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The Odeon's unenclosed sidewalk cafe, 145 W. Broadway, Manhattan. *Image Credit: CityLand.*

CITY COUNCIL

Legislation

Citywide

Sidewalk Cafe Legislation Calls for Earlier Hours, Efficient Application Process

Community boards fight City Council on shortened sidewalk cafe review period. On May 7, 2013, the City Council's Committee on Consumer Affairs held a joint hearing with the Land Use Zoning & Franchises

Subcommittee to discuss proposed amendments to sidewalk cafe regulations. Introductions 875-2012, 876-A-2012, and 1039-2013 seek to expand sidewalk cafe hours and streamline the sidewalk cafe licensing and registration process.

Sidewalk cafes are licensed and monitored by the City's [Department of Consumer Affairs](#). In order to operate a sidewalk cafe, owners must first submit various documentation and fees to the DCA. Certain public safety regulations must be met and documented at *(cont'd on page 63)*

Welcome Citibike!

The Bloomberg administration will be remembered for, among other initiatives, a major reallocation of public street space for new and innovative uses. Cars and trucks have been joined by a host of new users, most recently by the long anticipated bike share program. Citibike is a worthy experiment.

The City's Department of Transportation chased vehicular traffic from portions of Times Square, Herald Square and Madison Square and rededicated the space to movable chairs, tables and planters. Formerly clogged streets now serve as parks for sitters, walkers, lunch time breaks and urban star gazing. Along First Avenue, Second Avenue and other thoroughfares, DOT has seized entire lanes and pushed the parking lane away from the curb and out into the street. It then dedicated the former parking lanes to bicycles. These two shifts — pavement parks and protected bike lanes — constitute the largest shift of street space away from motorized vehicles since New York City started paving streets with asphalt.

Most recently, in May 2013, DOT allocated more dedicated street space for bicycles. Lengthy bike docks now occupy former parking lanes near many popular destinations in Manhattan and Brooklyn. On blocks where alternate side of the street parking was once available, DOT has removed five or more car spaces and installed a bike dock. But drivers can not complain too much. Street space for free on-street-parking doubled in recent years when the City limited alternate side parking to only four days a week and for only a couple of hours a day.

Cars and trucks compete for street space with movie shoots, street fairs, parades, and the unpredictable street travel by skateboards, push carts, scooters, pedicabs and even motorized wheelchairs. Intercity buses now use sidewalks and curb lanes as bus terminals.

Streets are competitive environments with DOT the final space arbitrator. Each claimant for priority makes a persuasive case for its own preeminence. Now it is bikers who argue that motorists have to adjust. Mayor Bloomberg has the correct idea about Citibike. It is a free market experiment. Use will enhance its value. If use does not justify the dedication of space, there are plenty of other street users who are ready to reclaim the space.

Ross Sandler

CITYLAND

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this time, such as whether the proposed cafe will be on a sidewalk that is at least 12 feet wide. Applicants go through a multi-step approval and review process in order to be granted a revocable consent before a sidewalk cafe license will be issued. DCA controls and facilitates the process; sending the revocable consent petition to various City entities for discrete review periods. The petition is first sent to the City's Department of City Planning, Department of Environmental Protection, and the Landmarks Preservation Commission (if applicable). From there, the petition is sent to the local community board, then back to DCA, and then on to the City Council. Each entity is entitled to hold its own public hearing on the petition and recommend approval, approval with modifications, or denial. Finally, the petition is sent to the [Mayor's Office of Contract Services](#) for review and approval. When a revocable consent is granted, DCA will issue the sidewalk cafe a license to operate.

The sidewalk cafe license renewal process is similar to the new application process. Both the license and the revocable consent expire every two years. While the renewal goes through the revocable consent review and approval process, DCA will issue the sidewalk cafe owner a temporary operating letter in lieu of a license until the revocable consent is granted. Sidewalk cafes that operate without a license or temporary operating letter or in violation of the revocable consent terms may be fined or eventually sealed by DCA.

[Introduction 875](#), proposed by Council Member [Daniel R. Garodnick](#), Council District 4 (Manhattan), would allow sidewalk cafes to open and operate on Sundays starting at 10:00 A.M. The current law prohibits sidewalk cafes from operating before noon on Sundays.

[Introduction 876-A](#), also proposed by Council Member Garodnick, would clarify and stagger the timeframe in which licenses and re-

vocable consents are renewed. The bill would set a two-year term for licenses and a term of no less than four years for revocable consents. Additionally, a revocable consent expiration could not be dated earlier than six months after a license expiration date. The purpose is to ensure that the two renewals needed to continue operation of a sidewalk cafe do not create a burden on applicants with overlapping processes. The City Council noted that because DCA will not issue a license renewal until the revocable consent is granted, some sidewalk cafe owners have been fined for operating without a license while the revocable consent petition is in review. Therefore, the bill would ensure that a sidewalk cafe owner is not treated as an unlicensed operation during the revocable consent review process if the applicant has submitted a complete petition to renew, the owner previously held a valid license to operate, and the owner is in compliance with the terms and conditions of the previous revocable consent.

[Introduction 1039](#), proposed by Council Member [Diana Reyna](#), Council District 34 (Brooklyn/Queens), would seek to make the revocable consent process more efficient. Currently, the local community board has 45 days in which to hold a hearing and approve, disapprove, or offer a modified approval of a revocable consent. The bill would reduce that time period to 30 days. If the community board does not take action on the application within the 30-day period, the bill would deem such inaction as a waiver of the community board's option to hold a hearing and give a recommendation. The bill would also reduce DCA's time period in which to decide whether to hold a hearing from 45 to 30 days. The bill would permit DCA to waive its hearing option and if that waiver is exercised, DCA would have ten days to submit the application to the City Council for its review. If the waiver is not exercised, DCA would have the

option of extending its review to 60 days upon notification to the applicant. Finally, the bill would permit the mayor's office to waive its approval process if it determines that mayoral approval is unnecessary.

At the May 7, 2013 hearing on the proposed legislation, Fran Freedman, deputy commissioner of DCA testified that DCA is opposed to the provision of Intro. 876-A that would stagger the expiration of the license and revocable consent. She said that DCA supported a four year term on revocable consents but that separate expiration dates would lead to confusion for sidewalk cafe owners. She also testified that DCA would be forced to issue licenses without the pertinent information uncovered by the revocable consent process. Representatives of multiple community boards testified in opposition to the reduction of the community board's 45-day review process and the community board waiver provision. Bob Gormley of [Manhattan Community Board Two](#) testified that community boards meet on a monthly basis and that if community boards are given only 30 days to review applications, some applications would fall outside of the timeframe for those meetings. He said that the bill would undermine the public review process because those applications that the community board cannot calendar within 30 days would be automatically approved without going through the community board's review. Several other community boards as well as Manhattan Borough President Scott M. Stringer agreed with Gormley's testimony.

Council Member Reyna expressed her concern over the lengthy application process and explained that her bill targets inefficiency; "despite unanimous community support, a sidewalk cafe application can take a minimum of 70 to 100 days for approval." Council Member Garodnick, who chairs the Committee on Consumer Affairs, noted that the proposed legislation would need

to both address the cumbersome application process and the importance of the community board's review. He stated, "In fact, it's become very clear in the course of this hearing that the community board is, perhaps, one of if not the most central actor in the scrutiny and consideration of ... sidewalk cafes." He then closed the hearing; no vote was taken on the bills.

Council: Intro. 875-2012 (May 7, 2013); Intro. 876-2012 Version: A (May 7, 2013); Intro. 1039-2013 (May 7, 2013).

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Certificate of Appropriateness

SoHo, Manhattan

Third Time's the Charm for SoHo Project

Instead of a tower on a base, the revised project would rise to six stories at the streetwall, with a minimally visible penthouse. On May 14, 2013, the Landmarks Preservation Commission voted to approve a proposal to construct a new building at [42 Crosby Street](#) in the [SoHo-Cast Iron Historic District](#). The meeting was the [third time the Commission addressed the proposal](#), and the [An-](#)

[nabelle Selldorf](#)-designed project underwent significant changes in its design since its [initial proposal](#). The building will replace a parking lot and garage currently occupying the corner lot. The building will be primarily residential, with retail uses at the ground floor.

[At the first hearing on the item](#), on December 11, 2012, the applicants presented a plan for a nine-story building clad in aluminum with a four-story tower setback from a five-story base. The plan called for horizontal bands of nine-foot-tall, double-hung horizontal windows. Selldorf said the design reflected the industrial character of the neighborhood, and that the use of aluminum in the facade related to SoHo's historic cast-iron architecture. Some of the commissioners objected to the building's massing, and others asked for revisions to the facade materials. Chair Robert B. Tierney asked the applicants to revise the design in light of the commissioners' comments.

The applicants returned on [February 12, 2013](#), with a proposal that raised the cornice line of the building's base six feet, set the tower off from the rear party walls, and modified the facade windows and columns making a more vertically emphasized pattern. Commission-

ers generally praised the design, but some still voiced discomfort with the project's massing and scale. Chair Tierney asked the applicants to revise and return.

At the May meeting, Selldorf presented a plan for a building with a six-story streetwall, and only one set back penthouse story, which Selldorf said would be "virtually invisible." The retail-oriented ground floor was also reduced in height, and the windows were changed from double-hung to sliding doors with glass guardrails. The revised structure would rise to a total height of 85 feet, down from the 125 feet of the original proposal. The structure would possess a steel cornice, thinner spandrels than prior iterations, and round columns.

Chair Tierney said that the applicants' revised plan was "totally responsive," and that the issues hindering earlier approval were "completely resolved." Commissioner Michael Goldblum found the plan "lovely" and approvable, but lamented that "the challenge of the first scheme" could not be met. Commissioner Margery Perlmutter called the project "beautiful," and found it to reflect the character and materials of the historic district. Commissioner Diana Chapin commended "the subtle use of textures" and found the plan's massing much more appropriate for the neighborhood than previous proposals. Chair Tierney led a unanimous vote for approval.

LPC: 42 Crosby Street, Manhattan (13-6801) ([May 14, 2013](#)) (Architect: Selldorf Architects).

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Certificate of Appropriateness

SoHo, Manhattan

Facade Demolitions Approved on DOB Recommendation

Applicants will retain brick from ne-



Corner lot at 42 Crosby Street. *Image Credit: Google.*

glected Federal style row houses' unstable facades on the verge of collapse. On May 21, 2013, the Landmarks Preservation Commission voted to approve an application for the demolition of two adjacent structures at [321](#) and [323 Canal Street](#) in Manhattan's [SoHo-Cast Iron Historic District](#). The action was presented as necessary to prevent the imminent collapse of the vacant buildings. Landmarks' Deputy Counsel John Weiss explained that the application was before Landmarks without a restoration plan because of the dangerous conditions at the site. The front and rear facades of both buildings would be dismantled, and the materials would be stored on site for later reconstruction.

Department of Buildings' Executive Director of Forensic Engineering Timothy Lynch stated that both the front and rear facades were unstable, and that he recommended their immediate dismantling. Lynch testified that the lime-based mortar on the facades had disintegrated, and the bricks were now essentially resting on "pure sand." He also said the facades had separated from the walls shared with adjoining buildings, and would be very difficult to stabilize without dismantling. He added that the walls were "unlikely to stay put in the foreseeable future."

Architect [Page Cowley](#) presented evidence of the buildings' deterioration and said that documentation would take place to ensure that future reconstruction was accurate. The roof would be shored and braced during the demolition. Structural engineer Stuart Gold stated that the buildings had "a litany of issues" and the floors also required replacement. He detailed the process for dismantling the facades while retaining the roof and making reconstruction possible. He said "whatever we can save, we will," which would include all face brick, as well as window frames and any salvageable brownstone.

A letter from [Manhattan Community Board 2](#) recommended ap-

proval of the application. The [Historic Districts Council's](#) Nadezhda Williams testified that the organization is "wary of the deconstruction of two 1820s row houses without an approved plan for their reconstruction." She further testified that "demolition of even non-contributing buildings in historic districts are not allowed without an approved new construction."

Landmarks General Counsel Mark Silberman responded that the Historic Districts Council was correct in that Landmarks did not usually consider demolition applications without attendant plans for reconstruction, but the application before the Commission was brought forward because of the dangerous condition of the site.

Commissioner Michael Devonshire was convinced of the applicants' good faith, and said he was "quite sanguine" that the process would be conducted properly. Chair Robert B. Tierney emphasized the necessity to "proceed without delay" in closing the hearing and leading the vote. Landmarks voted unanimously to allow the demolition.

LPC: 321 Canal Street; 323 Canal Street, Manhattan (14-2652; 14-2567) ([May 21, 2013](#)) (Architect: [Page Ayres Cowley Architects](#)).

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Designation Calendaring
Gramercy, Manhattan

Former Tammany Hall Near Union Square Enters Landmarking Process

Hall served as home to powerful City political organization after abandonment of 14th Street headquarters. On May 14, 2013, the Landmarks Preservation Commission voted to calendar the former Tammany Hall, formally commencing the structure's consideration as an individual City landmark. The building is

located at [100-102 East 17th Street](#), just off Union Square.

The Neo-Georgian building was completed in 1929 based on the designs of the firm of Thompson, Holmes & Converse and architect Charles B. Meyers. Three-and-a-half stories tall, the structure was loosely modeled on Wall Street's [Federal Hall](#), where George Washington took his oath of office. The building replaced the organization's former headquarters on 14th Street, a structure that is no longer standing. The building possesses a stone base, with the upper floors primarily clad in brick. Decorative elements include a pedimented portico and sculptural reliefs in limestone and terra cotta.

The Tammany political organization, which originated in the late 1700s, was at the pinnacle of its power at the time of the building's construction. The building was intended to convey both Tammany's origins in the Federalist era, and its renaissance as a significant fixture in City politics. Within a few years, however, Tammany-backed Mayor Jimmy Walker resigned in 1932 amid corruption scandals, and Tammany foe Fiorello LaGuardia was elected as Mayor.

Tammany sold the building in 1943, and it has subsequently served as a union meeting hall, as the Roundabout Company's theater, and most recently as the home of the New York Film Academy.

The building remains relatively unaltered since its construction, though five storefronts have been created on the ground floor facade facing Union Square, and various commercial signs and banners have been installed on street-level facades. The building has also undergone changes to its rooftop, which are concealed by the building's parapets.

The unanimous vote to calendar the item was met with applause from assembled members of the public. Chair Robert B. Tierney commented that the building was



Former Tammany Hall at 100 East 17th Street, Manhattan. *Image Credit: CityLand.*

“obviously rich with a lot of interesting things,” and looked forward to further consideration. No date has been set for a public hearing on the item.

LPC: Tammany Hall, 100 East 17th Street, Manhattan (LP-2490) (May 14, 2013).

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION

Designation Hearing
Financial District, Manhattan

Second Hearing for the Marine Midland Bank Designation

Preservationists turned out to support designation of mid-century modern bank building. On April 2, 2013 and May 14, 2013, the Landmarks Preservation Commission heard testimony on the potential designation of the Marine Midland Bank building at [140 Broadway](#) in Manhattan’s Financial District. The building was designed by the Gordon Bunshaft-helmed firm of [Skidmore, Owings & Merrill](#), and exemplifies mid-century modernism in its unadorned curtain walls of black aluminum and bronze-tinted

glass, and trapezoidal form. The building is offset by a sculpture by artist Isamu Noguchi, a 28-foot-tall red cube balanced on a corner. The building primarily housed financial-services industry offices, and was named for one of its principal tenants, the Marine Midland Grace Trust Company. As of 2010, the primary building tenant is Brown Brothers Harriman. The 49-story structure was calendered by Land-



The Marine Midland Bank building.
Image Credit: LPC.

marks on November 20, 2012. (See [CityLand coverage here](#)).

On April 2, 2013, supporters of designation included the [Historic Districts Council](#)’s Nadezhda Williams, who noted that the tower was one of the first tall structures to be built under the 1961 zoning resolution, and that its design was “almost the definition of minimalism.” John Arbuckle, of [Docomomo](#), an organization that advocates for modern movement architecture, stated that “the public sidewalks along all four sides...allow its crisply geometrical volume to be appreciated as an elegant freestanding structure.” Andrea Goldwyn, from the [New York Landmarks Conservancy](#) also [testified](#) on behalf of designation, and New York University Professor Carol Krinsky submitted a written statement which called the building’s architecture “unprecedented at the time of its construction.” Fried Frank attorney [Carol Rosenthal](#) asked Landmarks not to close the hearing, but reopen it at a later date so that the owners might offer testimony. Chair Robert B. Tierney agreed.

When the hearing continued on May 14, 2013, General Property Manager Cliff Parker testified that the company was “pleased to support designation,” and praised the building’s “distinctive design” and “beautiful integration” with the Noguchi sculpture. Parker further stated that a landmark “cannot be separated from its need to continue performing as a strong and economically sound real estate asset.” He said “we look forward to a productive working relationship” with Landmarks to maintain the building. Carol Rosenthal testified that the owners requested that they retain flexibility regarding signage, and that they also intended to create a new entrance. She also claimed the building’s “visual integrity” was threatened by street vendors who crowded the plaza, and hoped to work with Landmarks to resolve the issue. Preservation consultant [Bill Higgins](#), also retained by the own-

Nothing Yet Garden Becomes the Nothing Anymore Garden: The Need for Open Space in Williamsburg and Greenpoint

High rises are built in Williamsburg, Brooklyn at a historic rate and most of them remain empty while very few lots are preserved as open space. One such lot at [99 South 5th Street](#) in Williamsburg is owned by Housing Preservation and Development (HPD), the City government agency charged with managing affordable housing, and has been vacant for at least 20 years. Last year HPD released a [Request for Proposals](#) (RFP) for the lot (alternative address 337 Berry Street), asking developers to submit plans to buy and develop the property. The results were supposed to be released to the public last November. While the RFP for this lot requested that at least part of the footprint be set aside for open space, the activists at [Time's Up](#) know all too well how public space projects conveniently disappear from development plans when costs run higher than expected.

Time's Up, a direct action environmental group, has defended and supported open space in New York City for at least 20 years. After three years of operating a bicycle co-op in Williamsburg, the group has established deeps roots in the community. One of the volunteers proposed that they finally start their own community garden. The group decided on 99 South 5th Street, just one block from their bicycle co-op, after scouting vacant lots around that location, researching who owned those lots, and holding several meetings to discuss the pros and cons of each. Time's Up spoke with the community board and left messages for HPD to find out what happened with the RFP, but were told nothing. Additionally, hundreds of signatures were collected from local residents who supported the garden.

For the past two months, a team of volunteers have converged on the vacant lot at 99 South 5th Street to begin establishing the community garden. Two women made compost bins, a large group constructed a stage out of donated recycled plastic lumber, four carpenters with power tools built eight raised beds, and various other volunteers weeded the flower beds and cut tall grass. "What's the name?" one volunteer asked another as they stood outside the fence, staring in. "Nothing yet," said the other. The No Trespassing signs were replaced with a colorful hand-painted sign reading, "If you would like to garden with us, contact NothingYetCommunityGarden@gmail.com." There were two locks on the chain, one belonged to the City, and one belonged to the gardeners.

In its aptly titled 2012 article, "[Brooklyn Waits on Promise of a Park](#)," the Wall Street Journal reported that Williamsburg and Greenpoint do not have the amount



The City's Department of Sanitation bulldozed the community garden at 99 South 5th Street, Brooklyn on May 23, 2013. *Image Credit: Time's Up.*

of open space called for in the 2005 [Greenpoint-Williamsburg Rezoning](#) plan. The article pointed out that plans for a 28-acre park, connecting Williamsburg and Greenpoint with a path, waterfront views, and a playground have yet to materialize. The City has failed to follow up on their plans to create desperately needed green spaces. In its statement of community needs, Community Board One in Williamsburg-Greenpoint notes that [expanding parkland](#) is a priority community need. The [Williamsburg-Greenpoint Open Space Plan](#) specifically concurs.

On May 22, 2013 HPD [announced](#) that North Brooklyn Development Corporation had won the RFP and would be developing the lot this year. After finding out about the RFP announcement, Time's Up volunteers were eager to talk to North Brooklyn Development Corporation and find out if they would permit the garden until development started, or even include a garden in the plans, since the RFP requires open space. Instead, the next day at 7:00 A.M., the City's Department of Sanitation destroyed the raised beds, picnic tables, benches, and stage, and bulldozed the garden. Volunteers called HPD on the spot. When HPD finally returned their calls, they were told that the lot was actually not part of the RFP, still belonged to HPD, and would remain vacant. HPD came in with-

(cont'd on page 68)

GUEST COMMENTARY (CONT.)

Nothing Yet Garden Becomes the Nothing Anymore Garden: The Need for Open Space in Williamsburg and Greenpoint

out any warning, destroyed valuable materials that the organization can never get back, and reversed hundreds of hours of hard work put into cleaning and beautifying this lot. If they would have just given us a reasonable amount of time, we would have moved the raised bed, tables, benches, stage, and beehive to another location.

Dozens of people approached the gardeners as the bulldozers demolished the lot, offering their condolences and support. "I've been watching you guys work on this from my office window, and it looked just great," one person said. "It doesn't make any sense, this lot was full of trash for 20 years and they never cleaned it up until you guys started gardening here." If

the garden had been destroyed by the developer who had bought the lot, the gardeners could have understood the impetus to clean the space, but we are all confused as to why the city spent its own money and resources destroying a project that had extensive community support and no complaints. Even though this garden was destroyed, at a huge loss of resources and volunteer efforts, Time's Up will continue to struggle to create the open space that the community so desperately desires, both in this lot and others.

— Keegan Stephan

Keegan Stephan is the volunteer coordinator for Time's Up.

ers, said that activity in the plaza "almost destroys the character of what you see and what was intended to be seen."

Chair Tierney said he also looked forward to a productive relationship with the building's owners, and said he deeply appreciated "the attitude and approach" of the representatives who testified. The hearing was closed but no date has been set for a vote on designation.

LPC: The Marine Midland Bank Building, 140 Broadway, Manhattan (LP-2533) (April 2, 2013; May 14, 2013).

the plan: [Donald H. Elliott](#), who was Chair of the City Planning Commission from 1966-1973, as well as Edgar Lampert, who worked on public development projects in Lower Manhattan in Mayor John Lindsay's administration.

Elliott discussed how a comprehensive plan was required in order for the City to qualify for federal funding for public housing in the 1960s. In addition, the 1938 City Charter called for a plan but the task had yet to be undertaken. Elliott recalled that the 1969 plan embodied

Mayor John Lindsay's approach to the problems of the City. It was not just a land use plan but a comprehensive plan that attempted to deal with the serious problems that faced the City, and give best judgments and determine best practices for the future. The plan was divided into four major sections:

Section 1: The National Center: The view that NYC is the center of the United States.

Section 2: Opportunity: Jobs existed in the City but there were a large number of people who were

CENTER FOR NEW YORK CITY LAW

New York Law School

Citywide

Former CPC Chair Discussed 1969 Plan for New York City

On Thursday, April 11, 2013, the [Center for New York City Law](#) and the [Center for Real Estate Studies](#) at New York Law School presented a Master Class on the 1969 City Planning Commission's Plan for New York City. Ross Sandler, Director of the Center for New York City Law, found a complete set of the original plans at a recent auction. Mr. Sandler invited two guest speakers to discuss



Edgar Lampert and Don Elliott. Image Credit: CityLand.

Planning a Sustainable NYC: Howard Slatkin, NYC Department of City Planning



Image Credit: DCP.

Howard Slatkin, the director of sustainability for the New York City Department of City Planning, was a frequent visitor to NYC while growing up in New Jersey, but it was not until he moved to the City after studying history at Brown University, that he became interested in architecture and the social life of places. He earned a master's degree in urban planning at Columbia University in 2000. At that time the concept of sustainability, though embedded in the course curriculum, had not yet gained the notoriety it has today.

From City planning to City sustainability. Slatkin joined the Department of City Planning immediately after graduation in the summer of 2000; he started as the community planner for Brooklyn Community District 1. His first task was to look closely at the Williamsburg, Brooklyn area and how the community was changing around the L subway line. His work eventually became part of the 2005 [Greenpoint-Williamsburg Rezoning](#). The rezoning addressed population growth in the area and the disparity between the actual and legal uses of industrial buildings that were increasingly being used as residential and commercial spaces. The experience exposed Slatkin to many important issues including mixed-use development, waterfront redevelopment, and affordable housing, which became one of Slatkin's areas of expertise and focus. The Greenpoint-Williamsburg Rezoning created the City's current tool for affordable housing development – the [Inclusionary Housing Program](#), which allows developers to take advantage of a floor area bonus in exchange for creating or preserving units of affordable housing for targeted income levels. The program has been used to encourage affordable housing development in many of City Planning's rezoned areas, including [Hudson Yards](#), [West Chelsea/High Line](#), and [West Harlem](#). From there, Slatkin became increasingly involved with the policy side of city planning and eventually became deputy director of strategic planning, where he oversaw the special

projects, and in particular the green initiatives, for all of City Planning's divisions.

In 2010, Slatkin was named City Planning's first [director of sustainability](#). Slatkin said that the creation of the position was a recognition of the importance of sustainability to the City and a reflection of the City's shift in focus after [PlaNYC](#). PlaNYC was created in 2007 by Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg's administration and sought to develop long-term sustainability goals addressing population growth, climate change and economic development. At City Planning, sustainability issues and ideas for projects are communicated and implemented through a green team, a person from each division who is responsible for focusing on sustainability. Slatkin coordinates and directs the group. He says that "the idea of sustainability is that it is a set of principles that you integrate into everything you do." Slatkin and the green team encourage the concept of complete neighborhoods, communities with a variety of housing options and accessible transit, open space, and retail and services all within walking distance.

Zone Green. In 2010, the [Green Codes Task Force](#), a joint collaboration of City government and private industry, released a report recommending ways to increase green building, energy efficiency, and resource conservation. Slatkin's team used those recommendations as a jumping off point for [Zone Green](#), a comprehensive zoning resolution text amendment aimed at removing obstacles to and encouraging green building. Passed by the New York City Council on April 30, 2012, Zone Green allowed building developers and owners to accomplish green retrofits and sustainable projects which were not possible under the zoning resolution. For example, inadequate insulation can cause as much as 70 percent of a building's energy loss. A minimally-intrusive, effective way to achieve energy efficiency is by retrofitting the building with external insulation. However, most existing buildings were built out to the allowable maximum floor area and height under zoning regulations. Adding extra inches of external insulation onto the building would therefore push the building into violation of zoning laws. Zone Green amended the zoning

resolution to exempt external insulation on walls and roofs up to eight inches. Zone Green also removed impediments to solar and wind power installations, sun control devices, the installation of roof maintenance systems, and rooftop greenhouses.

Slatkin accepted the American Planning Association's [2013 National Planning Excellence Award for Environmental Planning](#) for Zone Green on behalf of City Planning. He said that Zone Green is not always perceived as environmental planning, but categorizes the project as urban environmentalism. "Cities are not antithetical to the environment." He says "When we grow in cities, we're not sprawling. Seeing [Zone Green] nationally recognized was really gratifying for New York."

Rebuilding the waterfront after Hurricane Sandy. Slatkin's newest project seeks to make the City more resilient in the face of extreme weather events. Slatkin's office was contemplating the implications of climate change on the City's 520 miles of shoreline when Hurricane Sandy hit in October 2012. That preparatory work gave his team a head start on issues the City faced in the aftermath of the storm. A mayoral [executive order](#) issued on January 31, 2013 and emergency rules promulgated by the [Department of Buildings](#) allowed immediate reconstruction of homes destroyed or damaged by the hurricane. Certain zoning regulations, especially those related to building height, were suspended so that owners could rebuild based on [new advisory flood elevation data](#) from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. City Planning plans to propose amendments to the zoning resolution to permanently enable the construction and retrofit of buildings in flood-prone areas based off of FEMA's newest data. For example, the [Flood Resilience Text Amendment](#) would give buildings an additional one to two feet of height to accommodate DOB floodproofing regulations that require first floors to be above base flood elevation levels. When FEMA issues new [Flood Insurance Rate Maps](#) (FIRMs) sometime in 2015, City Planning will revisit the zoning resolution and propose appropriate updated amendments.

— Amber Gonzalez

unemployed because they were not trained or educated for the jobs available.

Section 3: The Environment: This did not deal with environmental issues like we face today; instead it primarily dealt with the building of housing, and how to make living conditions and our neighborhoods better.

Section 4: Government: Mayor Lindsay was very interested in having a community participation component as part of the development process. Following the Robert Moses era that mostly ignored public opinion, Lindsay wanted local communities to have an impact on government decisions before they were made.

Elliott said that the City Planning Commission and the Lindsay administration were confronted with a planning system that was obsolete and no longer worked. One of the first things they did was break up the City into 62 Community Planning Districts. Presently there are 59 Community Districts in the City, each with its own Community Board. The Commission even held 62 separate public hearings on the plan itself. In addition to the overarching four part theme, the Plan attempted to create 62 separate plans for each district or provide detailed information as to what was going on at that time in each district instead, including the number of schools, quality of transportation and local development. The goal was to help aid the local community boards by providing them with the information they needed to make legitimate plans for their own district.

Elliott said the City Planning Commission hoped to update the plan's information on a regular basis, but it was not until the era of computers that such updates became much easier and faster to implement. Now anyone can go to the Community Data Portal on the CPC's website to get all kinds of up-to-date, district-specific information.

In terms of overall development, Elliott stated that the Lindsay administration's goal was to make the City comfortable to live in and not just a series of high-rise buildings. One of the ways this goal was accomplished was through the use of special zoning districts, a concept developed in 1969. Elliott discussed how the zoning ordinance was intended to apply to districts in the same way City-wide, however, the City's individual neighborhoods are diverse and sometimes require specialized zoning regulations through the use of special districts to emphasize and preserve neighborhood diversity. Elliott and Lampert used South Street Seaport as an example of how special districts were intended to be used. For the first time in 1970, the City utilized the special district method to preserve the Seaport area, and save it from major development that was threatening the area.

Elliott also discussed the Lindsay administration's dissatisfaction with the World Trade Center project because the buildings were too tall and it was a state project rather than a City project. Lampert added that there was a political rivalry between Governor Nelson Rockefeller and Mayor Lindsay. In an effort to bring about a 24-hour community in lower Manhattan, Governor Nelson Rockefeller pushed the Battery Park City project, which was built on a landfill, and Mayor Lindsay pushed an East Side project that never happened. Lampert and Elliott were surprised that significant lower Manhattan development took longer than expected to occur.

To watch the full Master Class and listen to the in-depth discussion concerning the 1969 Plan, the role of community participation, and the strategy for saving the South Street Seaport, please visit: <http://www.citylandnyc.org/former-cpc-chair-discussed-1969-plan-for-new-york-city/>.

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