

November 24, 2014 Bridging Gowanus Public Forum

Comments

Charlene Nimmons (Wyckoff Gardens)

I just wanted to say, first and foremost, I appreciate everything that has been done. I was a skeptic when it first started. I gave Councilmember Brad Lander a hard time. And who else? I gave some people...wooo...I was tough. But then, looking at how we really came all together and the meetings were all across the community and all different sections and people got to voice their concerns. Even people who didn't agree, right? Even if you didn't agree you got to be heard. I thought that was real important. And to hear and see the entire framework, the way it's laid out, I'm pretty sure that you all are open to some new thoughts based on the comments. But, I just wanted to say thank you so much to our elected officials for sticking with us and fighting with us through all of our turmoil and all of the great things that are to come. Thanks so much.

Dave Powell (Fifth Avenue Committee)

I want to thank everybody for their work in this process and just acknowledge, you know, as a community that this is an exciting time because the framework is just that and now it's up to us to actually make this happen and breathe some life into it and I'm very excited to be among you and getting ready to roll up our sleeves and be do that. On the affordable housing and housing preservation side of things, I just want to flag one thing for this meeting. And I'll leave my colleagues from 5th Avenue Committee to talk about the affordable housing development side of things. As well as my colleagues in the NYCHA development and from Families United for Racial and Economic Equality to talk about the public housing side of things – both of which are critically important. But, one thing I hope folks will notice and dig a little deeper into, that this framework has called for, for the first time in a long time, is an anti-harassment special district for existing tenants, residential tenants, in the Gowanus Corridor. And this is very important because as someone who works with, and is a tenant advocate and is with a lot of your neighbors in housing court, watching people get evicted as rents rise, there really needs to be additional protections beyond the rent stabilization laws to address the out of control land hyper valuation that is pushing our neighbors out. The big flaw with both urban renewal and Bloomberg style rezoning is that it does not talk about the individual household and seek to preserve the tenure of the individual household. It talks about numbers. And an anti-harassment special district does turn that around. We have a couple of examples of how this has worked in New York City, particularly in Hell's Kitchen Clinton, that we need to learn from. And I look forward to those of you who are interested in addressing the crisis of displacement and keeping our neighbors in their homes. I look forward to working with you to further that. Thank you.

Linda Mariano (Member of FROGG – Friends and Residents of the Greater Gowanus)

I have one question about the high density elements that Pratt was discussing earlier. And that is I find it very difficult to believe that a majority of people, actual residents of Gowanus, would give up their wonderful open sky for more than 8 to 14 story buildings. And I would personally like proof that this was found, discovered, during this process. I would even like to ask the members of this community, if you live in Gowanus, how many people in this audience, favor more than 8 to 14 story buildings?

Jim Vogel (State Senator Velmanette Montgomery's Office)

As everyone is saying, this is part of a process. We shouldn't expect anything that comes in the report to be perfect, because perfect means change doesn't happen. The only time change

doesn't happen is after you're dead. So we're always going to be aware of change. We're going to have to be participants in this as it goes forward and as it continues. When we're talking about TIFs, the idea of being able to take dedicated taxes and keep them within a community...it always starts out so great and it always ends up in the general fund. Unless you're really on top of it. According to city records, the subway is still supposed to be, I think it's 5 cents, on the IRT add if an item (*unclear*). That changed. But that's because people didn't watch the change. So, I applaud what we've done here so far. Is it perfect? No. and it shouldn't be. It's a work in progress.

Paul Basille (The Gowanus Alliance)

I just want to echo the first speaker's comments and thank everyone from the elected officials to the community. Because one thing is certain, however this plays out, Gowanus will never go back to what it was in the 70's and 80's. And thanks to the work everyone is doing here we'll be a part of a better city because of the work that everyone has done. So thank everyone. Thank you everyone.

Debbie (Attended the Bridging Gowanus meetings and lives in the neighborhood)

Hi my name is Debbie, I attended the Bridging Gowanus meetings, I live in this neighborhood, and I'm very distraught at the potential rezoning that threatens to completely change the character of this neighborhood. I applaud Brad Lander for this effort, but unfortunately I feel that the process was very misleading, very non-transparent, very undemocratic, and very manipulative. I'm glad that the NYCHA people are happy with the things that are going to happen to their buildings. That should happen regardless of development that happens here. I'm glad Paul Basille is going to keep his industrial area. But that wouldn't be threatened if there wasn't so much prospecting going on because of the threat of rezoning. In fact, artists wouldn't lose their spaces if there wasn't the threat of rezoning. Affordable housing wouldn't be getting lost by people speculating and selling their properties so that more luxury condos can come in. So, in fact, it's not a matter of big box stores. It's not a matter of storage facilities. We all know, and I don't know why it's not just said out there, the pressures coming from big developers and I think as a community what was really discussed constantly in those Bridging Gowanus meetings is that we don't want that area for big tall buildings. It's going to change the character of the neighborhood. Now, I realize a number of different community groups got sort of paid off to be willing to go along with this idea. If more people were really into it, I don't believe that the procedure for getting those votes for taller buildings wouldn't have been so manipulative as it was at the last meeting. You know, the people are speculating about those areas because of two reasons. First of all, if they get brownfield payments, which means because those areas that they want to develop on are contaminated, the New York State taxes, our taxes, actually go as a credit – as money – to pay for 25% of those developments being built. That money alone, instead of going to developers, could fix all the NYCHA problems we are facing right now. And then, all those developers like Lightstone get a 25 year tax abatement, while you're telling me if they will get a tax abatement, but my property taxes are going to go up? It's nonsense, and I don't know why we are considering this kind of rezoning in the first place.

Samuel Robinson

My name is Samuel Robinson and I'm a horticulturalist and I own a small business that used to be in Gowanus but I kind of got pushed out because it got too expensive. In regards to the comment about what happens after you die, you might actually stop changing, but the environment around you continues to change. I think that should be something that people are focused on, beyond themselves. What happens in the environment. So I'm interested in the environment. And, actually, in response to the comment about tax abatements, about larger developers have the opportunity to take advantage of, has anyone actually considered a tax

abatement for residents that not only live in Gowanus, but in the other neighborhoods that affect the watershed? Specifically for stormwater management. I know there's DEP money that's available in the grant form, between 30,000 and 1 million dollars. Most of that money has gone to larger institutions. But, for private or multi-family houses, has there been any talk about just a small tax abatement which would kind of give people a little bit more motivation to capture the water in the square footage of their home. I think it's kind of cost effective over the course of maybe 15 to 20 years. When it comes to capturing storm water and it doesn't have to be a high percentage. There's already a high percentage for green roofs, which is technically not very cost effective because you need a structural engineer and an architect, etc. etc. But for a simple sort of replicable, systemized, rain catchment system for private and multi-family units, I think it might be something to consider. Just a little bit of a push in the right direction for people to consider actually catching water. It also gives people a little bit more of a sense of empowerment in having some sort of effect of the collective storm water issue, which obviously is a part of the plan. Thank you.

Steve Hindy (Gowanus Resident)

Hi, my name is Steve Hindy. I've lived in Gowanus for 21 years between 3rd and 4th Avenue on 8th Street, and I started Brooklyn Brewery with my downstairs neighbor, Tom Potter, 26 years ago. And I just wanted to say that the mandatory mixed-use element of the plan is essential if manufacturers and community minded people like Paul Basille and others are going to keep their businesses in Gowanus. Also, I hope there is as much focus in this room on the parole center that's being built on 2nd Avenue between 4th and 6th Street as there is on concerns about high rise buildings in Gowanus. Because I have nothing against a parole center, there used to be three in Brooklyn, but they are all being combined and put right in the middle of Gowanus. Which I think is a challenge to the dream that you are all working on here today. Thanks.

Warren Cohen (Gowanus Resident)

Thanks so much. I'm Warren Cohen and I'm a neighbor...and this sounds very loud. I was gratified to see in the plan the acknowledgement about the broken promises when we make these types of plans and our big expectations for what the city does and ends up not delivering. I wonder if we can strengthen the timing of the implementation in two important ways. The first is to have the clock start now. And I don't know, and I'm sorry if I misinterpret, that we can count the Superfund as a win going forward. I would bank that as a win we have already achieved. I wonder if the community, knowing the importance of our zoning, can really say starting now, "we want to see the sewage problem solved in public housing. We want to see the 3rd Avenue sewer fixed. We want to see the high capacity line fixed and Carroll Street. We want to see this building, which has trailers that were supposed to be for Kindergarten kids for a few years, now 18 years and counting." I wonder if we can make that list first and foremost of what we want to see invested in and then we can talk the zoning. So, I think there's a time issue. I'd also say the same thing in regards to global warming. The Times a few weeks ago talked about New Yorker's "environmental Machismo." We have this belief that we can build anywhere and everywhere we want with no heed to the consequences. We are facing an unprecedented challenge in global warming. I'm so gratified about the hydrology inclusion in the study and the greater studying in New York. But, I am curious why we would start to rezone the process before we really have fundamental understanding of what storm safety we have. It seems we don't want to consign future residents and businesses to millions and millions of dollars in insurance losses in the future. So I'm curious about those two things. How we decide when we can kind of get started.

Kelly Carroll (Historic Districts Council)

Good evening, I'm Kelly Carroll and I'm representing the Historic Districts Council. The presentation concluded with asking "how are we going to do this?" and I'd like to speak to the issue of historic preservation, and one of the tools which was placing Gowanus industrial district on the national or state register of historic places. In able to do it, it was this close, and so the work is done as a preservation tool – it's really, we're right there. So my question to the elected officials and to Pratt is how and would you be willing to outreach to the community so the property owners who would be affected by such a designation would actually fully understand the implications of such a designation. Especially the fact that private property, and choices to be made to those private properties, would not be regulated. If you wanted to clad your house in rainbow sprinkles in a national register district, you would be able to do so. So I just ask you all if there would be a community outreach or presentations to inform the public about what national state registration would do.

Blake (Resident)

My name is Blake and my affiliation is that I've lived here since I was 12. So 16 years. I am encouraged to see, from what I've read and from what we've listened to here today, that folks have been so thoughtful about what it looks like to preserve affordable housing in the community. And what I'm noticing is sort of in moving forward is that it's not quite as explicit what the industrial plan is going to look like, how that is going to spelled out in terms of what happens when you're bringing businesses in. What sort of businesses are you going to encourage? And how are they going to make their place in this community? I think that in conjunction with the affordable housing plan, there is a really incredible opportunity here for us to start thinking about how to bring good jobs to this community. Start thinking about how to use those manufacturing districts to create entry level and jobs that actually have upward mobility built into them in the first place. Just encouraging, you know we already have tax incremental financing on the table. That's something that's really big in this city and doesn't happen often. If we're going to think about other sort of creative opportunities that we have here we can think about where BID's can get involved in this. We can think about where we can get incubators involved in this. A lot of those tools are already at the disposal of the Economic Development Corporation. So for next steps it seems like while we have flushed out the housing plan, starting to think about how the lower income community members and components of our community can start to benefit in terms of jobs would be a really important consideration. Thank you.

David Briggs (Resident)

My name is David Briggs, I live over on President Street, and I've been here since the late 80's. Some of you may know me through my work at Gowanus by Design, I'm more or less the acting Executive Director. I just have a few comments and observations on the framework, which was pretty good. It was better than I'd hoped it would be. I think there are some things we all kind of have to agree on in order to move forward. First of all, I'm not clear on how you're defining "Gowanus." I'm not sure if it's the watershed, the sewer shed, political boundaries? And this sort of rolls into my next comment, which is you keep bringing up the 3 NYCHA projects that are close to the Gowanus but you don't mention the one over in Red Hook. And it's only 2 or 3 blocks outside the watershed so it seems like there has been some decision made about the edge of what you are defining as Gowanus. And yet, I think that's the largest housing project in New York City... in Brooklyn, yeah, it's a couple thousand people in there I think. So, anyway the fact that it's just two blocks outside of the watershed seems to do it a disservice if it's not getting the same attention as the other housing projects. Particularly since it's in a floodplain. So that's just a comment on how we're defining Gowanus and what the edges are, if there are edges. You mention somewhere in the framework that the schools, you're coming up with a number of school seats based on current zoning, and I think that's a real disservice to what's going to happen down 30, 40, 50 years from now. I think some real robust projections have to

be done. Finally, you really need to concentrate on displacement. The D and D pool has a great community center, it might get displaced when the 8 million gallon retention tank gets put in. What's going to happen to the services that are provided by the pool? Where are people going to go to actually enjoy a summer day around a pool while that's out of commission for 2 or 3 years? Thank you.

Owen Foote (Gowanus Dredgers Canoe Club)

Good evening, I'm Owen Foote, Gowanus Dredgers Canoe Club, and over the last 15 years we've been responsible for exposing close to 20,000 people to the contaminated waters of New York Harbor, Gowanus Canal included, and I want to thank the 2 Councilmembers out of three tonight who choose to do that with us on the Gowanus Canal. My question, however, I am unclear, and I hope you will provide additional information on the website, as to what we will be doing in this auditorium a year from now? What is the tools the community can use, what will be dealing with? Will I be going to our community board, will I be calling Brad's office every day to say, "Well, what's next? What's happening?" We've been at this, I've only been at this a short time, close to 2 decades, and I'm wondering what planned for the future? What do we do next with this great plan that the planners have done? I presume the planners won't be continuing to talk to us for the next 2 decades, so what do we do next? Thank you.

Charlene Nimmons (Wyckoff Gardens, 2nd time speaking)

Charlene Nimmons, Wyckoff Gardens, New York City Housing Authority, NYCHA. I heard a couple things that really provoked me to get back up. Before, I was just being nice. Now, I'm thinking that sometimes people make statements and here I go again, and you imply or you make it appear that we sold out for some reason or that we got paid to buy into a particular framework that we haven't decided if it's going to actually be what was presented. So there's still dialogue that needs to take place. So I think that it's important for you to understand that we didn't receive a dime, we sat at the table like everyone else and put forth our concerns of how we are being impacted by the Gowanus Canal. Another thing, I live in a 21 story building. Please be understanding. I may cast you a shadow. However, where I live, you need to acknowledge that we exist. Now, if you want me to support you on low rise, be nice and be gentle. Because then I might say, like you are saying to me, "to hell with you and what you think." Now also, please understand, because this is going to be my last comment because I may have the leave the room once other people start to talk, New York City Housing Authority, we get elected into our positions to represent public housing residents. When we get elected in, we become the spokesperson. We then go out find opportunities and resources to bring back into the community. So when you say building 92 at Brooklyn Navy Yard, or you say 5th Avenue Committee, guess what? You all need to know there's an organization called Public Housing Communities, Inc., and I am the Executive Director and Founder. We have been very instrumental in making sure we get jobs, training, for many of our residents across the city. Ok, I love you. I just want you to know we represent our residents in public housing and we welcome you to come in and help us. And please forgive me for saying H-E-L-L.

Linda Mariano (FROGG, 2nd time speaking)

This is about government and zoning. Most people, especially in Gowanus, don't even trust the word "rezoning." Because we have seen it happen over and over again. We don't seem to have a community board here that represents the people. When there was a ULURP for the Whole Foods, somehow Whole Foods got around the City Planning for a variance and the government grants it because there's so much corruption between the developers and government.

Michelle (Fifth Avenue Committee)

So first off, I just want to join in the folks the elected officials and the Pratt Center for facilitating some very engaging and at times boisterous conversations. I definitely wouldn't expect anything less from the Gowanus community because people feel so deeply about the community and what it represents and the kind of promise that it holds for the kind of city that we want to have. I guess I just kind of want to put a couple things in context, and I know that a couple people in the room know this already. But, for Fifth Avenue Committee that is based in Gowanus and has been around for 36 years, whose mission is to advance economic and social justice, you know we certainly approach the conversation that's been going on here for the last 15 months in broadly speaking, in trying to be as inclusive as possible for all the populations that need to be involved. So for us, it starts with the context of the fact that we've had a housing crisis in this city for 70 years, which is why we have rent stabilization. Because vacancy rates have been less than 5% for more than 70 years. It starts with the fact that we are completing construction of 3 small buildings, 8 units, and there's an affordable housing lottery where literally 30,000 people applied for those 8 units. It starts from the fact that literally hundreds and hundreds of people come to our office all the time seeking help around anti-displacement efforts and help with eviction prevention. And it comes from the fact that whenever we hold any workforce development workshop, the number of people seeking opportunities to better themselves and provide opportunities for their families far outstrips the jobs. There's a mismatch between the skills and the kind of jobs. If we can as a community, and it seems like there's so many shared values, if we can put those opportunities together that would be tremendously helpful. Especially because we are expecting a million new people in New York City over the next 25 years and if we don't plan for that growth, it's just going to overtake anything that we value. So to the extent that we as a community can take what we're doing and move forward, I know that we at the 5th Avenue Committee stands ready in the next steps in the process so thank you.

David (lives and works in Gowanus)

Hi my name is David Powell, and I live in Gowanus and work in Gowanus as well. I also want to thank the Councilmembers like everyone else and I guess its repeating but I'm really excited, I've been a part of some of these meetings, and been really excited actually for the community of Gowanus, which is an absolute gem in a big city like this to actually have people that like really care about it. And I hopefully think we are seeing actual traction with that, which is very cool. So it's very cool to be a part of that, so I guess thanks to everyone. I guess I wonder if I can have some clarification from Pratt, I know it's a long process. You know, rezoning is happening and I know that affordable housing is a very sensitive subject. And I know that if you don't want to be against it. And so high rise is the way I think you do that. And you know property like Smith 9th Street the high rise makes a little bit of sense just because architecturally with the trains being so high it works. But you know on 3rd Avenue, for me personally, I would love to keep that 4 stories. I don't know if that's possible. So I guess my question is: are we talking about these corridors we are going to keep at this level or are we still, I think we've always been on the location by location, and wondering if that's how we are right now – what is the process for that. I know 6th Street and 3rd Avenue there is a 6 story commercial building being built up. Just wondering what the process is for all these because the 6th and 3rd Avenue was in the middle of all this planning over the last year and we never really talked about it. So I was like “Oh, do we not talk about them when they start?” So I guess I'm wondering how that works.

Carl Titlebaum (live in and business owner in Gowanus)

Hello. Carl Titlebaum. I live and work and also have a small business in Gowanus/Carroll Gardens. First, I want to reiterate what someone said before, I was at all 3 of the large meetings. No one at any of the tables I sat at wanted 18 stories. But, I think the way the question was posed, people felt manipulative. It was like, “Do you want schools? Do you want

open spaces? Do you want to fix the sewers? And if so, do you want 10, 15, or 20 story buildings?" So, the two are completely and shouldn't be...fixing the sewers should not be dependent upon our building 20 story buildings all over the place. It's just separate and distinct issues that have nothing to do with each other, really. Now, the other thing is that this is a great plan. Utopian. Covers everything. You take it to city planning and they say "Oh, 18 story buildings, that's good." And the rest of it is like, and what happens then? If they cherry pick? "Oh, we'll take this and this and this, but forget about everything else for the next 50 years." What's the next step? OR let's say if they ask you for your priorities, what are they?

Joseph

Thank you everyone for waiting this long. And I will say that clearly this is really difficult and a lot of work. And I know that every person involved, from the politicians, to the organizers at Pratt, to all of you spent a lot of time and energy on this and it's incredible that we are all standing here first of all. Second of all, I will say personally, that I am amazed at how much of the things that I heard at the meetings that did get into this report. And I really do think that there was listening happening, and that's what it's important. And I think that Carl's comments about the height are very important, which is that even though what you just said is true. We don't relating control about what city planning can do with this information, what they hear and what they will take from it is, is paramount to having these conversations. If they hear 18 stories, they will latch onto that if they can. I really don't believe that anyone here wants that kind of height near, next to the canal. And I don't think I've seen anyone say "that sounds like a good idea." And the more we talk about that, the more that it becomes clear. And that was one of the main reasons I got so annoyed about all of this is because I felt like even though you didn't intend for it to be that conversation, that's the thought that it provoked. And that's why some journalists have said "Well, this plan..." and have immediately recalls for high density planning and that's not what I think Mr. Lander wants people to think because that's a very simplistic way of looking at it. That said, I will leave you with one last thing: Gowanus Green. 770 units. Correct me if I'm wrong, right on public place site. Where did that come from? Why has that never been a discussion? Why didn't we talk about why we need to put housing right next to the canal? I still think it's bad idea and I don't understand why we can't talk about it in a more...let's like...okay, thank you.

Ed Tyree (Resident Council President Gowanus Houses)

Good evening. First, I'm the resident council president from Gowanus and I want to piggy back on what Sharlene was saying, because I got a little offended by it. In fact, when people talk about us getting paid off and stuff...we don't get paid a dime. Now, my thing is that we reach out to other people outside of our communities and they extend their hands to us as well. Last week, we had a meeting with councilman Lander and he's not even our councilman. So that tells you itself that we are willing to work with other people. But for people to not understand that we live in developments that we don't have feelings like other people and we don't want like other people. I take offense that. Because we do want like other people. We have dreams like other people and we're not and we don't want to be confined to just that development. We want to be a part of everything that happens outside of that development, and the people that are outside of that development to get to understand us better, too. Because a lot of times, people look at us as if we are less than and we are not. We're people like everybody else are. To be underappreciated, I really take offense of that. I've always been taught to respect everybody and when people disrespect you because of where you live at, that's pretty sad though. Because you shouldn't deal with people like that. You should deal with people based on how they treat you, or what you feel about them or what you think about them, and based on how they treat you. And understand, too, because we live in developments doesn't mean that we want the best that we want. I got voted and part of the reason I took this job on too is because I have footprints of where I live at. I've been there for the good, the bad, and the ugly. And it's

gotten a little bit better, and I just want to get back to the good again. And that's all I have to say, thank you.

Debbie (2nd time speaking)

I just wanted to say something because I feel as though it was some of my comments that upset some of the representatives from NYCHA here tonight. and I want to apologize for that. I'm afraid I didn't speak my comments as eloquently as I should have. What I wanted to say is that I don't feel like any of the improvements that need to be done in NYCHA, getting new elevators, other things, that its absolutely scandalous is that it's not already the case. I don't understand why that needs to be tied to a rezoning framework. I don't understand what that has anything to do with a rezoning framework. The rezoning framework that we're talking about is coming from pressure from the developers who we all know want to build tall buildings along the Gowanus. So, I think it is absolutely imperative that the NYCHA housing be brought up to the standards that people who live there deserve. I grew up in NYCHA housing myself in Brooklyn, so I am not meaning to disrespect the people that live there at all. I think that it's a scandal that that is somehow being tied to this. I don't understand it, maybe someone can explain that to me. Also, I wanted to say that I'm not sure how many people here saw the original Gowanus framework that came out in 2007 or something like that from DOB in which the entire corridor, Bond Street, from around 3rd Street to the entire corridor North, I don't know what, to the end of the canal was all shown that that was going to be rezoned for the kind of development that we are getting with Lightstone right now. So that was the original plan. And also a large swath of it across the street from that...across the water. The reason I'm raising that is because as much as I don't want to be a cynic, I'm terrified that even with all of our hardest efforts, that a couple of months from now, when everything is up on the website, I'm going to be presented with that exact same framework of tall luxury condo developments maybe with some affordable housing tacked on, even though those developments are actually taking away the existing affordable housing, so I just want to put that out there. It's being recorded. If I see that, I'll be really disappointed. I think we'll all be really disappointed.

Steve Hindy (2nd time speaking)

Steve Hindy, again. I know that the woman from Pratt stated that absolutely that the parole center was being built as of right. I think she misspoke. The state asserts that it's being built as of right. Gowanus United has filed a law suit challenging that assertion, and I hope that we prove it is not being done as of right and legally. Thanks.

Sarah

Hi my name is Sarah. Thank you everybody. I was just wondering if you could provide more information on the tax incremented financing and how that works and also how the oversight would work? Because from what Councilmen Levin said, this is what was pushed through with the Bloomberg administration seemingly because we are all involved and we have supported elected officials. But, down the line, how will...I guess it's a two part question: how will the tax incremented financing work and how will this general oversight potentially work?

Adam (resident)

My name is Adam, I've lived on Sackett Street for 22 years. I wanted to put a question to our elected officials. There is a lot that is very impression here and it's built on tradeoffs that we're not all getting behind. But you make an argument that is worth thinking about, about why we have to think that way. But, in thinking about this framework, what the other thing you hear in this room is an awful lot of skepticism built on experience about broken promises and a

generation after generation of bait and switch in the city of New York. And there will always be pressure. And there will always be political leverage that belongs to the interest of real estate speculation and development by the hands that went up in support of 18 story buildings when we did the little straw poll. But I think we have sort of a unique moment right here as we have progressive leaders representing us...Brad and his colleagues in the council and in with support from our state and federal representatives. And I guess the question is what are the strategies that our representatives are going to use to take this framework and prevent it from being something that just goes to city planning and they say "Yeah 18 stories, that's great!" and get it through the council and to our mayor, who you know who know supported Lightstone to support this. Where's our leverage and how's it going to work?

Steven Gimenta (business owner in Gowanus)

Hello, Steven Gimenta. Family business owner in Gowanus, manufacturer, architectural grill. Member of Gowanus Allaince and member of Gowanus United. I want to thank the elected officials. I want to thank Pratt. The last speaker mentioned about trade-offs. I think that it's important we have heard from a lot of residents, and maybe one other manufacturer. I think it's important that these trade-offs aren't at the cost of manufacturing, aren't at the cost of jobs. Because if you can't work, you can't live. So the DOC facility and things that are happening are going to cost jobs and cost manufacturers and cost manufacturers to leave. It's a lot harder to uproot a family, but I think as a manufacturer the truth of the matter is that I can manufacture anywhere. I choose to manufacture in Gowanus because I've been here and my family has been here for over 70 years. Manufacturing is key to the future of Gowanus and it's very important we keep that in mind.

Shawn (resident)

Just very quickly, thank you so much. My name is Shawn and I'm a resident. I just wanted to know if you could address what the current status of Public Place is and what process will be used to decide how that area is developed and will it involve community and feedback and will this framework be applied, etc? I think Public Place came up a few times today during the presentation and it seemed like things have already progressed, but I haven't heard anything in these meetings, so...

Anonymous

Thank you for your time and thank God for that and this is like a perfect day to draw attention. I am (*unclear*) and I am a Brooklyn-ite as well. A lot of the thing is that it is all about the job opportunity, that some of that is my main point and that some of them remain open. But the other thing on their mind is about their community, how to get to their jobs. You got the (*unclear*) lines that just got back to normal from like 5 months ago. You have Smith Street and you have the 9th Street line. Another issue that has been forgotten about is the Union Street line, AKA the B71 that's been there for decades in the Gowanus area. And for the course of that the last time they cut the line was under the previous administration...not Bloomberg, but Governor David Paterson, in 2010 paid by the MTA 2010 service cut and reduction. It's led to massive overcrowding on the subway and bringing more chaos when there's nowhere else to go. So my solution is, if we get the B71 bus back, it could help them to support the community. Thank you, God bless.

Michelle (Fifth Avenue Committee, 2nd time speaking)

So I just wanted to answer a couple of the questions about the Public Place site so some of the folks know. So, back in 2006 I want to say it's been a while at this point, the city's department of Housing Preservation and Development, after several different community visioning sessions, issued whereby the criteria for the future of the Public Place site was laid out, issued a request

for proposals and a number of development teams responded. 5th Avenue Committee was part of the development team for the Gowanus Green, the Hudson company, the Bluestone organization and Jonathan Rose companies. And the criteria that HPD laid out was for at least 50 percent of the units on the site to be affordable housing and for there to be open space. When we put our proposal together this was before the city, this was before the words “permanent affordability” had even crossed the lips of anyone at HPD, we were the first team to promise permanent affordability as part of a process, as part of our being selected. And our proposal has 70 percent of the units to be affordable. The public place sites we’ve been designated as the development team for the site has not gone through the ULURP. That would it would go to the community board, it would go to borough presidents, the city planning commission, city council, then finally to the mayor, so that process is very similar to any of the proposals that would happen here, should they move forward. So there’d be plenty of additional opportunity for community comment and a number of years ago before the DCP framework was released and before the superfund was designated for the canal there were a number of community sessions. Literally dozens and dozens and dozens of community sessions where all of this was discussed. Since then, things have been on hiatus waiting for the canal cleanup to move forward, which we’re very, very happy that’s happened because ultimately the public place site is begin cleaned up to a higher standard as a result of EPA’s involvement

Linda Mariano (not in the microphone, difficult to hear)

I was told in 1965...Public Place designated for public recreation...how did that suddenly disappear? I want an answer. From one of the elected people.