judy Francis. Please state your name, address and whether you're appearing as a representative of any organization. If you have prepared remarks and have copies available, kindly submit them in the box.

The subsequent speaker will be Rachel Landis. If you could please
approach the front of the room and
prepare for your statement. Okay.
Thank you.

MS. FRANCIS: Yeah, she might
not be here, so if I go over, I will
take her time. My name is Judy
Francis. I'm the President of the
Brooklyn Bridge Park Defense Fund,
and that is a 51C3 group -- a
coalition of organization throughout
the Borough in support of the parks.

There is a children's book that
serves as a useful parable to the
park's story. It goes something like
this. A king has a daughter he
really doesn't want to give up, so he
puts her in the tower and he offers
all the men in the kingdom a chance
to win her hand in marriage if they
can leap up to that window.

So all the lads come and they,
you know, have catapults and they
have long jumps and they build
boroughs, so they can get a running
start. And, of course, each one them
hits the wall, falls down, broken
bones.

Along comes a temper, and he
says to the king, all I have to do is
leap up to that window? And the king
says yes. He says, okay. And he
circles the building once, and he
circles it again. And he finds a
doors, and he opens that door, and he
finds 100 steps. And he begins to
leap, one step at a time. That is a
great leap that allows him to marry
the daughter and win the kingdom.

When the committee worked on
the park's plan and addressed the
recreational needs, both active and
passive for this park, to use the
park's original 13 guiding
principles, fiscally prudent that
encouraged park compatible uses such
as a destination resort, conference
center, restaurant, and discouraged
office and residential housing to pay
for park maintenance.

   It was a prudent way in another way. It had no full way to pay for the park, balancing the ups and downs of the economy's bubbles.

   While the current park funding plan looks like this, with 90 percent of the money coming from one source, the community's park plan looks like this, with a series of steps physically prudent to secure funding to pay for the park.

   Which is better? The giant leap of private housing inside a public park with all your eggs in the luxury housing basket or multiple revenue generators that are publicly assessable, compatible and appropriate with the public parks.

   Here are some ideas. To fund this park without the need for further housing inside its borders. Taxes. Instead of allowing wealthy homeowners who live inside a public
park to keep their taxes to a minimum, to bring up their own lawns, taking money out of the City's cauffers and putting it into a small place, their front lawn, why not do what other communities do around the world, and frankly, around the country -- the version of Senator Squadron's park increments recapture plan?

It encourages community building for both surrounding communities, as well as the parks; Win, win.

It also addresses the fundamental financial truth of this park. That is so important. That the park, itself, improves the communities that surround us.

Another idea comes from one of the most conservative republican counties in the nation. It is Polk County, Florida. This county is full of lakes and tea partiers. It has a
beautiful waterfront and a real
aversion to access.

These lakes are very hard to
keep up and keep safe. If you think
little borers eating away at our
piers are bad things, think of 15
miles of alligators living on the
shoreline.

Okay. I have a random tax bill
from one taxpayer. Michael Foley, he
lives on Drexel Avenue in
Winterhaven. He pays $1300 per year
on his taxes. His bill is itemized.
It includes a $25 fee for parks.

Not one citizen in Polk County
is protesting this charge. Not one
republican, not one tea partier, not
one democrat. Why? Because the
resident understands what it goes
for.

New York City used to put 1
percent of its tax revenue into our
parks. If we can no longer afford to
pay for our parks, then why don't we
create a park improvement fund. With a minimal $25 per household we can generate sufficient funds to pay for all parks. And when you itemize it, people get it. They understand the value they receive from this minor amount of money.

MS. HAYASHI: One minute.

MS. FRANCIS: Uh-huh.

A second, is capture all of the revenue pouring into the park today. How many people in this room know that the concessions in Brooklyn Bridge Park today don't pay into the park? How many people know that some, even the most recent vendors from this summer are not even charged rent to be in the inside of this park?

How many of you know that the river passe occupies two acres of parkland? Do you think one dime of their very meager rent goes into the park? No, it doesn't. Let's see.
Sounds like some sweetheart deals from some favorite vendors, doesn't it.

If this park must take all of its expenses, then all vendors must pay inside the park at market rates and all of the funds captured.

A third issue is capture future revenue activities. The movie business is strong in New York City. The iconic bridge is one of the beloved spots to shoot at. It's the Brooklyn Bridge Park and it is a park to celebrate the great bridge, and if it must pay for itself, something no other park is asked to do, then all dollars that accrue as a result of this iconic belief -- it must go to the park. When people drive to get there, the parking fees go there.

Rachel has given me -- so I'll finish. I'll finish up, Kei, so --

MS. HAYASHI: We actually have a council member who's here and who
would like to speak if there is time at the end of the hearing. We'll get around to.

COUNCIL MEMBER: I will defer.

MS. FRANCIS: Okay. Thank you.

So when people drive to get to the park, secure parking fees for the park. Create an outdoor revenue. Like the community out on Pier 3. Put it under the now useless firm and charge admission.

Build an honest-to-goodness recreation center and charge for its use. The Y does a great job of this, and they generate enough money to also give back the other Ys in the neighborhood.

And at the same time, offer significantly reduced rates for those who are unable to pay. If you want to shoot -- on the bridge or in the park or along the river, then fair is fair, all revenues must be captured, not -- no exceptions.
Philanthropy. When improvement is entirely in Manhattan -- one million dollars last month, it was free and clear for the park's use. If you were to demand that their corporate artwork be housed in some building and that their donation be used to support the upkeep of owning that building, why aren't we pursuing philanthropy without strings attached?

How is it that -- make a donation appear to itself -- and work on the back of the deal that all of the funds will accrue easier if from taken itself -- to go to support their building, and not the whole park? There's something very wrong in --

MS. HAYASHI: Wait. In fairness to everyone else who's here, could we wrap up with the last point.

MS. FRANCIS: Okay. Last point.
Spend within your means. We share a lot about belt tightening these days. 10,000 City workers are about to lose their jobs. They're in the midst of a deep depression -- or recession.

Isn't it time that Brooklyn Bridge Park live within its means? If the City spends $15,000 per acre, why is Brooklyn Bridge Park spending $225,000 per acre? Cut the fat salaries, cut the Toyotas and dune buggies. Cut out the re-zoning bureaucracy. You're already know the parks commissioner -- park workers and architects to build our parks.

Learn to live like the rest of us do and spend no more than $150,000 an acre, which is ten times what the parks get. That way, you cut out one-third of your cost. It would make everything simple to execute.

I want to thank Senator Squadron, especially, and Joan
Millman for giving us, the community, a chance to demonstrate how it can pay for this park. We would like an opportunity to meet with you because these are, I know, three-minute increments, but this is 26 years of community involvement to get a park -- a real park for the citizens of Brooklyn. Thank you.

Could you give your written testimony?

MS. HAYASHI: Council member, Steve Levin. And after Council member, Steve Levin, is Rachel Landis in the room? Okay. If not Rachel Landis, Jerry Armor will be next.

MR. LEVIN: Hi. I don't have prepared remarks, but I did want to come down to make my opinion known and on the record.

So I just want to voice my concern and my deep-seated belief that the work of this committee is very important. That coming up with
meaningful alternatives of having a park is, I think, is essential to the future of this park.

I have said this before. We only have one chance to get this right. This is a remarkable, remarkable opportunity. This is not going to come around again. We don't have a second chance at this.

And to come up with a system or a set of revenue-generating ideas, and I'll leave it to others to kind of pitch specifics, but that keep the park a public entity. I think that that is what has always been my opinion, and that is something that continues to drive my thinking on the parks.

Is that by creating housing as the revenue-generating model, essentially, what that does is it privatizes the park. And this is a park that is meant to be public. It is a park that has a wonderful
opportunity to provide a public space that belongs to the generations. It does not belong to individuals or condo owners or those that have a personal stake in it.

I think that it's important to not dismiss what that means in terms of what an ownership stake would give somebody with regard to the rest of the parks. So that I think it is -- I think it is a wonderful turn of events as it were in the transfer of government that this committee was created, that this committee was given a charge and a path and a mission.

And I am very confident that, you know, that you are going to come up with some very innovative ideas. And I truly hope that the administering agency of the Brooklyn Bridge Park will be taking these under serious advisement because I think that they can be a great
benefit to future generations that are going to be using this park. So thank you very much for your time.

MS. HAYASHI: Thank you. Jerry Armer, and then, Henry Stern.

MR. ARMER: Unfortunately, I don't have any prepared remarks, but I think I can speak to the park and its use.

First, let me say that when I was chair of the community board six, and we all originally started with the 13 guiding principles on the vote that day as we toured the harbor, I signed for two reasons.

One, because community board six supported a park, not a housing complex, but a park.

Two, because I believe parks should be open, are not places for people to live, either in high-rises or in tents as some people want to do, now, in Prospect Park. I think it's incumbent upon us to come up
with alternative ideas. I think the consultant has to think out of the box.

Judy Francis mentioned a whole list of items that were in the original plan of ways of raising money, revenue for the park. They have been discarded. They have to be looked at among others. There are parks all over the country that have to raise money that do it without housing.

It is a park for the people. It's not a enclave. It's not a community. The community is outside of the park. The community visits the park. Putting housing in the park is not going to create a community. You will isolate them. They will not be part of Brooklyn. They will be sitting on an island all by themselves. Granted, it's not a real island, but they will be out there by themselves.
It is incumbent that we come up with something that you as the consultant and the corporation come up with ways of financing, finding the revenues for this park.

Cutting the fat, always a good idea. We all have to do that. So that is all I have to say. And I'll just end it with saying, no housing within the park. Thank you.

MS. HAYASHI: Henry Stern, and then, Nancy Webster.

MR. STERN: I just want you to know -- everybody, my name is Henry Stern I am the President of New York City, I'm a retired Parks employee (sic).

I just wanted to make it clear. It was 44 years since I was first appointed to the Parks Department by Mayor Lindsay and Commissioner Tom Holding and his Executive director. And in that intervening time, formalities have increased
enormously. That is one thing that
grows faster than the park
system. And I hope you can work your
way through it.

I have been a member of the
board of the Hudson River Park Trust
for over 20 years under three mayors.
I was only out during the
Dinkins years. But we worked -- oh,
that lady looks like my mother.

I can tell you that the Hudson
River Park Trust has struggled with
its financial obligations and is
falling further behind each year
because it has no solid revenue from
residential uses.

Yes, commercial revenue. But
it is very difficult to get a
commercial user that the community
and the Trust can agree upon. And
commercial use means loads of people
coming in and out of the park, and is
much more unfriendly to park usage
than residential use.
I listened to Judy Francis' suggestions and I thought that some of them were quite good. And I think, particularly, the idea that more revenue derived from the park, the concessions should go to the park.

That was promised years ago in the 2001 mayoral campaign, but the promise has not yet been kept. I hope it is. I think you start with the income that derives from the park.

But you need much more than that. And that is why you need more for residential parcels. Unless someone is going to state the park to a 300 or 400 million dollar trust fund in which revenues could be used to operate the park.

We're in the year where the state has a nine million dollar shortage in this year's budget. It will be larger next year. Services
will be cut right and left. Employees are being fired. It is highly unlikely that the state legislatives will undertake an additional burden providing a endowment for a brand-new public park.

When the park was established in the MOU in 2002, it was anticipated that the park would be financially self-sufficient with annual operation and maintenance expenses funded by revenue generated from within the park. That was eight years ago.

Now, in the last eight years the state has gotten poorer, and the costs have risen. So it is not more conducive, now, to do that. I wish that Hudson River Park had the kind of revenue generators that you have the possibility to use today. I see that they're back from the river. They don't instruct to use from the
park. They are not likely to cause discomfort or inconvenience. I can't think of a more peaceful and harmonious use.

Now, here's what happened. When parks were originally set in the 19th century, they were all vast open land. There was nothing where Central Park is today. Of course, they were just building the park. There was no one to be displaced.

In the 20th -- especially, the late 20th century, those wonderful open spaces were built. Moses did a lot of it. But also going on landfills and vacant land, swamps. Swamps are what wetlands used to be. When they were swamps, they were supposed to be drained. When they became wetlands, they are supposed to be preserved. That's okay.

It's like Emperor Constantine in 305. Previously, people were thrown to the lions if they believed
in Christ, and subsequently, they were thrown to the lions if they did not believe in Christ. What happened is the Emperor converted.

And that's sort of what happened to the swamps and wetlands. But I am in favor of the conversion. I want to observe the wetlands.

The ideas that you mentioned that you should -- had you incorporated, for the ultimate revenue stream -- oh, I have one more quick story.

MS. HAYASHI: All right. One minute.

MR. STERN: We originally wanted -- the City Parks Department wanted Brooklyn Bridge Park to be governed and supported in the same way as Hudson River Park, which is complete cooperation between the City and the state.

In the 20-odd years that Hudson River Park has been in operation
we've never had a fight between the City and the state. And that goes over four mayoral terms and four governors if you count the most recent ones.

So it's four and four. And there has never been a fight on those issues. And we see no reason why they can't be maintained.

Now, we tried, but the state at this time, in I think it was 1993, refused to go along, and they wanted state domination of the project. Mayor Julianne and I, as parks commissioner, refused to go along with that. So what they did is simply wait out Mayor Giuliani.

When there was a new mayor and a new parks commissioner who were not familiar with the CAH situation, they caved, the state, and it took eight years to get it back from the state. So things have happened that should not have happened.
Anyway, I'm glad you're having us here, and that there are so many community people here. I mean, it is just a great institution, and I hope you listen to the good points on what the witnesses have to say, and their suggestions.

But I believe that if we talk in terms of reality and what the states and cities can actually be expected to spend in the year 2011, going forward, you should accept the housing without the pressure, based on your understanding.

Because this is brand-new space. This wasn't park space before. When you are building, I guess I don't see the -- I don't see the harm in it. I am not for rich people. I'm not against rich people. I think the park should be self-supporting because those are the terms on which it was created. And I hope you find a way to do it.
And there is nothing wrong with people living within. It's a very nice thing to do. People want to be alive and live -- and what is it -- live long and prosper.

MS. HAYASHI: Thank you. Thank you very much.

MR. STERN: Thank you.

MS. HAYASHI: I want to acknowledge that Arana Hankin has joined us on behalf of the Brooklyn Bridge Park Board, and the Committee on Housing Alternatives. She is representing Peter Davidson. She is in the audience. Thank you.

The next speaker is Nancy Webster, and following that, Roy Sloan.

MS. WEBSTER: Good evening. My name is Nancy Webster. I am the executive director of the Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy. Based in citizen activism around the desire to revitalize the Brooklyn waterfront,
informed with a mission to turn the
piers area into a public park, the
Brooklyn Bridge Park coalition, now
Conservancy, was born in 1988.

For over 20 years we have been
lead advocates for Brooklyn Bridge
Park and worked to support the park
through community outreach, cultural
education and recreation programs,
park stewardship and fund raising.

Since 2000, more than half a
million visitors have enjoyed the
Conservancy's free public programs in
the beginnings of the park, including
the floating pool in 2007, the 2008
interim public park, on a then under
construction, Pier 1, and the popular
movies with a view series.

This year the public program
being sponsored by the Conservancy
welcomed over 60,000 visitors to
Piers 1 and 6. The opening of Piers
1 and 6 this year are attributed to
the hard work and fortitude by many
in this room. The community, civic and environmental groups, local elected officials, and government who transformed a set of abandoned industrial piers into a vibrant world class park.

This is an extraordinary time for all who have given so much of themselves for this park as well as for the many who have just begun to discover its wonders. As a consistence of order of Brooklyn Bridge Park General Project Plan, GPP, which calls for a limited amount of residential and commercial development to support the park, the Brooklyn Bridge Conservancy looks forward to the work and recommendations of this community.

The Conservancy has strongly supported the park's current plan because we believe that creating more than 70 acres of public open space on the waterfront with boardwalks,
rolling hills, natural habitat, sweeping lawns, playing fields, ball courts, water access and public boating, all of which is supported by the revenues generated from 8.2 acres of residential and commercial development is good for Brooklyn and is good for New York City.

The current park plan proposes an achievable strategy for self-sustaining ability with approximately 8 percent devoted to revenue generation, less than half of what was authorized by the 2002 Memorandum of Understanding between the City and State of New York.

The Conservancy strongly supports a self-sustaining park as called for in the 2002 MOU. A regular and dependable revenue stream for the operations and capital maintenance budget will ensure that Brooklyn Bridge Park stays safe and well maintained for generations to
This is especially important for the waterfront park when neglected pier structures in the park would lead to rapid deterioration. Brooklyn Bridge Park has 12,000 pilings on Piers 2, 3, 5 and 6. The cost of keeping those pilings in good repair cannot be treated as one-off capital requests and subjected to the fluctuation of economic cycles and competing priorities for City dollars. We must budget for maritime infrastructure and capital reserve to adequately sustain this park.

The Conservancy urges the committee as it looks for revenue alternatives to preference options that fully fund Brooklyn Bridge Parks operating in capital maintenance expenses as currently outlined. Revenues must be sufficient to sustain the entire park, including Piers 2, 3 and the John Street
parcel.

    Further, revenue-generating
activities must be limited to the
smallest footprint possible so that
we all have the most park to enjoy.

    Finally, it is critical that
there be no delay in park
construction from the children who
have walked to the Pier 6 water route
to the thousands who have spent
summer evenings on Pier 1's harbor
view lawn. Brooklyn Bridge Park
means too much to too many to halt
its momentum. Thank you for your
consideration.

    MS. HAYASHI: Thank you. Roy
Sloane, and next, Eli Cohen.

    MR. SLOANE: Thank you. My
name is Roy Sloane, and I am
President of the Cobble Hill
Association, but I'm also someone
that's been very deeply involved in
the park since its actual inception
in 1985.
I personally organized over 30 meetings. Some of them, plain session, some of them have been held in this room, going back to 1995. So I think I'm uniquely qualified to present the vision of Pier 6, and I'm going to really focus on the southern end of the park.

As it speaks to the goals and aspirations of the people of south Brooklyn, and really I think almost all of Brooklyn, but I've woven these ideas into a concept for a new place in the park that I call Atlantic Ferry, which was its name in the 19th century.

Most of the ideas are not my own. These are ideas that people have expressed at many of the public hearings. It's kind of a mash-up, if you will, to use the current term. So let me take a whack at it.

Our vision is for a much more active use of Pier 6 and its upland
that would be an attractive destination to those of us who do not live immediately adjacent to the park, which is basically 99.99 percent of all of the residents of Brooklyn.

We envision the park filled with -- at Pier 6, filled with recreational, cultural and hospitality amenities. It would also be connected to Governor's Island in Manhattan by ferry and connected to one another -- whether it's by trolley, bus service, bike paths and pedestrian bridges.

South Brooklyn is deeply connected to the waterfront, and it is part of the fabric of our community. We need a real park, not just a place we visit when our relatives are in town. We want it to be part of our lives.

We need an active park that is an attractive destination to help
revitalize our commercial corridors on Atlantic Avenue in the Columbia Street waterfront district. We need activities particularly for teens and adults.

Our goal is to enhance our residence opportunity to experience the waterfront, to make it a more livable city to make families think twice before they move to the suburbs when they have that second child.

And all of these amenities are revenue-producing and all of them will dramatically increase the number of parks users, which is what we're in favor of. It's a high degree of utilization.

Some park experts in their own plans have told me that the current high-rise plan will serve -- I talked to a number of park planners. The range that they estimated this park will serve was between -- the low was 2 to 3 percent of what the LDC
generated public -- was. And the
high -- the highest number I got from
any park planner, or urban planner
was 15 percent of the potential park
users. A 24/7, 12-month a year
activity. We are not committed to
the much talked about 10 percent
footprint, at least not on Pier 6.

Twenty percent or 30 percent
that we can actually use is far
better than 10 percent that we can
never use. And if we need to cut off
half of Pier 6 to pay for our dream,
we can prepare to discuss that, too.

Right now, it looks to me like
half of Pier 6 is devoted to
wastewater storage needed by the
high-rises, new roads and hard-scape.
So it might be better to make it
shorter right now. We can use that.

And trust me, no one from south
Brooklyn ever asked for wetland on
Pier 6. Think of all of the money
that would save.
What would Atlantic Ferry look like and what would be in it? Number one, it would have a green welcoming entrance that you could get to by trolley, bike, bus or one of any of the five non-pedestrian bridges across the BQE, trans -- that we are currently planning.

It would feature a vertical pay-to-play works and recreation facility located on the upland of Pier 6 that would also include a vertical parking facility sandwiched in back combining two revenue generators in one.

Thirty percent of the users of Chelsea Piers currently come from Brooklyn and Staten Island. According to HRNA, the operators of Chelsea Piers offered one million per year for Pier 5. But a vertical facility on the upland of Pier 6 is far more accessible and preserves Pier 5 for a much needed soccer
field.

Three, it would be filled with places to eat, drink, listen to music and dance, and on the water at prices we can afford. We -- not at the river cafe.

MS. HAYASHI: One minute.

MR. SLOANE: We want seasonal recreation; ice skating in the winter, swimming in the summer. We want Pier 6 to be the main entrance to Governor's Island. We want it to be the home to historic vessels. Why could we not have an old ocean liner that would be a hotel, catering facility, restaurant and nightclub?

We want more -- but we want much more than that. We want a real ferry that connects to Manhattan, Governor's Island, and the waterfront park that Senator Squadron has so eloquently spoken of.

We want it to be servicing intermodal transportation that will
connect buses, trolleys, pedestrians and bicycle riders to a new waterborne mass transit option.

We mentioned a ferry terminal that would house restaurants, drinking establishments, entertainment venue and retail establishments. In the 19th century, Atlantic Ferry was the big ferry in New York City. It carried the most people and the most freight. I see no reason why it wouldn't do that again.

I have a lot more but.

MS. HAYASHI: Do you have written testimony you could submit?

MR. SLOANE: I will submit it, but I'm not ready to submit it right now.

MS. HAYASHI: You have until December the 13th.

MR. SLOANE: Okay.

MS. HAYASHI: Thank you.

Eli Cohen, and after that
Moishe Indig.

MR. COHEN: Hi, I'm Eli Cohen, the Crown Heights Community Council. And although Crown Heights is right in the center of Brooklyn. It is the pivot by which everything else in Brooklyn goes around. It's a really lazy great place. And believe it or not, the people of Crown Heights really have begun to love and use this park in an amazing way.

And I thought I would at least come out here and at least express physical appreciation for the people who have done so much to make it to this point. And we are very excited about the plan going forward to keep it and help it to grow.

I think that the main consideration is that -- I want to speak about is -- Number one, it seems like it is a phenomenal plan to move ahead to move the park forward and expand its use as quickly as
possible of the available space. And I think we appreciate that and we would love to encourage that continuation.

I should mention that Crown Heights Community Council is an elected body, which I am the executive director, but my boundaries are elected by a community-wide election. So there are about 3,000 families that participate in supporting the Community Council. So it's a large constituency in Brooklyn and we very much care about this.

You know, because many, many years ago I was in -- from the Bay Area. I lived in San Francisco in the marina district. And we used to take our little kids down to the beautiful, beautiful park that is right under the north end of the Golden Gate Bridge. It's a really -- it's like being in the wilderness two minutes out of the city.
If we could do something like this in Brooklyn it would be very nice, but I think it's impractical. It's not something that is going to happen, so.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Yes, it is.

MR. COHEN: You will never get it built like that. But the idea of building a beautiful facility like we have along the Hudson River and like in so many places. And there are long, meandering things that, you know, that a little piece of development here is not going to damage what's going to happen four or five blocks down the park. It is just not. It is just the way it is.

And I heard a speaker before speak about Chelsea Piers that was. That is one ugly piece of that Manhattan waterfront, Chelsea Piers. It's the worst. It goes all the way up to the Javits Center. It's the worst part of it. So please, let's
not do something like that.

There's also -- someone was talking about the idea of having piers with bars and drinking. For years and years and years, in the summertime, I used to give a class out on the waterfront on the other side of the river, on South Street and Seaport.

And in the beginning, it was very, very nice, you know. I would sit on the steps and people would gather around and I would, then, speak words of philosophy really, very, very, calm and gentle.

But over the years, I've noticed a crowd -- the crowd on the South Street, people just got more and more rowdy. The drinking and the music. It got to the point where it became a place where you couldn't bring children at night, even in the early evening. So we have to be very, very careful about usage.
The other big possibility is --
Prospect Park, which is right next to
Crown Heights. And one of the big
problems at Prospect Park is big
parts of it is deserted. And it's
not safe to be there in the early
evening or after dark unless you're
in the areas -- even the bike path.
Even the bike path and so -- someone
said build a bike path outside the
park -- so be careful.

So the idea of having housing,
having people, having activities
through the night is very, very -- I
think will work for the park. It
won't affect it that badly and it
will bring -- it will make it more
accessible to the people of Brooklyn,
like us.

And the last point is, we are
all struggling with high taxes. And
when I hear the speaker get up and
say let's just tax and pay for it --
not for housing, no more taxes.
Thank you.

MS. HAYASHI: Thank you.

Moishe Indig, and then Isaak Werzberger.

MR. INDIG: Hi. Good evening. I'm Moishe Indig. I'm coming from the Williamsburg part of Brooklyn. I'm representing a large part of our community, which is the JCC of Williamsburg and CJC.

There is a saying, if it's not broken, don't fix it. We see that this park is underway and it looks beautiful already. And everybody every time -- all the time is passing by and we look at it and it's like an excitement for the community passed from one side to the other. Everybody waiting to see when this will be done, finished and ready to come and enjoy it.

As of today, I am one of the visitors almost 3 or 4 times a week. We are coming with the family, same
as all other people we always see there. People from all kinds of places or whatever, old, young ages, everybody enjoying the place and everybody wants it.

And I think it is probably healthy also for the community because everybody needs a vacation. A vacation doesn't mean only just to go and buy a ticket on a plane for $3,000 and pay for a hotel another $4,000, and come back. You can use this for just to get your mind to clear up a little after working all day and all week. You can use this for clear-up and healthy (sic).

I see that -- my wife, unfortunately, she is having cancer second time in two years. And we are using this. The doctor told me do it and it helps. I have been coming here three times, four times a week. We walk in the water (sic), we look in the trees, and this is the thing
that I think all communities needs it
and it's a need for the community.

So I'm here to support, and ask
the board, please, don't change it,
leave it the way it is created, and
let's just finish it up and don't
hold it back because I think it's
important for all communities. Thank
you very much.

MS. HAYASHI: Isaac Werzberger,
and then, Barbara Charton.

MR. WERZBERGER: Good evening.

As I see many people over there are
gathered and many want to speak, I
will make it very short. Although it
is the night before Hanukkah and we
have a lot to prepare for tomorrow, I
felt it is very important to come
over here to show the need for
appreciation for those that are doing
good.

Our community of Williamsburg
takes full advantage of this park.

There are a lot of elderly people, a
lot of families who have big families that come out to the park. They enjoy it. The school systems come out and they enjoy the services. And that is why I came over here today, to come out and ask the board to please continue with it and they should not make any further delays on it.

The financing plan was already a subject of serious examination and full through deliberation following the creation of the parkland. Thank you for the time to speak up.

MS. HAYASHI: Thank you.

Council Member, Brad Lander would like to say a few words, and then, Barbara Charton.

MR. LANDER: Good evening.

Thanks very much to the Sub-committee on Alternatives to Housing for this opportunity to provide testimony. And to everyone who came out tonight. It's really great to see such a big
turnout on this important issue.

As we saw this past summer at Pier 1 and Pier 6, decades of work to secure a park on the Brooklyn waterfront has begun to pay off in a very major way. Brooklyn Bridge Park is already providing extraordinary open space and recreational resources for New Yorkers.

I'm extremely grateful to the folks who advocated over so many years to make it happen. To Regina Myer, Nancy, to the City and the state, and everybody at the table who has worked hard to get it where it is. And I look forward to working with all the stakeholders to help realize the full potential of Brooklyn Bridge Park in the years to come.

Obviously, the most significant unanswered question we face now is how we will pay for it and what the implications of the decisions that we
make about that have for the design, development, access, maintenance and usage of the park.

As I have said many times in the past, I remain firmly opposed to building additional residential developments inside the park. I believe that high-rise luxury buildings will narrow access to the park, that they'll detract not only from the landscape but from the sense of openness, of publicness that's at the very heart of what we saw this summer in the gorgeous set of public events that took place at Pier 1 and Pier 6 and on the connections, and what that park really calls us to think about and see in the City and what it can and should be.

I think there's too much risk that the park comes to feel like the backyard of a few wealthy Brooklynnites, and that it really would set a bad precedent for
diminishing public open spaces with residential development in our parks in general.

Fortunately, I believe that there are viable alternatives that get us what we all want, which is the elaboration of what we saw this summer into a fully built-out park that paid for it's maintenance as it don't require residential development.

You are going to hear a lot of them tonight. You know, obviously, the potential sale, transfer and disposition of the watchtower properties creates some potential for new revenue as the shift from a not-for-profit owner to a for-profit owner, and some potential conversions from commercial to residential space. All of which will be substantially increased as a result of the value increase that the park is bringing, bringing new revenue into the City.
The park increment recapture proposal developed by Senator Squadron also would appropriately dedicate additional incremental revenues that will come to the City over time as property values rise in the neighborhood surrounding the park.

There is also many opportunities within and adjacent to the park itself to develop more park-appropriate concessions and other revenue-generating uses.

Cities around the world, very much including New York City have seen sort of a dramatic improvement in the creativity and value generation that can come from thoughtful and well-planned concessions that both generate revenue and add value to the park.

And I hope one of the things that you'll do is ask some of those experts and consultants to really
think about this space from that point of view. How could we maximum concessions and other revenues that would add value to the park. And think about how to unlock the extraordinary creativity of the folks here and other folks in Brooklyn and the ideas that they'll have.

    That's just a few ideas.

You'll hear more tonight. I'm confident that you guys and others that you will be able to reach out to will have many more. And I really would urge the members of the sub-committee in general, and especially those representatives and the mayor to really consider these options and listen to the neighbors who have thought long and hard for the park in this neighborhood. And please don't allow preconceived notions of housing development to close your mind to the wide array of good options that you'll hear.
When the transfer took place in the spring, it was publicly announced essentially as a transfer from the state to the City and that what we were getting was a City park.

Now, it were a City park, that means part of the Parks Department, then the process that we're undertaking here would be a lot more involved. There would be a lot of steps in transparency and public participation. We'd likely have to go through ULER, the alienation of parkland. It would require a vote of state legislature.

And while I think there are some important questions about governed structure, I'll save them for another day. For now, I simply urge you to ensure a level of transparency and community involvement that is at least equal to or even greater than those processes would involve. This is a good first
step. Next week's hearing is going to be a good second step.

Let's really build on them and have the spirit of community involvement and transparency, really infuse this process as it moves forward.

I really believe that by listening to the community, by working together to develop a package of alternatives and by building on the great work that now is on the ground already, thanks to really visionary work, again, over decades by folks in this room, but also by the folks who got busy over the last year really making it happen. That it will be possible to meet our share of goals without residential development in the park. And truly to build the extraordinary promise of Brooklyn Bridge Park. Thanks again for your time here.

MS. HAYASHI: Thank you.
Barbara Charton, and then, Bob Stone.

MS. CHARTON: Hello. I'm Barbara Charton, and I help Brad Lander.

And there have been a few things carefully left out of the historical arrangement of this park.

Yes, there was a MOU in 2002, and in 2004, a brand-new park plan was rolled out. A very expensive park plan which was essentially a plan for a very large, very upscale, very expensive luxury housing development with a little tasteful landscaping around it.

In January of 2006, this was formalized into changing the name from Brooklyn Bridge Park which has been bandied around a lot, but it is still that housing project that, that mixed-use project.

We would like a park. We have been saying for years we would like a park. We would like input in the
parks. We would like year-round
recreation. It is now quite cold and
desolate. It's also windy.

I happen to be a scientist. I
know damn well that climate change in
passing and this area is a flood
zone. It is an inappropriate area
for housing.

Particularly housing that would
have to be expensively built. You
have to go down to bedrock. Nobody
is going to build a nine-story
building if they have that much to
put into ground structure. Hello.
This is a crock.

You are going to see 30-story
buildings because that's the only
thing that would be economically
viable were there housing.

Now, this plan has a budget of
over 16 million dollars. When I last
looked at the budget of Central Park,
which is ten times the size -- more
than ten times the size, it is less
than 30 million dollars. When I looked at the projected budget for the East River Park in Manhattan, somewhere under six million dollars. Why is a space in Brooklyn to cost more than 16. I can do arithmetic, and this arithmetic is not adding up.

There are structures in this park that are way more expensive than they need be. There are structures that are now planned for this park that are totally unnecessary and unwanted like waiver ten raters (phonetic). Have they been taken out? I don't see that. Have the dam boroughs been taken out? A berm is a naturally occurring geologic structure. A rock pile because we've got all those rocks in the Second Avenue Subway. It's unnecessary. You can't climb on rocks. This is not a lawn.

We need a real park starting with a real park plan. There used to
be one. It was kicked out in 2004.

Let's re-address the plan of the real
park that was here, please.

MS. HAYASHI: Thank you. Bob
Stone, and then, Dorothy Siegel.

MR. STONE: All right. I am
Bob Stone. I am the treasurer of the
Brooklyn Bridge Park defense fund.

I want to thank everyone for
being here. However, I see that only
Mr. Nelson and Mr. Raskin are actual
members of the CAH. And I am
wondering why the other members
haven't appeared tonight. And I'm
wondering if they think this is
important enough to be here and hear
this testimony.

My testimony is largely -- has
been covered by previous speakers and
I suspect subsequent speakers. I'd
like to complete the Roy Sloan's
testimony, but he didn't get an
opportunity to say in his time.

With regard to the subject of
housing, you're very own Brooklyn Heights Association's website proudly and somewhat ironically and perhaps hypocritically states, quote, building Brooklyn Bridge Park, the H -- was the driving force behind the magnificent park now being developed on our waterfront.

Without us that unique site might become luxury housing forever closed to the public. By joining the association you'll uphold our vision of the park as a green open space.

Why would you ever expect us to join -- I will never accept that we will haven given up our skyline beauty for preserving, quote, view plan in Brooklyn Heights. It is wrong to ask us to give up our green space to pay for yours. It's inherently unfair and unjust to build a high-rise to pay for maintaining the landscaping in front of Brooklyn Heights. Thank you.
MS. HAYASHI: Dorothy Siegel and Doug Biviano. Is Dorothy in the room? Okay. We can come back to Dorothy. Doug Biviano, and then, Glenn Kelly. Glenn Kelly, and then, Ben Bankson.

MR. KELLY: Hi, my name is Glenn Kelly. I'm a Carroll Garden's resident. And for the last 20 years have been a park volunteer of Carroll Park here in the neighborhood.

During that 20 years I have seen the Parks Department budget cut and cut again. So I understand the need for additional revenue for the park. The park needs more support. Having said that, I object to the plan for putting housing into the park for two reasons.

One, parks already provide a significant portion of their budget through existing concessions and fees. And I maintain that parks more than pay for themselves through
encouraging tourism and getting us out of our houses. We shop and eat on the way to parks, and on our way back.

I also feel that parks are precious. And this City has too few parks, too little park space, too little open space for us to consider carving this new possible park in pieces and selling them off as a funding source.

As Councilman Lander said, I think this is a risky business and a dangerous precedent. I encourage you to put it aside. Thank you.

MS. HAYASHI: Is Dorothy Siegel or Doug Biviano in the room? Okay. Ben Bankson, and then, Chris Havens.

MR. BANKSON: My name is Ben Bankson. I'm the President of Willowtown Association. And I'm reading this statement on behalf of our 12-member board of directors.

The Willowtown neighborhood
borders Piers 5 and 6 in Brooklyn Bridge Park. It is greatly impacted by whatever happens at these Piers and anywhere else along the narrow waterfront park. We will watch with much interest the building of Pier 5 between now and the expected opening in the summer of 2012.

Our focus, too, is on all of the activities that are slighted to take place there, and the park goers that they will attract.

Since last March when Pier 1 was open to the public followed several months later by the upland section of Pier 6, I have walked several times a week in a loop from Willowtown through Pier 6, along the pathway on the East River shoreline around Pier 1, up to the Brooklyn Heights promenade and back home.

My walks provided me with varying perspectives on this unique, beautiful, and as we have already
heard here, very popular park, and gives me a deep appreciation for it.

The Willowtown Association applauds President Regina Myer of the Brooklyn Bridge Park Corporation, and her team and all others involved on their remarkable accomplishments to date, and looks forward to what is yet to come.

We welcome the present openness of the parcels of land that Piers 1 and 6, and along John Street, that have been designated for the development of residential housing and a hotel within the park.

We decry the construction of any buildings on these parcels, and feel that this would be a desecration of our waterfront that is quite finally completely accessible.

Common sense would seem to shout a loud no, again, to filling in these parcels with buildings. We urge instead that they be left as
they now are but landscaped as integral parts of the park and be made into inviting groves.

If housing must be used as the means to raise the needed revenue to maintain the park, we urge that the present watchtower facilities that front, but are not in it, and that are expected soon to be sold become instead the structure as needed to fulfill the maintenance scheme.

The large T-shaped watchtower facility along Furman Street, and extending to Vine Street, already has the very look of a hotel. What a wonderful place it would be, Brooklyn's Plaza perhaps, without taking up an inch of parkland.

We are pleased that the Brooklyn Bridge Park Community Advisory Council is up and running. And that the Willowtown Association is represented among the initial members.
Could not the dozen or so
groups of the Council, all of whom
have a deep interest in the park and
its future, take upon themselves
raising some part of the maintenance
revenue. Or perhaps this could be
part of the mission of the Brooklyn
Bridge Park Conservancy.

The park has quickly
established itself as an urban
treasure that I am sure all of us
would be happy to help support
through voluntary contributions.

On my regular walks through
Brooklyn Bridge Park, I'm much
inspired, but what already is in
being able to now see up close our
amazing waterfront and especially the
tidal flow. I can hardly wait for
the parks full completion.

But, please, no new high-rise
condos in the park. No hotels in the
park. Certainly in our midst are
enough creative mines to come up with
ways to raise the needed revenue.

That are far more sensitive to
what parks are supposed to be without
more buildings in it.

MS. HAYASHI: One minute.

MR. BEN BANKSON: We hope that
this will be the consensus of
tonight's hearing and the one next
week in what the consultant, Bay Area
Economics, will recommend. Thanks.

MS. HAYASHI: Thank you. Doug
Biviano, and then, Chris Haven.
All right. Chris, I'm sorry. Go
ahead. Go ahead.

MR. BIVIANO: Thank you. My
name is Doug Biviano. I'm a PSE
parent of three. And I have a real
stake here in the neighborhood for a
real park. Thank you for the
opportunity to present our case.

I want to, first of all, object
to the constraint that all
alternatives must be other than what
the City is already entitled to.
That's like infinity squared.

It defies -- in fact, it defies hundreds of years of what the public trusts. And, in fact, it de-constructs long-established and codified law if we resort to private funding within the park itself with private ownership.

I would add that if you want a park that is completed sooner than later without runaway costs for earthwork for three-story mounds of running the entire length of Furman Street instead of saying baseball diamonds -- or lower cost baseball diamonds or swimming pools.

And if you want to have the foresight to avoid not-so-public authorities designed to answer to no one, then we need to find alternatives to funding the park.

I believe that allowing the construction of the luxury skyscrapers will move the center of
vertical mass for controlled use and operation of the park squarely with the mayor and the condo owner boards. Not BBP, Brooklyn Bridge Park users, and it'll be void of public process or City park laws, like I alluded to.

Kind of like the MTA, I call it the private corporate board that controls Brooklyn Bridge Park, the MPA, Managed Park Authority as, you know, we understand the political process. Contributions are going to start to flow in from the condo owners who are going to be more outgoing people. It will then become the defacto-stairing committee of all use of the park. So it is essential that we find alternatives.

One other point I'd like to make is that when condos came into the park, all of the year-round recreation came out. Landscaping replaced the two pools. The indoor recreation center, the ice rink that
the community had worked so hard for
decades to get, landscaping sells the
condos while baseball fields do not.
And that is a quote I robbed from Roy
Sloan. Thank you.

And as a parent that in
particular concerns me the most.
That we're going to be robbed that
swimming pool. We saw the barge down
there. That was a huge success. You
know, the swimming pool barge.

Baseball, we don't have
baseball fields. That's a real
concern. I have two boys. We want a
baseball field. You know, there's a
small field that's across Atlantic.
We need more fields. You know, it'd
be great for the adults to go down
and play occasional softball games.
We just don't have that.

And that's what everybody up
here is talking about this long plan
of 26 years of work and commitment
trying to make this happen. And
that's being skulled away with fear that we are not going to find the revenue.

Now, what I am for is alternative funding, and I'll go through a few other things. Senator Squadron's perks plan, you can't dispute it. It works. The numbers work.

The disposition that Mr. Lander talked about of the business building -- others have brought that forward. It's gaining ground. There is two-point-something million square feet of tax base coming on line. That's why I object to that constraint.

Year-round recreational use, again, the pools, the ice skating rinks, the rec center. I'm open to the consultant's ideas.

MS. HAYASHI: One minute.

MR. BIVIANO: I love the idea of cutting costs. Of minimizing
costs, tightening the belt. What comes to mind is when Nancy Webster talked about the capital reserves and the civil engineer. Well, you have to think about the structures you want. If you want perched wetlands, you're having saltwater intrusion attacking the structure of the concrete and the rebar from every direction and it is in a constant state of solution, the most reactive type of solution, the saltwater solution.

So the -- you are creating additional capital costs by the kinds of things that people never wanted anyway -- uses that you are building.

Then I would add revenue. Why not with the concessions look at revenue-sharing type of concessions with all of the -- you know, the point was brought up of all the vendors in the park are not paying any rent. That model seems to be
upside down. It is an economic windfall to have a concession in that park. We ought to get our fair share of it. It's our park.

And then, also, philanthropy, the Prospect Park alliance model, but also for, you know, to set aside maybe to build a trust that, you know, we can over decades build that 300 million through philanthropy that will run the park ultimately.

Thank you for the opportunity. Please, for my family and all the families of Brooklyn, please take this seriously.


MR. HAVENS: I am Chris Havens, of Hoyt Street, a Brooklyn resident and a very diligent voter. I am familiar with the witnesses and their thinking to some extent. But I don't
think anyone knows when they're going
to sell which building that they own.
And anyone who tells you that they do
is blowing smoke. They don't tell
anybody what they're up to.

Part two, the witness building
there is ineligible to fund the park
because once it goes private it will
be a tax-paying entity. So it's
money that would otherwise go to the
City.

So I don't see how that
possibly could be used. If it could
be, that's great. I would like you
to note that my father and sister as
parents lived up the hill from the
park many years ago. I have a long
connection to that area. And, of
course, since 2002, I have worked in
this immediate area of Dunhill and
Court Street.

And I love the park, so far,
very much. I wish I could see a
practical alternative to housing than
a hotel to support the park. I don't really believe there are many. The commercial uses that are proposed are exciting. I like dancing. I go all over Brooklyn for all kinds of dancing. I like bars, and I like restaurants. But I think commercial development to bring in ten million dollars a year would have to be enormous. And it would vastly dwarf the impact of housing in the park. I think if you look carefully at that, you would see that.

The other thing about housing, it creates a strong constituency for the park. And supporters for the Brooklyn Bridge Park Conservancy to help care for it will be a heavily used space requiring funds for programming and future improvements. Much like Prospect Park and Central Park successfully do.

What negative effects on Prospect Park have you noticed due to
the presence of multi-million dollar houses on the next block. I go there frequently. I have never seen any negatives from having all those rich people around there.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: It's not in the park.

MR. HAVENS: But it's about 50 feet away. And I don't see the negative effects of 360 Furman and the people that live there either. Politically so. Politically, I like the housing idea the most because it's a tax on the wealthy. Why not have rich people who buy housing or stay at the hotel help take care of that park? Tax on the wealthy. But I think that's a good thing today. Especially with what's happening in Washington with the tax rates.

Anyone who thinks fancy housing will only cause certain folks to come to the park, too late. This summer,
I saw the big labowski in rear window. Over 25,000 people walked into the park those nights, 25,000 people. I don't think who lives on the edge of the park is going to make any difference to who goes there whatsoever. It certainly doesn't in any other park in New York City. Certainly not Central Park.

Whatever you build will bring more people. But we can't build without income to take care of the 12,000 pilings. When we talk about the budget, the uniqueness of this park is this park -- Prospect Park was on pilings that were continuing to deteriorate. It is a very unusual situation. Without the pilings, no park. Or at least a tiny little park.

Allow the housing to go forward. And now is the time. The real estate markets have all turned in Brooklyn. Developers are now
searching desperately for sites all over Brooklyn. This is a great time for an RFP. Take advantage of the park. Thank you.

MS. HAYASHI: Thank you. Peter Flemming, and then, Norman Cox.

MR. FLEMMING: My name is Peter Flemming. I'm co-chair of the Brooklyn Bridge Park Community Council. I'm also a member of the Brooklyn Heights Association sub-committee on the Brooklyn Bridge Park. But what I say tonight does not represent either organization. I speak for myself.

I address both the subject of additional evaluation parameters and the questions of which existing sites we should prioritize for substitution.

As to additional parameters, I propose two. One, that any alternative development within the park must take up no greater
footprint than the development being replaced. Which is the case of the three residential buildings that are at Pier 6 and John Street is 10,000 square feet each. For all three, 30,000, roughly seven-tenths of one acre.

Second, nothing at the committee's mandate should permit, and no proposal should require, the reduction, much less the elimination, of any configuration, any feature or any activity planned for the park under it's governing documents.

As to my priorities for developing sites to be replaced.
First, would be that 100,000 square feet, 2.3 acres assigned to Pier 1 to hotel and townhouses along Furman Street. I am mindful that this site is not precedent within your mandate. But now, the landscape along Furman has been cleared. It begs to be joined with the green-scape and the
waterscape we already have on Pier 1. It would be a shame to turn it back into another six or seven-story building just where the largest number of park visitors can be making their entrance into this park.

My second would be the John Street building both because it projects to generate the least upfront and ongoing revenues, and because it would take up an unseemly amount of the little park left for the John Street.

So third and last, would be the two buildings at Pier 6 a design would be to recapture these two small plots of the park. They are less than one-half acre total. It is but a small fraction of the eight or nine acres of the park at Pier 6. Further, they take up a far, far less footprint and add far, far less residents than the already existing one Brooklyn Bridge Park with the
360,000 square footprint and 460
residential units.

And the projected 30 to 40
million dollars of upfront payments
and the 64 million dollars of ongoing
revenues from the two residences at
Pier 6 will be very hard to replace.
Thank you very much.

MS. HAYASHI: Thank you.
Norman Cox, and then, Lucy Wilmer.

MR. COX: Hello. My name is
Norman Cox, and I represent the
Columbia Waterfront Neighborhood
Association. Columbia Waterfront is
a small neighborhood immediately to
the south of Atlantic Avenue and
between Brooklyn Queens Expressway
and the waterfront.

Our neighborhood is growing.
We have new apartment buildings and
re-zonings, which will result in more
residential use. There are more
young families every year, and
enormous demands for recreational
spaces from all ages and during all seasons.

We are thrilled that the park is so convenient to our needs, and we look forward to its completion. We appreciate the challenges in getting the park built and providing for maintenance.

However, we fear that fundamental principles are being compromised by the proposals to locate private housing within the park. We believe that housing in the park is not in the public interest, and displaces more appropriate uses.

We feel that the park should contain only such uses as can be utilized by all park visitors. We would rather see uses that provide additional recreational opportunity where there could generate income while serving the public.

Other speakers have listed many good ideas for such uses, and we
agree with a lot of them. We think there is a lot of scope for commercial-type activities, recreational activities, eating, drinking activities, maybe waterfront transportation activities, the water taxis and such that could generate quite a large amount of income from this park.

We also believe that there are other economic models or mechanisms to generate income for the park, such as Senator Squadron's perk plan, or by being more rigorous about getting income from concessions.

We also believe that with creative thinking and genuine commitment the money can be found. The park is sure to become a cherished amenity in our neighborhood. And we're eager to work with the stakeholders to identify other sources of revenue.

Thank you very much.
MS. HAYASHI: Lucy Wilner, and then, Lori Mara.

MS. WILNER: Hi. My name is Lucy Wilner. And I'm a board member of Fulton Ferry Landing Association.

I would like to call on the committee to consider housing on Pier 1 as well as on -- am I not -- as well as on Pier 6 and on John Street.

These are my reasons. The plan for Pier 1 currently includes housing. What we call a hotel is actually a hotel condo, which includes 180 units of residential housing. Thus, it is simply a matter of appearance that it's development and the form of housing can be reduced or eliminated, and should be reduced or eliminated on Pier 1 as well as on Pier 6 and John Street.

Secondly, although I'm not a financial planner it seems to me that it would only make sense to consider a comprehensive plan that includes
the entire park when we are talking about finances.

This is especially the case because -- and this is my first one -- the circumstance of the witness properties coming on the market at this time has created a unique possible opportunity to fund the park without encroaching on the narrow strips that border the waterfront.

I would point out that the witness buildings, the structures themselves are ideally suited to many of the uses that have been suggested for funding the park including conversions through residential units for use as a hotel. Already has a driveway coming in off of Furman Street. And even possibly something that the neighborhood has been wanting very much, a school.

Finally, as a motivator, I would like to hold out the vision of
an uninterrupted swath of green along the entire waterfront. This is the dreams that motivated 26 years of work on the part of community members. And I take issue with those who believe that the development of the -- the currently planned development does not interrupt or would be only a minor inconvenience in terms of use of the park.

I wonder if those people have actually looked at the plan and footprints for the hotel which is planned for Pier 1. That hotel is a damaging humongous intrusion onto Pier 1. It will block views from both the pier, to some extent from the Brooklyn Bridge, itself, and create a privatized area with very little feeling of public access.

Furthermore, Pier 1 is the primary gateway to the park and the center, and having an open area at Pier 1 would create the kind of entry
that we envision when we think about, quote, unquote, world class park.

So therefore, I call upon the BEA [sic] and the CEH -- CAH to work impetuously to remove housing from the park to reduce development or eliminate it, and to make this vision a reality. Thank you.

MS. HAYASHI: Lori Maurer, and then, Elizabeth Ernish.

MS. MAURER: My name is Lori Maurer. I'm a long-time resident of Cobble Hill and a practicing architect in the area. And I am fascinated by this process of evolution from a world class park into a private enclave.

It is not our responsibility as citizens to see the creation of a new important luxury development on this very special part of land. One Brooklyn Bridge Park stands alone, and it should remain standing alone.

We should not be building a
community to support that development
to a community which could be built
in many other parts of Brooklyn.

What we have the responsibility
as citizens is to preserve every
single inch of that world class park.
For a total accessible year-round
public recreation. That's what we
started to do and that's what we
should have.

If we have the concept that
we're going to fund this park with
housing, it's very easy. You just
figure out how big you're going to
go, how much you are going to charge,
finished. You have the part of the
park established.

But if you throw out the
concept of housing, you are forced to
look into alternate funding sources
such as a facility you all described;
a year-round drinking facility,
dancing facility, skating facility,
public facility.
I remember the first time that I walked around Battery Park City along the promenade along the Hudson. We weren't sure we were allowed to go there. We thought it belonged to the housing in Battery Park City. We found out that it was a public walkway that went all the way up to the who knows where.

We would have exactly that at Brooklyn Bridge Park if we allowed the private housing to be built there. I really urge this community to seriously look at public access funding sources and get rid of the housing in the park. Thank you.

MS. HAYASHI: Elizabeth Ernish and then Ken Lowey.

MS. ERNISH: Good evening, I am Elizabeth Ernish, and I am here representing Brooklyn Borough President, Marty Markowitz. He could not attend. But if he were here I know he would wish you a belated
Thanksgiving, a Happy Hanukkah, a Happy St. Nicholas day, a happy national park, as well. But seriously.

And also, I'd like to say that it is so delightful to see so many of you here this evening. I started -- my very first day with the Borough President was December of 2004, a day after the housing plan with -- the Brooklyn Bridge Park Development Plan was announced. And I've seen so many of you at the old citizens advisory committee meetings, at Metrotech and down at the park and so it's really delightful to see so many of you.

And I want to talk to Roy about the red bees, the story that was in the Times today about the red honey bees, I know your quite a honey bee affectionato. In the ideal world -- and this is the Borough President -- this has always been his
prospective on this matter -- in the ideal world, we would find a park at the same level that we find military contractors and reality stars. It would be that simple.

We would have beautiful cathedral lights, magnificent public spaces. But one needs to not travel that far in Brooklyn to see, it is simply -- os not the case. Go out to the Floyd Bennett Field, go out to the Coney Island Boardwalk.

Travel to the end of Eastern Parkway of Lincoln Park and you will see we have acres and acres of parks that are not properly maintained and are failing our communities.

In the case of Brooklyn Bridge Park, which I believe is the largest addition to open space in Brooklyn history since Marine Park, right? 85 acres isn't a big -- a huge -- I mean, this is a windfall, I can't -- Marine Park, it's up there,
it's huge.

And for a place like Brooklyn, where we have the least amount of open space dedicated to parkland among the five Boroughs, we have to grab every square inch that we can. We cannot let this opportunity go by us. And I know, again, because of so many people that came up with the idea that fought with the plans for development -- for the housing development in the 1970s and I totally appreciate that. And as a parent of two small children, I cannot tell you the pride in which I take my children to Pier 6 and say, this was the community's idea. To revisit -- to revisit the idea of self-sustaining, which was always the chief principal of Brooklyn Bridge Park. Self-sustaining parks are beautifully maintained parks. And I will get out my minivan
and I will take you to any park in Brooklyn, out in -- any park, I will take you to Owl's Head Park, I will take you to many, many parks that just aren't maintained at that level. We are very lucky in Downtown Brooklyn that our parks where, you know, we are a little better, but let's put it out there. Coney Island Boardwalk is falling apart, it's not maintained.

The City is considering -- The City is considering replacing the wooden boardwalk with concrete, that's how dire it is. I want to go back to the issue of that first day on the job when I was presented with the task of analyzing this proposal to put housing in Brooklyn Bridge Park.

And the guiding principle for the Borough President has always been what is the footprint, how much of this revenue generated site will take
away from parkland? What will the size and the bulk what kind of traffic impact will it have on the community? And we did a little exercise and we looked -- we transposed other developments, such as a big box store, such as a Marine Transfer station.

If you were to look at the size of a big box store, including parking, so much of the parkland would have been wiped away. But again, I'm really very pleased that this -- it's always very helpful to reconvene and reanalyze a situation and this subcommittee is very important.

And I would ask that both the public here and the members of the committee, there are three sites that I'm going to ask you to visit during your investigation. One is Aviator's Sports out in Floyd Bennett Field. It is a beautiful facility. It is
gorgeous. Two ice skating rinks, would love to see it in downtown Brooklyn, but it is not generating enough revenue to maintain that park, not by a long-shot.

The other park is Erie Basin Park, which is -- anyone know Erie Basin Park? It's Ikea Park. It's Ikea Park. And I want to ask -- you know, I would ask you to go look at that park and ask you; is it alive and active? It's beautiful, it's a museum. The furniture and fixtures are divine. But is it a place where thousands and thousands of people are going? No, because when you look at that park, you're surrounded by a big box store.

And finally, I'll ask you to look at Fairway and the esplanade. There was a lot of intrepidation when that -- the Fairway proposal was put forth. People were concerned about having housing adjacent to public
open space. And I can tell you as a resident of Red Hook, that is without a doubt one of the most important and utilized public spaces in all of Red Hook.

So thank you very much for your time and, again, Happy Hanukkah, Merry early Christmas and a belated Thanksgiving.

MS. HAYASHI. Thank you. Ken Lowey and then Andrew Buschenel.

MR. LOWEY: Thank you. I'm Ken Lowey and I'm here on behalf of Chris Owens. Chris is the District Leader in the 52nd Assembly District. Let me start by giving you a simple premise. Let's suppose that they proposed a -- we'll pick a marvelous building, you're proposing a 15-story building at Grand Army Plaza.

I'm just going to pause for a few seconds, because that's pretty much the amount of time it would take before that proposal was shot down,
it would never been acceptable.

And yet we're talking about housing in Brooklyn Bridge Park.

Housing in a park isn't compatible.

If you look at urban parks in this state, you'll find that they are exactly no apartment buildings, there's no housing, at all, and it's for a very good reason. But what we're here to talk about is alternatives, so let's talk about alternatives.

I'm a member of Chelsea Piers, which I know some people or one gentleman came up here and said it's hideous, but actually I'm an athlete, it looks really good to me. Looks really good because it's a destination. It's a place where people go to workout. Chelsea Piers makes money. Chelsea Piers makes money for the park.

Now, the actual health facility, the actual athletic
facility is very small, it's only one of the pier, it's Pier 60. And it would fit very nicely onto, well, let's see, where that 15-story building would go, maybe even a 31-story building would go.

Again, it would bring in money, it would be a destination. We also talked about -- actually Roy mentioned that a huge amount of people that belong to Chelsea Piers, actually like me live in Brooklyn, partially because there's nothing in Brooklyn like that. Let's talk about the swimming pool for a second.

For years a lot of us advocated for a swimming pool, we wanted a pool. I'm former president of the Chelsea Piers swim team, so I have a slightly biased opinion. So everyone said, no, we really don't think the pool would work or the people in the development corporation and then we had a floating pool.
Again, I'm a swimmer. I have never in my life seen people wait on line for hours to get into a pool. This is testament of how much a pool is actually needed. And by the way, Chelsea Piers, it makes money. There is a pool at Asphalt Green it makes money. One of the things that the pool at Asphalt Green does is they open it up for a small fee to the local schools, so the local swim teams can workout there.

We have a lot of schools in the area that don't have swim teams. They have swimmers, but there's no place for them to swim. Again, money coming in, a destination. Now, it was mentioned a few seconds ago that the parks are really not well kept up, unless it's self-sustaining.

That actually says a lot about our government, it doesn't say a lot about what self-sustaining parks do. It just says that our government is
not spending the money that's required, and it's their responsibility to do that.

Let me talk also very quickly while I still have time about the 31-story tower, the 15-story tower and the 16-story tower, which only pick up 10 percent of the park.

Well, that's technically true, but if you actually weigh each floor out, it would cover not only the entire park, but you would no longer need a ferry to Governor's Island, you'd be able to walk there.

So we need to take these things into consideration. A 31-story tower, as someone mentioned earlier, wouldn't really be a big deal because nobody's view would be obscured. And that's true, unless of course you're anywhere near the 31-story tower, in which case is a different story.

Housing is not a way to
sustain a park. One Brooklyn Bridge
Park is mostly empty. Housing has
downturns. We still have the 70s, we
still have the 80s. We see it now.
How many buildings have started
construction and have stopped dead in
their tracks? Just in this area
alone I can count a half a dozen.
That's not a way to keep a park
self-sustaining and it's not
something that belongs in a park at
all. Thank you.

MS. HAYASHI: Andrew Buschenal.

MR. BUSCHENAL: Hi, my name is
Andrew Buschenal, I'm a resident in
the neighborhood. I don't represent
any organization, I'm just here to
voice my opinion and let you know how
I feel. I've lived here for about 10
years and all that time I've been
involved in -- very interested in
development of this park, what we
have hoped would be a park. A lot of
points that I wanted to cover have
already been covered today, so I'll 
make it short. I just wanted to 
still speak and just say that it's 
very important to everybody in the 
community, you people seriously, 
seriously consider other options 
other than housing, for a variety of 
reasons that people have already 
spoken about.

There were two things that I 
wanted to bring up that I think have 
not been touched on. There's been a 
lot talk about the privatization of 
the park and whether that will happen 
or not. It's already happened. Some 
of you may have seen a video that was 
shot nine months or so back where 
park officials including Ms. Myer 
tried to remove an artist from the 
park. This artist was -- as she had 
the right to do in the City New York, 
the artists have gone to court to 
reserve their right, their first 
amendment right, to display their
work. The park officials, when told that, said, well, you know what, the city's rules don't apply here. The city's rules don't apply here. It's our park, our rules.

Now eventually, someone, and one of them, I think it was their lawyers, that the city's laws do apply there and those artists were allowed to stay. But I think that gives you a little bit of a mindset of where the city is headed. So, you know, let's not say there may be privatization, it's already happened.

The other thing is the Brooklyn Bridge Park currently is just over 50 percent occupied. That's after being on the market for over three years, dropping their prices 20 to 30 percent.

There's buildings all over this area of town that have been built, unoccupied or have moved from -- have been forced to turn into
rental buildings because they can't sell their units.

This idea of housing supporting the park came about in the height of the boom -- at the bubble. There is no guarantee that these buildings are going to be able to do this.

And imagine what happens if we build a 31-story building, two other buildings and they're not occupied and they still don't support the park? Then what's going to happen? Another building? More development? I mean, we need to consider other options.

The community has come out today, as we have at all of these meetings -- we have spoken. I appreciate the public officials and board members that have showed up, and I think it says something about the ones that haven't -- of the ones that have sent their representatives.
I think it says where their real concern lies. So, I was just -- once again, there's been some great ideas here, the Watchtower properties, revenue from the park, a recreational complex. And let's look at the budget. I mean, it's absurd, the size of the budget, for a park this size. I hope you consider all this. There's other options. I'm going to be sending e-mails, a little bit more detail, but I just -- I felt really strongly and I just wanted to stand up and, you know, say something today. So, thank you.

MR. ADAMS: Hello, I'm Murray Adams, I've lived here on Amity Street for the last 30 something years and I've been active in this park project for quite a long time. The problem -- and several have said it -- if you build these three really huge apartment houses at both ends of the park, you essentially privatize
this park, you block the entrances. The hotel, the Pier 1, the John Street from the north end, and the two buildings on Pier 6 essentially block access from the south bend and you'll have a privatized park. But we all know about the most privatized -- best example of a privatized park is Gramercy Park.

The houses around Gramercy Park support that park. You have to own one of those houses or be a tenant, and have a key; otherwise, you can't get in. That's what's going to happen when the board members of these condos and the city agency on the Parks Department, which runs it, will run this park. And before you know it, not just I won't be allowed in there, but people won't be allowed in there with their kids after five, and won't be allowed to play soccer after six and they won't
be able to listen to music at all. It's not a public park anymore. And that is the key point here.

Now, unfortunately, I frankly think these hearings are exercising futility, because Mayor Bloomberg has made up his mind, he wants to riddle the city with multiple condos for the wealthy. I mean, he won't change that, he's a stubborn man, we saw that with Ms. Black that we just went through.

I don't think that with the constraints that have been put on it, I don't think Houdini can figure out a way to finance this park, other than with the residential things, which you plan, because of the constraints that have been put on it. In fact, as I remember the original memorandum, it was simply said that revenues derived from the park will be used to support it, not that those revenues had to supply all of the
support.

And Tony Manheim over here will correct me if I'm wrong. But, I do think we have to have a change in attitude in the city to really get serious about looking at alternatives. I don't see any change up to now that would indicate any real intention of doing anymore than a little window dressings, so the public doesn't feel so bad about these huge apartment houses going up and blocking us from access to a world class public park instead of a private residential development.

Thank you.

MS. HAYASHI: Anthony Manheim then Sandy Balboza.

MR. MANHEIM: Hi, everybody. I, as most of you know, I'm Tony Manheim. I was the founding president of the Brooklyn Bridge Park Coalition and before that, President a quarter of a century ago, slightly
more, of the Brooklyn Heights Association when the Port Authority came to discuss with us and others how the -- we felt -- the respective abandonment of Pier 1 through 6 should be handled. We actually told them. That led to a lawsuit.

The lawsuit led to our controlling building into which the Brooklyn Bridge Park Corporation is about to move or already has moved its executive headquarters. A little bit of history. History is important here. History is really important, because parks aren't something that -- a chance to build a 50 plus acres, not 85, but I include the Atlantic Ocean in our limit -- boundaries of parkland.

But it is a major, major park, that is not to be found the opportunity to create a new major public park in Central New York City and I would remind you that
coincidentally, the Brooklyn Manhattan Boundary goes right through the park, the boundary, Kings County, a New York county line is at the bulkhead of Brooklyn Bridge Park. It straddles two of the most important of the five Boroughs, it's only symbolic.

But how did we get into this -- well, to finish the last point I was making. An opportunity like this doesn't come once in a lifetime or once every 100 years, it comes once in forever. This is it. So make the most of it, this is why this is so important. What's the matter with housing in a park? It's an inherent conflict with private -- especially market rate luxury housing and public park use. You don't believe it, you can talk to the people at Battery Park City.

But how did we get to this conflict. Where did this come from?
25 years ago we began this process that was universal acceptance that there should not be housing or major office towers, you know, in the park. That was part of the original 16 principles which became the 13 guiding principles that every elected official, including the then borough president, the then state legislators and the city council members were all signed on and then the community signed off on it.

Frankly, personally, it was my signature on behalf of the community, so I really know what I am -- what I'm speaking. There was a model for a Riverside Park, it's called Riverside Park. There's another model for a development, a project of the words of the current entities or at least the statement that the attorney -- a project, and that's Battery Park City.

How did we get Riverside Park
and Battery Park cities; very simple.

We authored in the Brooklyn Bridge Coalition rather we sponsored a quarter of a million dollars State-funded study of the economic viability of Brooklyn Bridge Park, copies of which have been made available to the consultants, which studied Piers one to six area, dominant then, even more dominant that today, area of the park, which showed that you could -- with a limited amount of relevant to a waterfront park you could pay for the operating and maintenance cost of a park, of park use, on site, the factor of one and a half to four and a half million dollars or a little more to amount to roughly three million dollars in a fully built out year. That would translate to be just about five million dollars, which is the proposed budget for the expense budget cost of operating and
maintaining a proposed new park just across the river, one of the earlier speakers mentioned it.

The difference is, we were not -- the park was supposed to pay for park use on the site, it was not supposed to maintain the site. That's the responsibility of the City and State. It is terribly important the fact this thing should be made because -- but if you were going to change the rules -- which is exactly what has been done -- and 16 or 15 million dollars is needed, Jehova Witnesses property does provide a very interesting opportunity to do that.

And contrary to what an earlier speaker said, there really can be a very successful negotiation with that. If you don't think so, you should know, you know, what eminent domain is, it's very much easier to negotiate with somebody
when you have a major persuader in
the closet. If you don't think so,
just ask the people in Atlantic
Yards.

I think it's terribly
important that we look at other ways
to fund this. If it's a commitment
to build a 15 million dollar, 16
million dollar annual budget to pay
for housing, why not build the
housing across the street from the
park? What's the matter with the
Plaza Hotel model? Why do you take
-- why should the City sell off
parkland or potential parkland to pay
for something that can be created and
the city can own it directly across
the street or overlooking the park or
elsewhere nearby? Thank you.

MS. HAYASHI: Thank you. Sandy
Balboza.

MS. BALBOZA: Good evening.
I'm Sandy Balboza, President of the
Atlantic Avenue Betterment
Association. A few weeks ago, the newly formed community advisory counsel made a motion to include a longstanding membership organization, two seats were available. It seemed like a simple request. That motion was never brought to the corporation board for a vote. Am I speaking into this thing right? Okay.

That leaves many of us here tonight to wonder about the CAH process and how that will turn out. Because, again, many of us know now that a study can come out the way the -- study, that would be a Sarah Palin word. But the entity that pays for this study wants it to come out. And it's involved in some studies with the city, so I know that. So we are not interested in a study that tells us why there has to be housing in the park.

A study to find alternatives to housing, should do just that, find
alternatives to housing. It's unfortunate that your only involvement from the community is five minutes to testify. It would have been better if we could have had some workshops and some like views that have been discussed could have been, you know, discussed in a different way, that the community would feel a part of the process.

It's outrageous that existing parkland run by the City and the State Parks Department has been turned over to the Corporation, first when it was the Brooklyn Bridge Park Development Corporation, now it's the Corporation, Brooklyn Bridge Park Corporation. And I'm referring to Empire State Park, the Main Street Park and the Tobacco Warehouse, which -- I don't know if it was in Empire State Park.

The RNP before this process started, and that shouldn't have
happened, because that -- although there's an agreement that it should remain in an urban -- it still could generate some income towards maintenance to the park. So, there's an opportunity, Tony mentioned it, a few people mentioned the Jehovah's Witnesses have announced plans to vacate their properties in Brooklyn.

Their buildings adjacent to the park in DUMBO and Brooklyn Heights could serve as housing to pay for the park, not just with market rate luxury condos, but it could include some affordable housing, if housing indeed has to pay for the park, that's the housing that should pay for it.

The existing buildings outside the park could be converted into luxury condos like the former Witnesses printing plant, known as One Brooklyn Bridge Park. And as far as conflicts, there's already a
conflict between park users and residents. The streets built in the park to service the housing have brought traffic, including tour buses into the park at Pier 6. The only sign I see that says, Park, there is a sign that says Park, P-A-R-K, it tells you to go to the parking lot, which is in One Brooklyn Bridge Park. It's a very strange place, it's not welcoming. Of course, the chain link fencing is up for the towers. And I think people talking about the footprint of the Towers, it's misleading because we're talking about high risers, not one story buildings. So, there's always been conflict between park users, which are the people I've mentioned, and the residents of the housing. Okay. And one more thing, I guess. I'm out of time, right?

MS. HAYASHI: You have 30 seconds.
MS. BALBOZA: I just want you to submit something -- I don't have written testimony to submit, but I do have part of the plan -- the only community plan process for Pier 6. We didn't have figures, it's just a plan with what the community wanted. It's the only community plan for Pier 6, so I'm going to submit that? Thank you.

MS. HAYASHI: Thank you.

DOROTHY SIEGEL: Hi, my name was called earlier, and I would like to speak now. My name is Dorothy Siegel.

MS. HAYASHI: I just want to say, we're going to try and get through all the cards, but if you do have to leave, there's another hearing a week from this coming Thursday at St. Francis College. Thank you.

MS. SIEGEL: My name is Dorothy Siegel, I've lived here for about
35 years, plus a few more years elsewhere in Brooklyn. And I've been, I guess, an activist for the entire time. At present, I'm also a female district leader of the 52nd Assembly District, which maybe doesn't sound like such a big deal, but we get twice as many votes as Republicans.

We get more votes than every party combined except for the Democrats. We're always the number two party in the 52nd Assembly District. And we accomplished something in this area. The people in this neighborhood are so disgusted with the arrogance of the people on this board and of this mayor, this autocratic, anti-democratic, imperiast (sic) mayor who does not like to be crossed.

That -- who decides that we would have two housing units in our neighborhood, that they decided to
unseat one of the elected officials who was a turncoat and turned this park into a development project.

Margie Connor is not sitting there tonight, but we would never asked for a seat with a veto power on it. Yeah, you're nodding your head, Regina, this must be very painful for you, because someone is actually criticizing you instead of lapping up the praise.

Now, this mayor has decided, not just here, but throughout New York, one of the things he wants to leave, this mayor wants to be president. He wants to leave to the country, to bequeath, is the concept of a public private partnership.

He is screwing up the schools right now with his contempt for the art and science of education and he's contempt to educators by appointing someone just like him, another rich person, who needs to keep herself
busy because she got demoted at her current job.

This is outrageous and you're doing the same thing and you should know it. We know what we're doing and the people in this community have voted before and we will vote again. We are against housing in the park, period. We should have to explain it to you, any idiot would know that. The only reason why this is even in the plan is because this petulant mayor -- I was going to say something else, but I didn't.

This petulant mayor decided he wants it, and nobody crosses him. So that is the reason why there is a Brooklyn Bridge Park Corporation, it used to be Development Corporation. That is why we're creating a park that is good for rich people who will live in the houses that will be part of the public private partnership that this mayor is bequeathing to
this city.

He is the most anti-democratic foolish man that was ever mayor of this city. The only thing he hears from his lackies, including everybody on this board, is how wonderful he is. He is saving New York for the rich people. Excuse me, but some of us aren't rich and some of us do not seek to sit on the board with you, Regina, so that they could suck up to the people who are rich, which is not a bad idea to serve on board.

Personally, I've served on enough boards, I don't need to serve on anymore. But a lot of people feel that that's a stepping stone because they can get in good with the rich crowd. Excuse me, those people who feel that there should be housing in the park or either aware of what they're doing, and they're bad people for doing that, or just stupid.

So I hold all of you
accountable. There are only two people sitting on this committee who have any kind of independence and they were put there by the people of this community. The people of this community have spoken again and again, and Regina sits there and smirks -- because you know your job is secure, until -- unless Mayor Bloomberg starts to run for president, which maybe -- in which case he won't be able to take care of you.

This park is being built with public dollars. The people are paying for this park. How outrageous that the representative of the Borough President says, well, if it was just a public park, you know, ha ha, in poor neighborhoods, wink wink. Wait, they don't get their parks taken care of, so aren't we lucky that we have these rich people to pay for a park for us? No, we are not,
dammit.

This is about a public park. And you people are ashamed of yourselves, every single person on that board with the exception of the two people who will vote the right way to make sure that true alternatives to housing are considered. This is a silly game that you're playing, it is cynical, it is nasty and it is incompetent and that is what all of you are.

So, I trust that our elected officials will do as the people want, and that the rest of you will have the courage to behave yourselves and act in a democratic matter, and not suck up to this incompetent mayor.

Thank you.

MS. HAYASHI: Joseph Whitaker.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: He left.

MS. HAYASHI: We will keep the cards for the next meeting. Mark Baker and then Meg Reed.
MR. BAKER: Thank you. I'm Mark Baker. I'm a resident of State Street, living just a few blocks from the Pier 6 site. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to the committee today in support of the park's plan for maintenance through residential development. I've been involved in this park for over 25 years as the Director of the Brooklyn Bridge Park Coalition and of the Conservancy and as a Director and Officer of the Brooklyn Bridge Park Local Development Corporation. So I feel like I'm a part of the history of this park.

I've supported the proposed plan for residential development to support the maintenance of this park from the first day I heard it. And why? Because it satisfies one the key principals that Tony Manheim and Ike and others had for this park, which is that we should enliven it.
with the smallest amount of
commercial development that would
support its maintenance.

And this residential plans
does that in spades. The footprint
that will be used to support the
park, we can see the footprint today
as we walk onto that beautiful park
on Pier 6, it's a small footprint, a
small price to pay for proper
maintenance of this park. And it's
separated from the park by streets.

And if there's anything I've
learned in park development, that's
the way to keep a park from becoming
a backyard. Put at street between
the park and the development and the
park designers, I think, have done an
admiral job of that. The residents
of these buildings will be the people
that keep the parks safe and keep the
park beloved. And they will become
as much a part of our community as
others who live in the community
today.

I know there were concerns when the proposal was first made about the quality of the developments. And legitimate concerns about whether they would be respectful to the communities, and I also share those concerns. But I feel that the corporation led by Regina has demonstrated how they can develop this park in a beautiful and extraordinary way. And I for one would feel great comfort in giving them the ability to make these buildings -- provide the support and maintenance of our park needs and deserves. Thank you very much.

MS. HAYASHI: Maggie Meg Reed, is she in the room?

MS. REED: Yes, I'm right here.

MS. HAYASHI: Okay, great. And then Carolyn Konheim.

MS. REED: Good evening and thank you for letting me speak. My
name is Maggie Meg Reed, I own a residence of Sydney Place, just around the corner here in Brooklyn Heights. When the earlier portion of the new Brooklyn Bridge Park was created some years back, my then toddler sons and I used to love visiting what we referred to as the tire chips down in the park, a magical playground in every season.

And that place and the grasslands around it became the focus of numerous gatherings of family and friends and drew us out of our neighborhood here, into the shops at the cafes of DUMBO and the vicinity. This summer, my now several years older son and my young daughter have delighted in exploring the nooks and crannies of the newest park space and playground here at the end of Atlantic Avenue and Pier 6.

My husband, and my dog, and I now regularly enjoy running along the
waterfront through the park, and we have enjoyed frequenting the new cafes and shops that we've been discovering along the way. We were thrilled a couple of years back by the floating pool in the summertime, and thought that we could have a neighborhood pool in place permanently, and an ice-rink, and sports fields available to our children and our family groups.

Right here is a neighborhood building and community cementing elements of Brooklyn Bridge Park that is to be sought and nurtured in every way possible. It cannot be achieved by filling those spaces instead with luxury condos, which block the vistas and block the park accesses and render the public spaces into useless if stylishly landscaped backyards of those residences only.

The best example of this detriment to the park caused by
concentrated luxury housing is evident right now in the current state of the property surrounding One Brooklyn Bride Park. The apartments may be great, although many are not occupied. But the land around the building is a barren wasteland of parking lot accesses, service areas and delivery route roadways, which repel neighborhood use and activity.

I strongly support protecting the status of Brooklyn Bridge Park as a public park and a public recreation waterfront site. I vehemently oppose the establishment of further residential development within the park, and particularly reject anything resembling a concentrated high-rise residence along the waterfront, which would be out of character with the remainder of our Brooklyn Heights neighborhood. Thank you.

MS. HAYASHI: Carolyn Konheim
and then Barbara.

MS. KONHEIM: Hi, I'm Carolyn Konheim, I live on Pacific Street and I've been involved with the plans here. First of all, I'd like to tell you that everybody in this room is operating on a false premise. The monies that the Mayor has said have to be raised, they're not -- those revenues are not dedicated to the park, they're not dedicated to this park or to any park. They go into the general fund. Just as examination of water rates.

The water rate, it gets better interest on water bonds, because the buyers think they are guaranteed by the rate payers and -- it goes to the revenue. But, in fact, all of those water bonds that are supposedly dedicated to water treatment and water supply go into the general fund. Then the mayor decides how to divi it up.
So, this extra cost for this facility is never going to -- there's no guarantee it's going to be dedicated or applied to this project at all. Another thing is that -- is the most important thing you have, is a diversity of sources, as Judy was pointing out, Judy Francis, you need diversity and flexibility is something wouldn't work, we didn't replace it with something else. And those are not there.

And then the major obstacle that boosts this park so high, is that this part alone has been required to do something no other public works do, which is that in their expense budget, they have to reflect the rebuilding cost of this particular park. The rebuilding costs and the operating costs are over -- are overpriced. But, regardless, it is a burden that no other public works projects have to
bare and that's not fair.

The other thing is that reducing the cost of operations. Just looking at the landscaping shows that there's no thought to high maintenance costs. The plans that are planned are poorly -- they're poorly planned. They are not going to survive this harsh environment. They've been -- I had a Thanksgiving guest who went down and looked at the park and he is a landscaper, and he said, well, it's okay, it looks like the developer's model home where they just stuffed everything in there to create a splash for opening day.

It seemed like they weren't going to be around five years from now, because there's no room for plants. Besides being fragile in this environment, they are totally crazy. Who in their right mind plants bamboo in this park? This park is stuffed with bamboo. There
Norfolk Pines and Southern Magnolias. It just shows that -- it just -- they are going to have to recoop so many investments in the design. So, this is a high cost, impractical group, the result of people who are not planners or -- who are just here to show how beautiful -- it has been operating for five years.

So, I just want to say that I agree with all of the things that you've heard about not having housing in the park. But it would not be needed if the cost were realistic. But don't think you're going to get any dedicated funding with this Mayor by jacking up the operating cost to an unrealistic and unnecessary level.

The mayor is getting more funds for all the parks -- not even for all the projects in the city, and he will designate what is the capital projects that go forward, not your
plan.

MS. HAYASHI: Danny Fuchs and Ken Baer.

UNKNOWN SPEAKER: Good evening. Before I say anything else, I would just like to salute the heros in this room, the people of the community who have put so much effort and love for the last 25 to 26 years into creating a park for the people and not for the developers and the wealthy. I just want to mention a few, Tony Manheim, Judy Francis, Roy Sloane, Sandy Balboza, Murray Adams, Dorothy Siegel, Carolyn Konheim, Bob Stone, and I'm sure there's many others who I don't know; those are just the few that I know.

And I really want to salute their efforts and I hope that this panel will have the wisdom to listen to the people who have dedicated a large part of their lives for no other benefit than to improve their
neighborhood and surrounding community. They are not the handmaidens of the Imperial Mayor, they are the people of the community. Just wanted to salute them, because they know they don't get the credit they deserve.

And so I -- and I ask why is it that the community efforts of the last 25 years are just maybe negated by this committee in this regard of the recreational facilities that the community had designed. You had artificially jacked up the costs of maintaining the park so that you can justify creating the unneeded and unwanted luxury high-rises. You created circular argument that is deeply flawed when you do this.

What you are proposing is not the park that the community designed as you've heard over and over again, but luxury housing with a spectacular backyard that will be
uninviting to the public at large, as was referred to before. Right now, Brooklyn -- in Brooklyn we are a wash with luxury housing that sits empty, abandoned and foreclosed. I see many of these, they're just sitting there foreclosed.

Now, in addition to what is already built, there are 20 high-rises in the downtown plan alone and just on Dussell (phonetic) Street, three new hotels are being built. What is the justification for all these additional luxury units? Do you have a study that shows a need for all these luxury units in the next few years?

And if so, then have you or why haven't you showed it to the community? I don't know the answer, I'm just asking the question, because you must have a study. When we see what's going on, when we see these high-rises along Flatbush and
throughout even in the parks that are half full, half empty, we don't know what percentage is full, what is empty. But, they're certainly not full and I see all over the area buildings that have the sign on them, luxury high-rise, but I know they're foreclosures. So, what are you doing here? It doesn't make any sense. And this has already been mentioned, of course.

So, further, there are always subsidies that go along with these buildings. And if there are any subsidies to be had, then they should go to create and sustain a real park, not the playground of the rich.

And last, we have not heard one advocacy group demand more luxury high-rises, yet again and again, the Bloomberg administration promotes these luxury buildings when everyone knows that we need subsidies for
affordable housing not luxury high-rises. And I am not suggesting that we put affordable housing in the park either.

But that's -- if there's money to be had for high-rises then truly there's money to be had for affordable housing. You mock us with your cynical proposals that only consider the needs of the developers and the rich. No mandate has been stated for berms and wetlands to be built in this park as well. And those are all the things that are escalating these absurd costs to this park.

The community had a vision 25 years ago, it was the correct vision. That vision is still the right one and if there's any possibility at all that this group could do the right thing, I hope you will go back and reflect on the communities vision that was laid out
25 years ago. It's still right, it hasn't changed. High-rises are just totally wrong and inappropriate for a park. Thank you.

MR. FUCHS: Thank you. Good evening. My name is Danny Fuchs, I work with HR&A Advisors. HR&A has served as an advisor to community groups, not for profit and public agencies seeking to build, manage and maintain public parks responsibly across the country and internationally for more than three decades.

HR&A also performed the analysis that was altered in the adoption of the original plan for financing the maintenance and operations of Brooklyn Bridge Park by directive leveraging of the real estate value created by the park. Although HR&A's work for Brooklyn Bridge Park preceded my employment at the firm, I've worked on several
parks with comparable challenges related to management and funding, including Pier 40 and the Hudson River Park, the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park in London and the 3,000 acre Great River Park in St. Paul, Minnesota.

The financial challenge we're discussing tonight is not new, nor is it unique to Brooklyn Bridge Park. Governments -- not only governments in New York, but also governments around the country and across the world simply no longer have the financial capacity to provide the level of resources that Brooklyn Bridge Park or any signature public park requires and deserves.

Many have turned to capturing the real estate value that the parks generate as a solution. In Toronto, new real estate development along the waterfront, development of a scale that far surpasses was proposed to
Brooklyn Bridge Park is funding the stewardship of the new waterfront park system.  
In Austin, Texas, the city council is seeking ways to support that city's park system through new real estate development. In Boston, the situation along Kennedy Greenway is much the same. In Manhattan, the Hudson River Park Trump is structured to support that waterfront park's operation and maintenance through onsite real estate development and major challenges that Trump has faced are primarily due to the lack of flexibility in what kind of real estate products can be developed.  
There are, of course, other means of supplementing and supplanting general fund revenues to fund public parks. Improvement districts have been developed that levy additional assessments on surrounding properties, taxing and
financing has become popular where adjacent parks scale neighborhood redevelopment is contemplated. Well endowed conservancies take charge where voluntary donations are sufficient. No one mechanism is empirically better than another. Government's decisions must be driven by local contexts. Contexts physical, economic, environmental and social. Based on the surrounding context for Brooklyn Bridge Park, HR&A continues to believe the current proposal for financing stewardship through park development at the park's edge is the most responsible now and for the life of the park.

Thank you.

MS. HAYASHI: Ken Baer.

MR. BAER: Good evening. My name is Ken Baer. I reside at 6th Avenue in Brooklyn. Currently I serve as Chair of the New York City Group at the Sierra Club. The Sierra
Club thanks Brooklyn Bridge Park operating and giving us the opportunity to come in for alternatives to housing in the park.

The Sierra Club opposed any plan for the Brooklyn Bridge Park that would include construction of additional residential buildings. We acknowledge that 360 Furman Street is not a residential building, but believe that this use is incompatible with public park. Public access to the Brooklyn Bridge Park is of paramount importance.

The Sierra Club feels that high-rise residential buildings that have been considered for the south and north sides of the park would certainly discourage residents from using the park. We're of the opinion 8 that large out of scale buildings would especially have this effect on people from lower income neighborhoods.
As far as finances are concerned, I hope that the purchase of the Jehovah's Witnesses properties and Senator Daniel Squadron's plan will be given serious consideration as revenue generators. And under no circumstances should the operating budget be loaded with expense -- expenditures related to capital facilities. Thank you.

MS. HAYASHI: Thank you.

Bronson Binger.

MR. BINGER: I am Bronson Binger. I came to this fairly late, when I moved from Brooklyn Heights. I was -- heard about Brooklyn Bridge Park, I thought it was a wonderful idea until I heard that it was going to be financed by housing. And I threw up my arms and screamed. I used to be the Assistant Commissioner for the Parks Department for 10 years, in charge of capital projects. And I -- never, once, did anyone
suggest in those 10 years that we fund anything with private housing in a park or for that matter even next to a park.

We never allowed any private funding, except for concessions that gave revenue to the park, within a park and served only the people that were in the park, they didn't do anything else. I do not believe that the park should generate money, other than taxes and concessions. The tax base is insufficient and currently to maintain parks less than a fraction of 1 percent of our tax revenue goes to maintaining parks which is a disgusting reflection on the city.

My father built the FDR Drive, which had many more acres of park attached to it than this park, and that park cost a great deal of money -- all of those parks. That land -- to build the parks was privately owned and had to be bought.
from the city, but by the way without a single act of condemnation. These were more gracious days in 1939 than they are today. But there was no question, ever, in the City's mind at those times and I don't think there should be today, about financing something by selling off real estate.

The whole concept of park design -- of a building being built within this park design was, I think of a rape of our City government by the real estate industry. I don't think it should have been allowed, I still don't think it should be allowed today, and I'm very much dead set against what it does to a park, and what it does to the concept of parks being built for and by the people, not by real estate developers for themselves. So, I plead with you and thank you for sitting through this very very boring, long, horrible meeting. And secondly -- you may not
have found it boring, but I did. And also, I just hope that you will turn your back on housing. Thank you.

MS. HAYASHI: Barbara Brookheart.

MS. BROOKHEART: Good evening. My name is Barbara Brookheart, I'm speaking for myself and I fully support a real Brooklyn Bridge Park without high-rise luxury costs. I wanted to respond to several people's comment. Number one, it takes a while to build a self-financing park -- from self-financing elements.

Now, I'm not talking about revenues or a sports complex or whatever. I'm just talking about to build a destination that has the cachet for film shoots, for product managers of a major company such as HSBC to want to come in and do at promotion in the park, which generates a lot of money.
But I think this park is so special and the views are so special, instead of having be a scale, meaning a line that goes like this slowly up, that it will go like this. And I think that eventually that this park will generate a lot of revenue. I worked for a park that is self-financing and I know that this will happen. And I just want -- I -- I just want people to realize that it doesn't happen overnight, it takes a long time. But it happens just over and over again and we lost the fashion shows, which is over a million dollars a show and we've almost made up that income in a year. And that can happen to this park, because of the iconic views and it's going to happen a lot faster than it happened at Bryant Park.

And I want people to think outside the box, because this is a regional park, it's not just local
businesses that are going to wind up
to do commercials and whatever inside
the park every so often and pay, you
know, two or three hundred thousand
dollars to do that. It's going to
happen really rapidly. And those are
things that need to be looked at.

And and and -- and I worked
for the Brooklyn Bridge Park
Coalition for Tony Manheim and we
built a coalition of 65 civic and
neighborhood organizations in support
of the Brooklyn Bridge Park, 13
guiding principles to govern
development and -- on the downtown
Brooklyn waterfront.

These guiding principles was
the collaborative effort and and and
-- between the communities and
elected officials. And I listened to
Tony negotiate every word of those
guiding principles. And and and --
with John Benguiat of the Borough
President's office and there were --
over and over again there were in-depth discussions between John Benguiat and Tony as to how they would privatize the park.

And this is why the principles state that residents -- in office ye shall be discouraged. I'm sorry, I am going on my second round of antibiotics. In 1998, the President -- the Borough President formed the Brooklyn Bridge Park LDC to come up with a community based plan based on the 13 guarding principles.

In 2002, the effort of a local corporation and the Brooklyn Bridge Park coalition along with elected officials spurred the creation of the Brooklyn Bridge Parks Development Corporation. In 2005, when the Brooklyn Bridge Park Development Corporation presented their plan, which included 12,000 units of luxury high-rise costs, I was just dumb founded.
And especially the one -- I was -- especially the one on -- out on John Street, because I had worked -- I spearheaded that to -- a piece of land to be taken -- be given to us by, where it connects, to use as a park not as condos and that just really shocked me that that's what was going to happen with that lot. And -- and I just hope that the community process for the committee to alternative to housing will feel the division so that our community with new housing was added to the community as a resident generated element.

Recently, the New Yorkers for parks and the regional plan have done very good studies on self-financing the park, which will be a very good starting point to your studies. We urge you to analyze Senator Squadron's plan and -- and -- and -- and a plan suggested by Marion
Calvert (phonetic) to use profits from the Jehova Witnesses buildings when they are slow to self-finance the park.

And I want you to understand that we do not have lost faith that this study could be independent, and we think that the conclusion will be that there is no alternative but to build a 10-story hotel and 1,200 condos, thereby getting the mayor off the hook, so that they can say, we tried, but I hope we are proven wrong.

MS. HAYASHI: Thank you. David Reese.

MR. REESE: I'm David Reese, I'm the CB6 representative to the park advisory counsel and I'm here to represent the views of CB6 as they've been expressed by the board, by most of the board as well my own as I am the parent of two small children. Over the last decade, CB6 has taken a
position against housing the park,
while at the same time demonstrating
unwavering support for a world class
park for everyone in New York City.
CB6 has supported the community
they've planned of 2000 and in
particular CB6 voted on three acres
that are relevant that are worth
reiterating.
First, to support the
reconsideration of the general plan
so that it better reflects the 13
original guiding principles upon
which the original proposal for the
park was based. Second, to support
recreation based alternative revenue
stream. And third, to eliminate
housing as a revenue stream. And if
that is not possible, to minimize
it -- evenly distribute it, and
keeping it as a small scale as
possible.
CB6 supports the efforts of
Senator Squadron and Assembly Woman
Milman and others to identify alternative revenue sources for the park and to takeoff briefly my CB6 hat, let me just add that as a parent of two small boys, I fell in love with the park the first time that I went there. I think it's wonderful and I hope that you have very fruitful discussions thinking about the future of the park, because as other have said, this is a chance to set the park on the path that will be for perhaps the next century or further, so I hope that your discussions are fruitful. Thank you.

MS. HAYASHI: The last speaker, Diane Buxbaum, was the last speaker that was announced.

MS. BUXBAUM: My name is Diane Buxbaum, and I want to first say thank you to all the people who are still here, and who have been here, who have worked so hard on creating a vision of the park. And I just wish
that I had the courage of Dorothy to say what I would like to say, but I don't.

These are my personal comments, I am also the Conservation Chair of the New York City Group, the Sierra Club that Ken Baer, our Chair, has spoken on behalf of the club. A couple of things that I want to say, and I wrote these in pen after my comment. I just have seen the sea levelized task force report of the State climate change force report.

There is not a single thing in Mayor Bloomberg's vision for the City of New York that takes into account the fact that we are inevitable five possibly more feet of sea level rise sometime during this next century and maybe earlier rather than later, depending upon the feedback mechanisms that will destroy the glaciers Greenland, Iceland and elsewhere.
That's one thing and if you listen to Dr. Malcom Wolman (phonetic) who I had speak in this room last year, you will understand that there is -- are inevitable of storm surges. Why are we building housing anywhere in this City next to the shore line? It is insane. We will live to regret it for our descendents.

Okay, my comments: I've been involved in meetings, workshops, hearings, and even supported the litigation on behalf of keeping Brooklyn Bridge Park as a park, not at garden for luxury homeowners in the form of two massive buildings at the entrance to the park on Atlantic elsewhere, and in the form of other buildings throughout the park.

Over years of planning, and I started this only in 2000, because I only moved into the neighborhood in '95 and I got involved in the Gowanus
Canal early on, now on -- anyway --
over the years there was no mention
of housing, ever, in the initial park
-- in the initial planning for this
park in all the workshops. A hotel,
yes, but not housing. This was
placed into the planning without the
public being apprised of this
inclusion. There were strong
objections from the first day that
this proposal was made public.

It is outrageous that the
city with the stature of New York
City and the State of New York cannot
create a park that is a disturbance
to the citizens who live here, and
pay taxes without turning it into
luxury garden for wealthy residents.
New York City is one of the poorest
places in the country with regard to
the amount of public park space per
citizen. I think of Albuquerque,
which is where my son lives, which
had pocket parks and bigger parks
almost every few blocks; and
Albuquerque is not a rich city.
Where is my city in comparison?

Brooklyn Bridge Park already
has housing, the former witness
building on Furman Street, and that
is not fully occupied, as we have all
heard over and over. One idea
proposed is a special tax for people
who live near the park. I live
further away, but I am willing to pay
a higher tax to support the park.

And what about the recent
proposal about purchasing the other
Witness buildings that will be on the
market and to create revenue? We've
heard that over and over and over.
Brooklyn Bridge Park should not be
held hostage to luxury housing.
Create a park for the people with
park amenities and park activities
that are available to all citizens
who want to use it. And by the way,
Carol Konheim mentioned bamboo. I
don't know, how many of you people go out to Fire Island to some of the areas where they've planted bamboo, where every homeowner has it coming up, you cannot fight bamboo. It is an invasive grass that will take over. I think -- I cannot believe -- I just can't believe that people have picked bamboo as one of the plants to plant in Brooklyn Bridge Park. Anyway, thank you all for listening to me. And I will e-mail as well as hand in my comments.

MS. HAYASHI: Thank you.

Geoffrey Croft.

MR. CROFT: Good evening. My name is Geoffrey Croft, I'm a President of the New York City Park Advocates. First, I would like to applaud the many people who have come out this evening. And there's still many more people who have worked on this for many, many, many years. This is a very important project.
And the energy and the passion of the people planning this project is absolutely amazing.

And people are looking at what New York City is doing. And unfortunately, as we've heard over and over again throughout many years now of testimony, the project was highjacked. And that is an issue. And now we have to deal with this issue. We're dealing with as a fallout.

I had the opportunity to ask the Mayor at the March 22nd opening of Brooklyn Bridge Park to comment on the disparities that having dedicated funding, especially the amount of funding that this park is proposing to have and he responded, in terms of disparities, and this is a quote, in terms of disparities, the City does not have the money to have new parks and fund them. This was the mayor of the City of New York talking about
funding public parks. We do not --
we have the money to build them, but
we do not have the money to maintain
them. That is obviously outrageous.

The purpose of public parks is
just that, they are supposed to be
public parks, and they have a very,
very important, a very very vital use
to our society. And unfortunately,
because we just saw under the round
of budget cuts to through this
agency, no other city agency in the
last four years has lost a greater
percentage of its workforce than the
Parks Department.

And every single person here
at this table who lives in New York
City is partly responsible for that.
The public needs to start speaking up
and telling our elected officials
that this is a priority. The Mayor
55 -- for this administration, for 55
million dollars was able to
essentially buy the state model of
park funding, which was -- the State depends on um, fee based, concession or any user based fees to pay for a lot of its state parks system, its maintenance and operation. We don't do that in New York City. And we don't do that for a very very good reason. And that is a problem now that we're dealing with.

So, for 55 million dollars, he was able to shuffle this into -- again, it's just a deal to try to adopt this state funding method. And we need to stay away from, that's a really, really bad precedence and I would be depending on housing, which traditionally has been pretty good in the City. But depending on housing for um -- to pay for parks is certainly not the answer and certainly we've seen a great example just recently with the housing downturn.

The alternative park funding
plan is extremely simple. And our city charter states that the City is supposed to maintain and operate our parks. It doesn't mention that these entities are responsible for that, it says we can work in concert with them, but that is a big huge, huge issue here, because our City charter, our tax dollars are supposed to be paying for our park system. And we need to get back to that. We need the public to support that notion.

The fact that we're having this meeting now after this is obviously clear and well into construction and a section of the park have -- have -- have been opened, community based planning and consultation is extremely important. And the very people who worked on this thought that that's what they had, until this project was hijacked.

And this is a terrible,
terrible precedent. The Mayor needs to step back and say, we will take care of this. Obviously, in -- the budget -- look, everyone wants a great budget for their parks, but that needs to be done equal -- equally, and we have to -- we really have to look -- look at that.

The HRNA, I mean, just about every single thing out of that person's mouth is laughable. I love this, you know, quote, we no longer have the financial capacity. I could sit -- sit here and tell you about the 100 million dollar golf -- golf course -- golf course the Mayor is building in -- Metro -- public housing -- in the Bronx.

I could tell you about 300 million dollars in -- we're spending to replace parkland in the in -- the district in the United States, near the Yankee Stadium, that shouldn't have been taken in the first place.
And the last thing, your own Borough President here wants to spend at least 64 million dollars on an amphitheater in the middle of a public park. Um, which that's adding up to, what, you know, three or four hundred -- about four hundred -- or five -- four or five hundred million dollars, just off the top of my head. We do have the money for the things we want to have the money for. We had 3.6 billion dollar surplus last year, which we just rolled over. We need to make parks a priority, and that means to fund the maintenance and operation because everyone, including everyone in this room and at the table I'm sure wants their parks to be adequately maintained and secure and programed. Thank you.

MS. HAYASHI: Is there anyone else who would like to make a statement that hasn't already? Okay. I now call the hearing closed. I
just want to remind everyone that we
are accepting written testimony until
December 13th. And we will
prioritize those who didn't get to
speak be at the top of the list.
Thank you. Good evening.

I, KERRIANNE MARASHAJ, a Notary
Public for and within the State of
New York, do hereby certify that the
above is a correct transcription of
my stenographic notes.

____________________________
KERRIANNE MARASHAJ
## INDEX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INTRODUCTIONS BY</th>
<th>REMARKS BY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MR. MEYER.........</td>
<td>SEN. DANIEL SQUADRON.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MR. O'SULLIVAN...</td>
<td>JUDI FRANCIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MR. NELSON........</td>
<td>CM STEVE LEVIN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS. COTTON........</td>
<td>JERRY ARMER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MR. RASKIN........</td>
<td>HENRY STERN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS. MEYER.........</td>
<td>NANCY WEBSTER</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS. HAYASHI.......</td>
<td>ROY SLOANE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ELI COHEN</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Page 3, 3, 3, 4, 4, 4, 10, 14, 46, 10, 23, 33, 36, 38, 46, 51, 51
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>R Moishe Indig</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>IsaaK Werzberger</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>CM Brad Lander</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Barbara Charton</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Glenn Kelly</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Ben Bankson</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Doug Biviano</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Chris Havens</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Peter Flemming</td>
<td>97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Norman Cox</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Lucy Willner</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Laurie Maurer</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Elizabeth Ernish</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Ken Lowy</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Andrew Buschenal</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Murray Adams</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Anthony Manheim</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Sandy Balboza</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Dorothy Siegel</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Mark Baker</td>
<td>144</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Meg Reed</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Carolyn Konheim</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Unknown Speaker</td>
<td>155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>Danny Fuchs</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
KEN BAER..............................163
BRONSON BINGER.........................165
BARBARA BROOKHEART....................168
DAVID REESE............................173
DIANE BUXBAUM..........................175
GEOFFREY CROFT.........................180

CONCLUDING REMARK

MS. HAYASHI.............................186

*     *     *

*     *     *

DIAMOND REPORTING  (718) 624-7200  info@diamondreporting.com
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page Numbers</th>
<th>Text</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>81, 24, 88, 9, 103, 5, 123, 22, 125, 17, 134, 9, 139, 19, 142, 7, 142, 11, 142, 14, 144, 6, 173, 22, 173, 23</td>
<td>boards [2] - 88, 4, 142, 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>112, 15</td>
<td>boardwalk [1] - 112, 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>129, 8</td>
<td>Bob [5] - 4, 9, 75, 2, 78, 5, 78, 8, 155, 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>112, 11</td>
<td>Body [1] - 60, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45, 16, 75, 10</td>
<td>Bonds [2] - 151, 17, 151, 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75, 10</td>
<td>Bones [1] - 24, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>128, 13, 129, 21</td>
<td>Broom [1] - 123, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>151, 25</td>
<td>Boosts [1] - 152, 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27, 6</td>
<td>Borers [1] - 27, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47, 5</td>
<td>Born [1] - 47, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>130, 9</td>
<td>Borough [1] - 130, 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>162, 8</td>
<td>Boston [1] - 162, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60, 9, 128, 19</td>
<td>Boundaries [2] - 60, 9, 128, 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>129, 3</td>
<td>Boundary [1] - 129, 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>129, 4</td>
<td>Boundary [1] - 129, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18, 7, 21, 6, 22, 23, 37, 4, 113, 8, 113, 11, 114, 19, 169, 24</td>
<td>Box [8] - 18, 7, 21, 6, 22, 23, 37, 4, 113, 8, 113, 11, 114, 19, 169, 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89, 15, 175, 6</td>
<td>Boys [2] - 89, 15, 175, 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56, 8</td>
<td>BOE [1] - 56, 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>189, 4</td>
<td>BRAD [1] - 189, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67, 17, 75, 4</td>
<td>Brad [3] - 67, 17, 75, 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41, 7, 45, 16, 75, 10</td>
<td>Brand [3] - 41, 7, 45, 16, 75, 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41, 7, 45, 16, 75, 10</td>
<td>Brand-new [3] - 41, 7, 45, 16, 75, 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150, 5</td>
<td>Bride [1] - 150, 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29, 12</td>
<td>Bridge [3] - 29, 12, 29, 15, 30, 22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24, 2, 7,</td>
<td>Bridge [80] - 24, 2, 7, 2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
148:2
magnificent [2] - 79,8, 110,8
Magnolias [1] - 154,2
mail [4] - 10,5, 18,14, 18,16, 180,13
mails [1] - 124,12
Main [1] - 135,20
maintain [9] - 6,4, 80,24, 84,7, 114,5, 132,8, 160,12, 166,15, 182,4, 184,4
maintenance [23] - 4,25, 5,14, 25,2, 41,13, 49,23, 50,21, 69,3, 70,10, 84,12, 85,6, 101,9, 131,16, 136,6, 145,8, 145,20, 146,4, 146,12, 147,17, 153,7, 160,19, 162,13, 183,6, 186,16
major [9] - 68,7, 128,21, 128,23, 130,4, 133,2, 152,14, 162,15, 168,22
Malcom [1] - 177,3
man [2] - 126,11, 142,4
manage [1] - 160,11
Managed [1] - 88,11
management [1] - 161,3
managers [1] - 168,22


MANAGEMENT [1] - 161,3
managers [1] - 168,22
likely [1] - 41:4
unneeded [1] - 156:17
unoccupied [1] - 122:24
unquote [1] - 106:3
unrealistic [1] - 154:19
unseat [1] - 140:2
unseemly [1] - 99:12
unusual [1] - 96:18
unwavering [1] - 174:4
upkeep [1] - 31:9
upscale [1] - 75:13
upside [1] - 92:2
urges [1] - 50:17
useful [1] - 23:14
utilization [1] - 54:18

V
vacant [1] - 42:17
vacate [1] - 136:10
values [1] - 71:7
variety [1] - 121:8