

THE HEARING OFFICER: Okay. Can I have everyone's attention, please.

So what I'm going to do is my introductory remarks are going to be translated by our three interpreters into Mandarin, Cantonese, Bengali and Spanish.

Mandarin/Cantonese Interpreter: (In Madarin/Cantonese.)

THE HEARING OFFICER: And Bengali.

Bengali Interpreter: (In Bengali.)

Bengali Interpreter: (In Bengali.)

Spanish Interpreter: (In Spanish.)

THE HEARING OFFICER: All of the presentations that you will hear tonight, we will not simultaneously translate, but we will translate and make available on either of the two websites; the City's website, [nyc.gov\oec](http://nyc.gov/oec) or the website of the Economic Development Corporation, nycedc.com.

Spanish Interpreter: (Translating.)

Mandarin/Cantonese Interpreter: (Translating.)

Bengali Interpreter: (Translating.)

Spanish Interpreter: (Translating.)

THE HEARING OFFICER: Also, when you comment tonight, if people -- these people will be available to translate your comments into English for us and the entire record will be available after this process concludes.

Mandarin/Cantonese: (Translating.)

Bengali Interpreter: (Translating.)

Spanish Interpreter: (Translating.)

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thank you very much.

So now we'll repeat the earlier introductory remarks. And, as I said, these will be translated into the four languages and will be available on the City's websites.

So good evening, everyone and welcome to the public scoping meeting for the Willets Point Development Project.

My name is Robert Kulikowski and I'm an Assistant to the Mayor. And I'm also the Director of the Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination.

I will chair tonight's meeting, representing the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development, the lead agency for the environmental review of this project.

It is now approximately 7:00 and we are continuing the meeting that started at 4:45 p.m. today.

It is being held on Thursday, September 27th, 2012 at P.S.

19 Marino Jeantet, 98-02 Roosevelt Avenue, Queens, New York.

Please note that this is a single meeting. It had -- has two sessions and people that spoke in the first session are asked to speak either in one session or the other but not both.

I'd like to introduce the other people from the project team who are here with us tonight:

David Quart from the New York City Economic Development Corporation, who will provide a short introduction in a minute;

Ethan Goodman of Wachtel, Masyr Missry, who represent the developers and will provide an overview of the project; and

Linh Do from AKRF, the environmental consultants, leading the preparation of the Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement or SEIS, who will briefly describe the potential impact areas that will be analyzed on the SEIS.

As most of you know, a Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement was prepared for the original Willets Point Project.

A Final Generic Environmental Impact Statement was prepared for the original Willets Points Project in 2008 and at that time the proposed project was approved. As the project changed in response to various factors, several technical memoranda were issued to provide a further analysis of the proposed changes.

The current proposal is to redevelop the Willets Point Citi

Field area with a mix of uses to be completed by 2032. This proposal incorporates development similar to that which was analyzed and anticipated in the 2008 GEIS. However, a new component is proposed that would develop an entertainment and retail center of approximately 1.4 million square feet in the parking field west of Citi Field or "Willets West."

Because of the additional project elements and changes in phasings, the Office of the Deputy Mayor is requiring the preparation of a SEIS to examine the potential impacts of the new proposal. The SEIS will add to or supplement and update the analyses conducted in the GEIS and subsequent technical updates.

The Supplemental EISs are subject to the same requirements as any other EIS and so will undergo scoping and all the other required components of the public process. That is why we're here today.

The purpose of this meeting is to hear the public's comments on the Draft Scope of Work for a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement that was issued by the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Economic Development on August 28th, 2012.

Under New York City rules, the scoping meeting is a required as part of the environmental review process. It gives the public an early opportunity to provide comments on how the Environmental

Impact Statement will analyze the project.

The purpose of scoping is to assist the City in identifying potential impacts and mitigation issues that were made during the environmental review.

The positive declaration, a statement of what potential impacts have been identified thus far, and the Draft Scope of Work have been posted on the EDC's and the Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination websites since August 28th, 2012 and have included notification of this meeting.

The time and place of this meeting were also published in the New York Post, El Diario and the Queens Ledger on August 29th of 2012 and the City Record on August 27th to the 31st.

Following the close of the comment period for the Draft Scope, the Office of Economic Development will issue a Final Scope of Work that will guide the preparation of the Draft Supplemental EIS, the document that will also be the subject of additional public review and comment before it is analyzed.

Today's sessions will be organized into several parts. First, we'll hear a brief introduction of the proposed project by David Quart, followed by Ethan Goodman who will provide a description of the proposed project. And then Linh Do, the project's environmental consultant will summarize the scoping

document and the potential impacts in the environmental areas that will be analyzed.

And then third, following an explanation of some procedures to keep the house in order, we will hear your comments.

Then David Quart, who will provide a brief introduction for the proposed projects.

MR. QUART: Thank you.

Good evening, everyone. My name is David Quart and I'm a Senior Vice President of the Economic Development Corporation.

The Willets Point Development Project is a comprehensive planning, zoning and redevelopment strategy that will transform a largely underutilized, approximately 62-acre site, in sub-standard conditions and environmental degradation, along with the 46-acre Citi Field area, into a lively, mixed-use sustainable community and regional destination.

For decades, multiple efforts to clean up and transform Willets Point have failed. The community-driven vision was developed over many years in partnership with local elected officials and other key stakeholders, resulted in the adoption of the Special Willets Point District and Urban Renewal plan by the City Council in 2008.

In 2009, the City issued an open request for

qualifications which led to the issuance of a Targeted development RFP in 2011. The City selected the Queens Development Group, a partnership between the Related Companies and Sterling Equities for the first full phase.

The project and the associated actions to be analyzed in the Supplemental EIS will unlock a comprehensive plan that facilitates development of the area as envisioned in the Willets Point Renewal plan.

In addition, it will leverage development on the West Side of Citi Field, a retail and entertainment center known as Willets West. A center for economic growth will emerge in Queens with a stronger connection to the surrounding neighborhoods.

The project will proceed in a series of steps beginning with the necessary environmental remediation to advance the critical environmental benefits of the plan - giving up even more land in the near term than was initially contemplated but for the earliest part of the project. This, in itself, is a central rationale for the plan and will be a significant achievement.

Several transformative steps will follow, including the development of Phase 1, as always envisioned, which a representative from the Queens Group will describe in more detail in a few minutes.

The Supplemental EIS will also analyze a future stage of retail, residential and other development on what is now the Phase 2 area.

The 23-acre Phase 1 area is located in the southwest portion of the district, bounded approximately by Roosevelt Avenue, 35th Avenue, 126th Street and 127th Street, as shown on the boards to my right.

With completion of development in Willets West and the Phase 1 area, that part of the project will unlock over 5 million square feet of new development in a unified district, transforming a contaminated area into a new neighborhood.

The new commercial residential, 35 percent of the housing designated as affordable, hotel and open space uses, will lead to over 7,000 permanent jobs and 12,000 construction jobs with MWBE and local hiring of 25 percent. It will also recapture billions in spending now lost to the suburbs.

Phase 1 will also include the construction of the new Van Wyck Expressway access ramps, for which the City received the required approvals earlier this year. The ramps will be critical to enable better access to the area.

The development of the full project is expected to be completed by 2032 and anticipates full build-out of the Special

Willetts Point district, substantially as anticipated in the Final GEIS.

In addition, work is progressing on schedule for the much-needed offsite infrastructure which the City broke ground on in December 2011. These \$50 million in improvements, to be completed by 2013, support of the redevelopment of Willetts Point and provide over 350 construction or construction-related jobs.

The City now owns, or is in contract to purchase, approximately 95 percent of the Phase 1 area. And it's continuing negotiations with the remaining property owners.

The City and relocation experts, the Cornerstone Group, recently began another round of outreach to businesses on City-owned property in Phase 1 to ensure they have all the information they need to get access to a variety of City resources in advance of future business relocation.

Relocation assistance will be provided to all interested tenant businesses on City-owned property in Phase 1.

During the recent outreach effort, Cornerstone also began discussions with tenants to identify relocation space. Cornerstone will continue to work with tenants, free of charge, to help them relocate beginning in early 2013.

Finally, all workers in the district are eligible for

training courses through the Willets Point Worker Assistance Program run by LaGuardia Community College. To date, the program has over 500 registrants with workers who are participating in programs to increase their English proficiency, vocational skills and computer literacy.

Additional workers in the phase 1 area are always welcome to join the program. And another series of classes will begin next month.

Thank you very much.

THE HEARING OFFICER: Thanks, David.

Now Ethan Goodman will give us a similar view of the project.

MR. GOODMAN: Thank you.

Good evening. My name is Ethan Goodman and I'm a project manager with the firm of Wachtel, Masyr & Missry. We are land use counsel to the joint venture, the Queens Development Group, which is the developer of the Willets Point Project, and is a joint venture of Related and Sterling Equities.

The Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement, or SEIS, is the subject of today's meeting and will be prepared to study the impacts of a project that has been expanded from the project that was studied in 2008.

In addition to all of the elements from the project that

was studied in 2008, this SEIS will also study the impacts of an entertainment and retail center with one million square feet of leasable space to be developed west of Citi Field, on an existing Citi Field parking lot.

Furthermore, this SEIS will study a phased project with three distinct build years, whereas the 2008 EIS studied a project that was envisioned to occur all in one phase.

So let me briefly explain what the current project is and the phases in which it's anticipated to unfold.

As I said, the current project envisions development in three phases:

In the first phase of the project, which the scope identifies as Phase 1A, would entail the disposition to the joint venture of an approximately 23-acre parcel of land within the Special Willets Point District. It should be noted that the City's authority to dispose of this property does not require additional approvals in this process, as that authority was previously granted in 2008.

Subsequent to taking control of the property, the joint venture would, under the oversight of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation, conduct a comprehensive cleanup of the land, which has been contaminated

for decades and must be cleaned before any redevelopment can occur.

Subsequent to the cleanup, the land would be redeveloped with, along 126th Street, the retail and hotel uses, and east of 126th Street, Citi Field parking that would be transformed into active recreational uses in the baseball off-season and potentially during other times of year.

This recreational space, which would be programmed in consultation with the community, could include elements such as a winterized multi-sport bubble, a driving range and numerous playfields, among other uses.

This phase would also permit the movement of the current Citi Field parking from the lot west of Citi Field onto the Willets Point District. Once that Citi Field parking is moved east, the former parking lot would be developed with Willets West, an entertainment and retail center with its own accessory parking and a million square feet of leasable space.

It should be noted that the current Citi Field parking lot, on which Willets West is proposed for construction, is not currently open to the general public nor does it currently provide any public open space for the community. The first phase of the project is anticipated to be completed in 2018.

The second phase of the project, which the scope identifies as Phase 1B, would occur subsequent to the completion by the City, of the Van Wyck Expressway and access and egress ramps. It would include development of the first 23 acres of the Willets Point district as a mixed-use community pursuant to the original -- pursuant to the zoning originally approved in 2008.

After completion of the Van Wyck ramps, the Citi Field parking on Willets Point would be relocated to parking structures south of Roosevelt Avenue and buildings would be constructed on these 23 acres of the Willets Point District. These buildings are anticipated to include a total of approximately 4.2 million square feet of development, including 2,500 housing units, 35 percent of which would be affordable housing, 900,000 square feet of retail and service uses to serve the new community, a half-million square-foot office building, 280 hotel rooms, in addition to the hotel rooms constructed in Phase 1A, more than five acres of open space and the public school to serve the new community.

This second phase of the project is anticipated to be complete by 2028.

The last phase of the project, which the scopes identifies as Phase 2, would entail the development of the remaining

approximately 41 acres of the Willets Point District as a mixed-used community also pursuant to the zoning originally approved in 2008.

Development in this phase of this project would include an additional 3,360 housing units, again 35 percent of which would be affordable housing, 345,000 square feet of retail serving the community, 210 additional hotel rooms, a 400,000 square-foot convention and an additional school to serve the additional residents of the district and additional open space to total a minimum of eight acres in the overall district. This last phase of the project is anticipated to be complete by 2032.

It should be noted that the joint venture team has been designated to develop Phases 1A and 1B of the project. A developer has not yet been designated to develop Phase 2 of the project on the remaining 41 acres of the Willets Point District. Nonetheless, the SEIS, as Linh Do will describe, will assess the impacts of development on all phases of the project, including Phase 2.

And to help the audience to understand how the project is envisioned to be developed, there are presentation boards in the front of this room that illustrate development for each phase of the project that you're welcome to come up and look at.

In order for the joint venture to move forward with development of Phase 1A of the project, we are seeking a Special Permit from the City Planning Commission to allow surface parking and recreational uses within the Willets Point District, and we are seeking a modification to the existing lease between the City of New York and an entity of Sterling Entities to permit the development of Willets West on the western Citi Field parking lot.

We expect the formal ULURP public review process for the Special Permit to commence in early spring of next year.

Thank you.

Before Linh speaks, I'd like to take just a minute to refresh everyone's memory about what's exactly an environmental review and how that's done.

What we're looking for are potential effects that may be caused by the proposed projects. To do this, the existing conditions of the project site are determined and this is provides the baseline. Basically, we take a snapshot of what exists today.

Second, we determine the build year to be analyzed. This

is the year or in this particular phase, three years, in which the project is anticipated to be complete and operational, again, for the years 2018, 2028 and 2032.

Third, conditions without the proposed project are estimated for each of these build years. And that includes adding background growth, other known projects that will be constructed in the area before the build year and similar types of adjustments. This is referred to as the No-Action Scenario.

And, finally, conditions -- the same analyses are done with the proposed project mixed in and it's the difference between the No-Action and the With-Action Scenario that is measured to determine whether the proposed project can be expected to cause adverse environmental effects and how large or small these will be. This is done using the criteria in the rules governing environmental review both for the State and the City.

So with that little bit of refresher, here is Linh to speak about the environmental process.

MS. DO: Thanks, Bob.

Good evening.

My name is Linh Do. I'm a senior vice president at AKRF and I'm here to speak a little bit about the Draft Scoping document that we've provided and copies are downstairs.

The Draft Scope of Work for the SEIS proposes to examine the project's potential effects on 18 environmental areas.

Among them are: Land use;

Socioeconomic conditions; Community
facilities;

Open space;

Shadows;

Historic and cultural resources; Urban design/visual
resources; Natural resources;

Hazardous materials; Infrastructure;

Transportation;

Air quality;

Greenhouse gas emissions;

Noise; and

Public health.

The Draft EIS -- the Draft SEIS will also include an assessment of the potential effects from construction of the project as well as alternatives to the proposed program.

Where the potential for significant adverse project impacts are identified, the Draft SEIS will identify potential mitigation measures and disclose those significant adverse impacts that are unavoidable.

The Draft SEIS analysis will be conducted consistent with the methodologies and impact criteria guidance outlined in the City Environmental Quality Review Technical Manual, or the CEQR Technical Manual.

For each of the environmental areas, the Draft SEIS will provide a description of the existing conditions.

The Draft SEIS will assess future conditions for three analytical years: 2018 for the first phase of the project, which is noted as 1A; 2028 for the second phase of the project, noted as 1B; and

2032 for the completion of both Willets West and the full build out of the Special Willets District -- Willets Point District.

While the Draft Scoping document details the approach and methodology to be applied to each environmental area, I would like to highlight some particular areas that the Draft SEIS will examine in detail.

Because the proposed project would increase the number of residential units under the development schedule that differs from that analyzed in the 2008 FGEIS, the Socioeconomic Condition chapter will assess whether the proposed project could result in significant adverse impacts on indirect displacement.

The analysis will identify whether there is a population within a half-mile study area that may be vulnerable to displacement due to increased rents.

The proposed project would result in the same direct business displacement as analyzed in the GEIS and subsequent technical memoranda. Thus, this SEIS will provide updated information on those businesses that remain on the project site and the anticipated timing of their displacement.

They will also assess whether the proposed projects increased commercial uses could result in significant indirect business displacement pressures within a half-mile study area due to increased rents.

And, lastly, the chapter will also consider the effects of the proposed project's one million square feet of entertainment and retail uses on the trade area business conditions.

The Community Facilities chapter will evaluate the effects on community services, including the demand for public schools and public child care resources.

The Hazardous Materials chapter will include a summary of any pertinent changes to site conditions in the Special Willets Point District based on the review of regulatory databases, as well as address the need for any changes to the remedial action

plan and/or to the construction, health and safety plan based on the new phasing of the project.

Since the Willets West portion of the current project was not analyzed in the 2008 FGEIS, the Hazardous Materials chapter will also include the description of those conditions and any potential hazardous materials on that portion of the site.

Since remediation, grading and infrastructure improvements would occur more incrementally in the District under the proposed project, and there would not be -- there would not be the open space area buffering eastern portions of Phase 1A and 1B from the industrial uses that would remain and that would be developed later, additional safeguards would be required to ensure that existing hazardous materials does not migrate into the developed portions of the site.

It will also consider the need for such safeguards and will describe the mechanisms to ensure that commitments described in the SEIS are implemented.

The Transportation chapter will analyze the project's effects on the local traffic, parking, transit and pedestrian circulation conditions.

It will include an assessment of approximately 32 local intersections and 13 highway network locations. The proposed

locations are noted in Figure 8 of the draft scoping document.

A detailed traffic analysis will be undertaken for seven time periods for each of the three analysis years.

Parking demand and supply will be assessed in detail as well as the project's anticipated demand on the public transit system and the area's pedestrian facilities.

A vehicular and pedestrian safety plan will also be assessed and conducted as part of the transportation analysis.

The SEIS will also examine the greenhouse gas emissions generated by the proposed project and include an assessment of its consistency with the City's established reduction goals under PlaNYC and local law 22 of 2008.

As noted in the Draft Scope and indicated in City's CEQR Technical Manual, consultation will be held with the Mayor's Office of Environmental Coordination and other appropriate agencies in the area of climate change.

The SEIS will also assess the project's potential to have construction related impacts on vehicular and pedestrian traffic circulation, as well as on air quality, noise -- and noise. It will describe a conceptual construction schedule and estimate the staging and onsite activities for the three phases, including the need to provide access to existing businesses in the District

during the initial phases of the project.

It is expected that a quantitative analysis will be prepared for the construction of the phases -- excuse me, for the construction of project's full build and the need to analyze prior phases will primarily depend on how the cumulative construction and operational activities compare to the full build out.

Measures to minimize or avoid these construction impacts will be identified.

The Draft SEIS will examine alternatives to the proposed project that will avoid or reduce project-related significant adverse impacts. These alternatives will also be compared with the stated goals and objectives of the proposed project.

Thank you.

THE HEARING OFFICER: Great.

Thank you. Thank you, Linh.

We have a short announcement before we continue.

Spanish Interpreter: (Speaking in Spanish.)

The comments that we hear tonight are going to -- or are submitted to the end of the comment period, will be used to further refine the scope of work for this Environmental Impact

Statement. And the final scope will reflect consideration of all the substantive comments received, oral, both oral and written comments receive full consideration. The final scope of work will then guide how the GEIS is prepared.

Just quickly, so that we can keep this moving along and hear everybody, I'd just like to go over a few procedures that we'll use to get your comments today.

It's my job to ensure that comments are received in an orderly fashion so that the record will be accurate and an accurate reflection of what we said so we can hear everyone and know exactly what you say.

We have a court stenographer recording tonight's proceedings. And I want to reiterate that the purpose of tonight's meeting is to hear comments on how to conduct the environmental review, including such things as:

Do areas already identified for analysis need to be changed in any way and how should they change?

What, if any other areas should be considered? And is there any information that the project team should know and other types, similar types of feedback?

I'll call on speakers in the following order: We will hear elected officials, if they're here, their representatives, any

City or State agencies and members of the public.

As I just said, if you wish to speak, you should have filled out a speaker card so we can keep track of who you are and we can get in touch with you to follow up. And they're available and if you haven't signed up already, you can do so now.

I will take people in the order that they did sign up, calling three names at a time to give subsequent speakers a heads up. If you're not ready to speak when it's your turn, your card will be placed at the end of pack and you'll be recalled at that time, we will ensure that everyone who wants to speak will speak.

I do ask that you be courteous to your fellow participants and not interrupt while someone else is speaking and keep the background noise to a minimum.

Everyone who wishes to speak will have the opportunity to do so.

Each person will have three minutes to make oral remarks and we'll signal when you have 30 seconds left. When you come to the microphone, please state your name and help the stenographer out by spelling it if, like mine, it might be a bit difficult. And if you're speaking on behalf of someone else or some group, please identify who they are.

Please speak clearly so that an accurate record of your

comments can be made. When your three minutes are finished, please conclude your remarks.

You will have until Tuesday, October 9th, 2012 at 5:00 p.m. at which to make or supplement any comments that you made tonight. These could be submitted to Rob Holbrook, who's sitting next to me at the New York City Economic Development Corporation, 110 William Street, New York, New York or at his e-mail address, rholbrook, that's r-h-o-l-b-r-o-o-k @nycedc.com.

I will also accept written copies of remarks if you want to give them to me after you've spoken this evening.