



OFFICE OF THE BROOKLYN BOROUGH PRESIDENT

**TESTIMONY
BY BROOKLYN BOROUGH PRESIDENT ERIC ADAMS
TO THE CITY COUNCIL
REGARDING THE EMPIRE BOULEVARD REZONING
JUNE 17, 2014**

I WANT TO THANK CHAIRPERSON WEPRIN AND MEMBERS OF THE CITY COUNCIL LAND USE SUBCOMMITTEE FOR ZONING AND FRANCHISES FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO TESTIFY TODAY ON THE EMPIRE BOULEVARD REZONING.

IN MY LAND USE RECOMMENDATION TO THE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION AND CITY COUNCIL, I SUPPORTED THIS PROPOSED REZONING AS IT IS COMPATIBLE WITH SURROUNDING LAND USES AND WAS REPRESENTED TO BENEFIT THE NEIGHBORHOOD BY PROVIDING A SUPERMARKET, COMMUNITY FACILITY SERVICES, A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF NEW JOBS, AND THE INCLUSION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNITS.

WHILE THE PROPOSED REZONING WOULD ALLOW WHAT THE APPLICANT HAS EXPRESSED INTEREST IN DEVELOPING, MERELY ADOPTING REZONING IS NOT A SUFFICIENT GUARANTEE OF WHAT WOULD BE DEVELOPED. BEFORE THE CITY COUNCIL TAKES ACTION, IT IS IMPORTANT TO RECEIVE A COMMITMENT THAT MY RECOMMENDATIONS WILL BE ACTUALLY REALIZED IN THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS SITE.

I AM CONCERNED THAT THERE IS LIMITED ACCESS TO FRESH FOOD STORES IN MANY NEIGHBORHOODS. IT IS A PRIORITY OF MINE TO CREATE AND/OR MAINTAIN ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOOD OPTIONS THROUGHOUT ALL OF BROOKLYN. FRESH AND AFFORDABLE FOOD CURRENTLY EXISTS ON THIS SITE, AND THE COUNCIL SHOULD RECEIVE ASSURANCES THAT A SUPERMARKET REMAINS AT THE SITE AS PART OF THE NEW PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT.

NOT ENOUGH BROOKLYN NEIGHBORHOODS HAVE ADEQUATE ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE SERVICES. THEREFORE, WE SHOULD UTILIZE DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES TO RESULT IN AFFORDABLE AND STATE-OF-THE ART MEDICAL SERVICES. ACCORDING TO THE REZONING THERE IS NO OBLIGATION ON THE DEVELOPMENT TO ACTUALLY PROVIDE COMMUNITY FACILITY SPACE AS SUGGESTED BY THE APPLICANT. I AM SEEKING CERTAINTY THAT THE REPRESENTED COMMUNITY FACILITY SPACE IS ACTUALLY PART OF THE FILED BUILDING PLANS.

I AM COMMITTED TO PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR BROOKLYN'S WORKING FAMILIES TO HAVE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE HOUSING. IF THE BUILDING WERE DEVELOPED PURSUANT TO THE ZONING RESOLUTION'S FRESH FLOOR AREA PROVISION, IT IS VERY REASONABLE TO EXPECT THIS BUILDING TO HAVE AT LEAST TWENTY PERCENT OF ITS RESIDENTIAL FLOOR AREA EARMARKED AS AFFORDABLE HOUSING – INCLUDING AT LEAST A FIFTY PERCENT PREFERENCE FOR RESIDENTS OF COMMUNITY DISTRICT 9.

TO BE CERTAIN THAT WHAT IS PROMISED BECOMES REALITY, THE COUNCIL SHOULD SEEK A GUARANTEE THAT DEVELOPMENT PROCEEDS ACCORDING TO THE FILING OF A LEGAL INSTRUMENT THAT ASSURES A SPECIFIC MINIMUM AMOUNT OF FLOOR AREA WOULD BE SET-ASIDE FOR: 1) SUPERMARKET USE AND THAT SUCH USE BE CONSISTENT WITH THE ZONING RESOLUTION'S FRESH REQUIREMENTS FOR THE TYPE AND FOOD PRODUCTS MADE AVAILABLE; 2) COMMUNITY FACILITY SPACE AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING.

FINALLY, THE EXPECTED DEVELOPMENT FROM THIS PROPOSED REZONING PROVIDES AN OPPORTUNITY TO RETAIN BROOKLYN-BASED CONTRACTORS AND SUBCONTRACTORS, ESPECIALLY AT LEAST TWENTY PERCENT PARTICIPATION FOR THOSE THAT ARE DESIGNATED M-W-B-E ESTABLISHMENTS, AS WELL AS LOCAL HIRING AND THE HIRING OF RETURNING MILITARY VETERANS FOR THE RETAIL AND COMMUNITY FACILITY TENANTS. I EXPECT THAT THE DEVELOPER WOULD TAKE STEPS TO COORDINATE WITH AN APPROPRIATE MONITORING AGENCY SO THAT WE ARE ABLE TO MEASURE SUCCESS.

THANK YOU.