

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

JOINT COMMITTEES ON LOWER MANHATTAN REDEVELOPMENT  
AND WATERFRONTS

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April 3, 2009  
Start: 11:17 am  
Recess: 1:50 pm

HELD AT: Council Chambers  
City Hall

B E F O R E: ALAN J. GERSON  
Chairperson, Lower Manhattan  
Redevelopment

MICHAEL C. NELSON  
Chairperson, Waterfronts

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Council Member Gale A. Brewer  
Council Member Mathieu Eugene  
Council Member Julissa Ferreras  
Council Member Melissa Mark-  
Viverito  
Council Member David Yassky

## A P P E A R A N C E S [CONTINUED]

Alan J. Gerson  
Chairperson  
Committee on Lower Manhattan Redevelopment

Michael Nelson  
Chairperson  
Committee on Waterfronts

Jeffrey Baker  
Counsel  
Committee on Waterfronts

Colleen Pagter  
Policy Analyst  
Committee on Waterfronts

Lyle Frank  
Counsel  
Committee on Lower Manhattan Redevelopment

Patrick Mulvihill  
Policy Analyst  
Committee on Lower Manhattan Redevelopment

Sergeants at Arms

Leslie Koch  
Director  
Governor's Island Preservation Education Corporation

Michael Weinlein  
Borough Commander  
Fire Department of New York

James Booth  
Chief  
Emergency Medical Services Division  
Fire Department of New York

## A P P E A R A N C E S [CONTINUED]

Patti Reilly  
Supervisor  
Governor's Island National Museum  
National Parks Service

Michael Shaver  
Supervising Park Ranger  
National Parks Service

Robert Pirani  
Executive Director  
Governor's Island Alliance

Michael Levine  
Director  
Planning and Land Use  
Community Board 1

Rick Bell  
American Institute of Architects, New York

Signed slips or offered written testimony but did not appear:

Tom Fox  
New York Waterways

Roland Lewis  
President and CEO  
Metropolitan Water Alliance

Stacy Sherman  
Harbor Experience Company

Sheelah Feinberg  
Director  
Governor's Relations  
New Yorkers for Parks

2 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Good morning  
3 on this--to all on this beautiful Friday morning.  
4 I'm Alan Gerson, Chair of the Lower Manhattan--the  
5 City Council's Lower Manhattan Redevelopment  
6 Committee, which along with the City Council's  
7 Waterfront Committee continues to monitor and  
8 support developments of Governor's Island.

9 It's once again a pleasure to be  
10 seating with and conduct this joint hearing with  
11 my friend and colleague and our leader Mike  
12 Nelson, Chair for the Waterfronts Committee, from  
13 whom we'll hear in just a moment.

14 And it's a pleasure to be joined by  
15 Dr. Mathieu Eugene of the Waterfront--a member of  
16 the Lower Manhattan Redevelopment Committee. And  
17 pursuant to Council protocol, I'll let our Co-  
18 Chair introduce the member of his Committee, but  
19 it's a pleasure to have her with us, no matter  
20 what, in advance of the introduction.

21 Governor's Island represents our  
22 City's future. Its development will bring about  
23 one of the shining jewels of New York for  
24 generations to come. Its history demands the  
25 stewardship which matches its grand place in the

2 great history of our City and indeed of our  
3 Nation.

4           And the needs of our growing City,  
5 demand that Governor's Island--and will continue  
6 for generations to come, provide a very special  
7 place for recreation, passive and active; for  
8 enjoyment of and relationship to the harbor which  
9 truly provides part of the, indeed, definition if  
10 you will of our City; and that we use it wisely  
11 for other uses which support and enhance the  
12 economic and cultural fabric of the five Boroughs  
13 of the City of New York and indeed beyond. Let us  
14 never forget what a special place this is.

15           It lies in the New York Harbor at  
16 the historic entranceway to the City of New York  
17 and indeed to the country under the gaze of the  
18 Statue of Liberty. It deserves our creative  
19 efforts to bring about the use of--a use of this  
20 island and a future for this island worthy of its  
21 very special location.

22           And even though we are going  
23 through difficult times, we must continue with  
24 that effort because it is precisely during  
25 difficult times when we must not give up on our

2 future but rather solidify it and affirm our  
3 commitment to our best future. And if you look  
4 back in history the City still benefits from so  
5 many of the infrastructure projects, in the social  
6 projects, whether it was the creation of  
7 affordable housing, whether it was the building of  
8 many of our public and private sector structures  
9 which still support our City. So much of that was  
10 done during the time period of my parent's  
11 generation and my grandparent's when they were  
12 struggling through the Great Depression. And one  
13 way they got through was by investing in their  
14 future.

15 That is what we must do now, as I'm  
16 sure we all recognize. But what all of us in this  
17 room probably recognize, but not all of us  
18 throughout government and indeed beyond recognizes  
19 that Governor's Island must be a central part in  
20 that investment in our future.

21 And that's what we are here today  
22 to discuss, a) where we stand with the State  
23 budget and the City budget. Going forward we must  
24 assure an adequate budget during the upcoming  
25 Fiscal Year so that the progress on Governor's

2 Island will not come to a standstill and will  
3 continue; where we stand with the necessary  
4 infrastructure support on the island, and  
5 obviously, infrastructure starts with safety. And  
6 we are very eager to hear from the Fire Department  
7 how they plan to assure the safety of the island  
8 in spite of the closure of the island's only fire  
9 house.

10 And we are also hear to learn where  
11 we stand with progress in the development of the  
12 park that is planned for Governor's Island, other  
13 uses planned for Governor's Island, and the  
14 historic district on the island. And to inform us  
15 on dialog with us on all of those issues we are  
16 joined by the President of GIPEC, the steward of  
17 Governor's Island; representation and the  
18 leadership of our Federal Park Services, which we  
19 know has integral--has direct control over a part  
20 of the island, and an integral role in the overall  
21 island; and of course from the Fire Department and  
22 the Administration to talk about those issues.  
23 And of course, many of the leaders and activists  
24 who really have kept the spotlight on Governor's  
25 Island and have led the efforts for this City and

2 our generation to reclaim the island.

3 So with that I will look forward to  
4 an important and informative hearing and  
5 discussion. And before we call our first witness,  
6 I want to turn over the proceedings to our Co-  
7 Chair Mike Nelson who has done just a fantastic  
8 job in leading not only the Council but in the  
9 City, in our efforts to reclaim and reopen and  
10 best utilize all of our City's waterfronts. Thank  
11 you very much Council Member Nelson.

12 CO-CHAIRPERSON NELSON: Thank you  
13 Co-Chair Gerson. In lieu of an opening statement  
14 I wanted to welcome everybody here in this  
15 inclement weather and you're all stout people  
16 evidently and brave. I want to thank Jeffrey  
17 Baker, to my immediate right, counsel to this  
18 Committee, and Colleen Pagter the Policy Analyst.  
19 And I want to welcome a new member of the Council,  
20 pretty new. You'll get sick of hearing that after  
21 a while, but Julissa Ferreras. I know I did ten  
22 years ago when I first got in here. When do you  
23 become not a new member, I was questioning, and  
24 you will too, I'm sure, having said that I'm going  
25 to turn the meeting back to Chair Gerson.

2 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Thank you Mr.  
3 Chair, and just before I call our first witness, I  
4 want to also acknowledge the roles, the ongoing  
5 work of the Counsel to the Lower Manhattan  
6 Redevelopment Committee seated to my left, Mr.  
7 Lyle Frank, and who by the way deserves all best  
8 wishes as he is about to in a few days partake of  
9 a paternity leave and looking forward to the birth  
10 of twins. And we wish him very well and we--and  
11 the entire family and we know he'll come back  
12 fully energized in his new role and continue with  
13 his great work for the Council and for the City.

14 And of course I want to  
15 acknowledge, seated to my far left, our Policy  
16 Analyst, Patrick Mulvihill, both these gentlemen,  
17 you know, really make the work of our Committee  
18 possible. And as ways, our Sergeant at Arms the  
19 unsung heroes of the City Council who keep us  
20 going day in and day out.

21 With that it's my pleasure to  
22 welcome and to call.

23 CO-CHAIRPERSON NELSON: I was just  
24 going to say and Lyle will find out what real work  
25 is.

2 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Laughing]

3 There you go. It's my pleasure to welcome and to  
4 call our first witness, someone we're fortunate to  
5 have in the position which she holds, the  
6 President of the Governor's Island Preservation  
7 Education Corporation, President Leslie Koch.

8 MS. LESLIE KOCH: Thank you Council  
9 Member Gerson and thank you Council Member Nelson.  
10 It's always a pleasure to be here although I do  
11 note that you have always ordered up particularly  
12 inclement weather for our hearings. So. I hope  
13 that maybe perhaps next year we should say on  
14 Governor's Island in the summertime.

15 I'm pleased to update you since the  
16 last testimony which was about a year ago I think,  
17 also on a rainy day; talk a little bit about our  
18 strategy for brining Governor's Island back to  
19 life. The upcoming plans, we're very pleased to  
20 say we are on track for our May 30<sup>th</sup> opening that  
21 was a little bit in question for a little while  
22 but we're thrilled to say that and also update you  
23 and share some images of our work on the park and  
24 public space Master Plan.

25 We have four key strategies to

2 bring Governor's Island back to life. And when I  
3 say we, I speak, obviously, for GIPEC for the City  
4 and State 'cause we work both for the Mayor and  
5 the Governor and their appointees, so I'm  
6 representing our Chair Avi Schick as well as our  
7 Vice-Chair Dan Docteroff.

8 The first and very critical and has  
9 been increasingly popular, we're pleased to report  
10 is the expanded public access and signature early  
11 uses for the island. A variety of programs I'll  
12 talk a little bit about our growth in visitorship.  
13 But since this was a military base for so long,  
14 closed to New Yorkers, those of us who grew up  
15 here never had an experience of Governor's Island.  
16 We think it's critical for the City that more and  
17 more people get to use the island and that we  
18 showcase the kinds of recreational and cultural  
19 programs that are not readily available,  
20 necessarily, in some neighborhoods in the City.

21 The second part of our strategy is  
22 public investment in stabilization of our historic  
23 structures as well as infrastructure of the  
24 island. That's a very expensive long term  
25 proposition. And we are very grateful for the

2 State and City investment in our capital programs.

3 The third part of our strategy is  
4 the multi-use, mixed--excuse me, multi-phase,  
5 mixed use development strategy. We have our first  
6 tenants, construction on those tenancies are  
7 underway. And this, we will see other tenancies  
8 unfold over the years and decades to come. And  
9 then an early creation of new world class park and  
10 public space.

11 I was here last year, before the  
12 summer, so I wanted to quickly update you on some  
13 of the experiences that New Yorkers enjoyed last  
14 summer. The island for the first time was open  
15 every Friday, Saturday and Sunday. We had dozens  
16 of programming partners from around the City, new  
17 exhibitions, activities and performances. And  
18 Governor's Island really became recognized as a  
19 place for the arts, for bike riding and for a  
20 variety of water recreation.

21 Our visitorship grew. This is--  
22 when before, I guess I was there, my first year  
23 was 2006. In 2005 we had 8,000 visitors our  
24 entire season. Last summer we typically had more  
25 than 8,000 people on a weekend. So we had 128,000

2 visitors last summer. And our goal for this  
3 opening season in 2009 is 200,000 visitors. So we  
4 hope that you'll all be out there.

5 Our visitors come from all over.  
6 Most of them come from New York City. So three-  
7 quarters of--we ask everyone when they come what  
8 your zip code is, three-quarters of our visitors  
9 come from New York City. They come from all five  
10 Boroughs. In particular our Friday program and  
11 our free bike Friday program attracted day campers  
12 from around the City we are pleased to report.

13 And you can see from our chart that  
14 about a little more than a third of our visitors  
15 are from Manhattan, a quarter from Brooklyn and  
16 then the rest among the other three Boroughs. We  
17 also have visitors from out of State.

18 We had one of the waterfalls last  
19 year, so we also had a number of tourists. And  
20 you can see that a really broad cross-section of  
21 neighborhoods represented our visitors and again  
22 Community Board 1, I see here, and also Community  
23 Board 3 in Manhattan. And then Community Boards 2  
24 and 6 in Brooklyn are really--draw a lot of our  
25 visitors.

2 Last year for the first time we had  
3 Free Bike Friday program. We had a bike rental  
4 concession, a free kayaking program, miniature  
5 golf. You can see that image, designed by  
6 artists, fishing, extended bike loop and a broad  
7 array of programs. The waterfall, it seems like a  
8 watery day today. People may have forgotten this  
9 but this was a big attraction for Governor's  
10 Island. People went by it by boat, came to visit  
11 the island. And then we had a variety of other  
12 artistic programs including Insight, Emergence and  
13 a photography exhibition.

14 There were really a very diverse  
15 array of programs on the island reflecting the  
16 diversity of New York. The Figment Performance of  
17 Art Festival, a folk concert series, evening  
18 concerts, the African Film Festival came, and a  
19 Jazz Age Dance Festival. So it really was very  
20 diverse.

21 City of Water Day, Roland Lewis is  
22 here, the head of the Metropolitan Waterfront  
23 Alliance. That was our biggest day ever on the  
24 island. We had thousands of people come by a  
25 variety of boats, including our own. People went

2 fishing that day and on other days and free  
3 kayaks.

4 And then recreation, of course, is  
5 very important for us, particularly for our Lower  
6 Manhattan users, so the Downtown Little League was  
7 here in 2008 and will be back in 2009. This bike  
8 surrey, for those of you who have not been on a  
9 bike surrey, this was a very popular activity on  
10 Governor's Island, sort of the perfect holiday  
11 family shot, people with their kids. And we had a  
12 variety of bicycles. Biking really exploded.  
13 About one in ten of our visitors in 2007 rode  
14 bikes. It grew to one in four of our visitors  
15 this past year.

16 Free Bike Fridays was sponsored by  
17 Transportation Alternatives, an extraordinary  
18 group. About one-third of the people who came to  
19 visit on Fridays got on a bicycle, as I mentioned  
20 earlier very popular with day camps and organized  
21 groups from across the City. But also very  
22 popular with a number of people a little bit older  
23 who maybe hadn't been on a bicycle in a while and  
24 felt it was safe to ride in a car-free  
25 environment.

2           So that was our summer and our--the  
3 success of our public visitation which we expect  
4 to increase this coming summer. But while we're  
5 doing that, we also work on the less sexy part of  
6 continuing work in our historic buildings and our  
7 infrastructure. So the building you see up there  
8 looks quite lovely. That reflects taxpayer  
9 investment in new roofs and gutters and other work  
10 to ensure that that building, which most of our  
11 buildings are vacant, can survive for future  
12 generations. We're also excited to show you that  
13 green space in the lower right because that is  
14 where the Super 8 Motel used to be. And as part  
15 of our program to open up more green space on the  
16 island, we demolished that building.

17           The City has, we are part of the  
18 City's Five Year Capital Plan and of course we are  
19 continuing to work on our stabilization and  
20 infrastructure programs. We have an enormous  
21 number of historic buildings that we are  
22 responsible for at GIPEC, 52 buildings totaling  
23 1.4 million square feet so you can calculate those  
24 needs. And again you can see a before and after  
25 here of one of our buildings before stabilization

2 and after stabilization. And again we do none of  
3 this for esthetic reasons, this is all just to  
4 save the buildings because they are all  
5 landmarked.

6 We have ongoing work to improve our  
7 infrastructure, restoring potable water, working  
8 on our ferry slips, both on the island and then  
9 also in the Battery Maritime Building. We are  
10 always addressing our seawall to make sure that it  
11 retains its integrity and that our infrastructure  
12 is ready for the first tenancies. So that's work  
13 that's going on as we speak on the island and will  
14 continue in an ongoing basis, 52 weeks of the  
15 year.

16 Our strategy, as I mentioned, is  
17 multi-phase mixed use development. We have three  
18 tenants who we have announced and I'll talk a  
19 little bit about them in a second. So this is  
20 really early in the first phase of development for  
21 the island. These tenants will open on time but  
22 obviously Governor's Island, like the rest of the  
23 City and the State and in fact the Nation and the  
24 World, we, of course, are affected by the current  
25 economic climate. And the challenge of attracting

2 tenants to the island in the best of times only  
3 gets greater as we look at what's going on in the  
4 economy.

5 Our first tenant whose construction  
6 is well underway is the New York Harbor School.  
7 This is a conversion of an existing historic  
8 building, Building 500. This represents \$35  
9 million additional commitment by the City of New  
10 York. This is funded entirely by the School  
11 Construction Authority. They are making great  
12 progress. This is an existing public high school  
13 that's currently located in Bushwick. It will  
14 draw students from across the City and it's on  
15 schedule for its September 2010 opening on the  
16 island. And I'll anticipate your question, the  
17 students will get to school by boat and they will  
18 take the boat with me and the rest of the people  
19 who work on the island and so they will have to be  
20 on time to come to school.

21 Our next tenant who actually will  
22 open before the Harbor School, the Lower Manhattan  
23 Cultural Council, a wonderful arts organization  
24 headquartered here in Manhattan will run an  
25 artists' studio program for visual and performing

2 artists. One of our requirements for this program  
3 was that they create programs that will be  
4 available for the public to enjoy so that people  
5 can see art in progress. And that is on schedule  
6 to open in 2009 in Building 110 which is the  
7 building that you see just when you get off the  
8 ferry. So it'll be very easy for New Yorkers to  
9 enjoy the work of artists who are resident, not  
10 living, but working on the island, again 52 weeks  
11 of the year, year-round.

12 A more seasonal tenant is the Water  
13 Taxi Beach. So this tenant will open this summer,  
14 July 4<sup>th</sup>. They will have food, drink and  
15 entertainment. The image you see on the upper  
16 right is, of course, the famous Water Taxi Beach  
17 in Long Island City. So this will have an even  
18 better view with all due respect to Long Island  
19 City. It'll be open during public access hours  
20 for our visitors to enjoy. And then there will  
21 also be ticketed concerts and again you can see  
22 the current parking lot in the lower right, but  
23 those views are pretty fantastic. So that is on  
24 schedule to open July 4<sup>th</sup>.

25 We are spending a lot of our time,

2 as I mentioned, in creating a world class park and  
3 public space. We began this work through an  
4 international competition a couple of years ago.  
5 We hired a team which I'll talk about in a second,  
6 and we are on schedule to unveil the Park Master  
7 Plan with a considerable amount of public input  
8 that we've been doing in time for the island to  
9 open.

10 So the park is really the first  
11 phase of reactivating the island. As you know the  
12 island, while it has a beautiful historic  
13 district, also has 80 acres of landfill that--  
14 where we have begun demolishing buildings. And  
15 really this project makes Governor's Island a  
16 compelling destination for New Yorkers to return  
17 to again and again. And it really builds on the  
18 public use we've seen so far but really makes this  
19 a true landmark sort of worthy of its site in the  
20 harbor that Council Member Gerson mentioned.

21 This is a considerable amount of  
22 green space, especially in the middle of the  
23 harbor, accessible by boat. It's 87 acres of park  
24 and public space. That includes the green space  
25 that people currently enjoy in the historic

2 district, 40 acres. The Great Promenade which is  
3 currently a road that goes around the perimeter of  
4 the island, this is being converted to a beautiful  
5 destination bike and walkway. And then a new 40  
6 acre green space on the south island. In addition  
7 to the green space in the park and public space,  
8 the National Park Service, which of course is that  
9 white area, has quite a lot of green. So this  
10 island will really be a green island in the harbor  
11 for future generations to enjoy, as well as future  
12 tenants.

13           The goals for the park and public  
14 space design, and these are goals that we  
15 articulated early in the process, create a  
16 compelling destination, offer unique experience  
17 and really focus on making this a park for all New  
18 Yorkers to enjoy, with a special focus on  
19 children, families, use of the arts and experience  
20 of the harbor and the water.

21           As I mentioned, we conducted an  
22 international competition. We received a huge  
23 amount of public input, public forum and other  
24 activities that aided the jury and the City and  
25 State in making the selection of West 8 which was

2 announced in December 2007. We then began the  
3 public input process for the park design in the  
4 fall of 2008 with a number of opportunities for  
5 public input.

6 We tried to be as inclusive as  
7 possible in our public input. So we have a number  
8 of ways, one) you may not already subscribe to our  
9 blog but I hope that you will in the future. We  
10 blog on a regular basis about what's going on, on  
11 the island and with the park design. We conducted  
12 surveys of our visitors. We went--invited  
13 ourselves to visit various Community Boards, both  
14 in Lower Manhattan and in Brooklyn. And then we  
15 also did some things on the island so that our  
16 visitors last summer could give us their ideas  
17 even before we started the design process.

18 So we did a project called Picture  
19 Yourself on Governor's Island where people could  
20 choose different images of future parks and decide  
21 which ones they like the most. You can see those  
22 on Flickr if you didn't participate last summer.  
23 And the image on the lower right is from a series  
24 of workshops we did out on the island. We took  
25 people out to the southern half of the island

2 which has been closed and asked them to sort of do  
3 an interactive workshop where they could create  
4 ideas of activities that they would like to do in  
5 the future park.

6 We also did an exhibition on the  
7 island. And what you see here is a map of the  
8 island entirely covered in Post-it notes 'cause we  
9 asked visitors, more than 1,500 of our visitors  
10 gave us Post-it note comments. Some in a variety  
11 of languages answering the question what would you  
12 like to do in the future park. We not only  
13 compiled all those but we actually used a software  
14 program, this is very cool, where we took all of  
15 the words and sorted them.

16 And so what this map represents,  
17 it's called a Word Cloud, is what are the words  
18 that came up most frequently when people told us  
19 what they wanted: free, park, bike, ice cream,  
20 incredibly popular, love, concerts, other things.  
21 We may not provide all those things. I don't  
22 think we can provide love but a place for people  
23 to enjoy. So this has fed into our process to  
24 design the park.

25 We're continuing public feedback.

2 We--the lead designer is going to be doing a  
3 public session next--actually it's this month,  
4 it's April already, April 24th. We had a meeting  
5 with a group of advocates both this week and two  
6 weeks ago. We'll continue to post on our blog.  
7 And then when the Master Plan is unveiled we will  
8 put the exhibition online and also on the island.  
9 And then we'll be out visiting Community Boards  
10 and anybody else who wants to talk to us in June  
11 to get peoples' feedback about the plan.

12 I showed you the Word Cloud a few  
13 minutes ago which is actually scientific. This  
14 translated into a program map that we worked with  
15 a team to say these are the kinds of activities  
16 that we want people to be able to enjoy on the  
17 island. So this is a more visual way of  
18 representing what are typically in park designs  
19 kind of giant grids of programs. And again you  
20 can see all the kinds of activities that we all  
21 enjoy, obviously including active sports,  
22 competitive sports, as well as more contemplative  
23 activities that people enjoy in parks.

24 This is a work in progress. So I  
25 will give you a brief guided tour of the future

2 park but we are working literally every day on  
3 this. This is the island, shaped like an ice  
4 cream cone, as you may recall. So the ice cream  
5 part of the island is the existing historic  
6 district. That part of the island while it will  
7 be a park, we are, of course, respecting the  
8 historic fabric of that landscape which is  
9 landmarked itself, adding trees, restoring paths,  
10 creating more green space, eliminating a number of  
11 parking lots, but really it will--just enhancing  
12 what is already quite beautiful.

13 The building in the middle of the  
14 island is Legate [phonetic] Hall and the new park  
15 really kind of unfolds from there, culminating in  
16 some beautiful hills but also you can see two  
17 sports fields here and active sports use of our  
18 parade ground. I just wanted to highlight those.

19 And then what I thought I would do  
20 is just show you a few areas that are work under  
21 development. We obviously have work going on in  
22 all areas of the park but I wasn't sure how much  
23 time you would like me to spend here so I just  
24 highlighted three areas.

25 The first is Soissons Dock which is

2 where you currently arrive; The Hills, which are  
3 new hills where we're recycling the debris of the  
4 island and creating really transformative  
5 topography; and then an area we're calling the  
6 South Prow which is this wonderful spot where you  
7 can see Staten Island and the entire harbor.

8           So Soissons Dock today was designed  
9 to be a place where vehicles drove up from a boat.  
10 People are very familiar with it, usually come  
11 with their bicycles but it's a big sea of asphalt,  
12 not particularly welcoming. And of course, has  
13 this fabulous view. The team envisions this is as  
14 a really much more welcoming place with lots of  
15 shade. You can see seating for people to enjoy  
16 the view. One of the signature experiences of  
17 Governor's Island as I've mentioned is a free bike  
18 program. So this will be a place where you can  
19 drop off your bike or pick up a bicycle as you get  
20 on the ferry and get off the ferry. And then you  
21 see on the right one of our historic buildings  
22 which will serve as a Welcome Center for the  
23 public to enjoy the park and open space.

24           So really taking a place that has  
25 just the greatest view on the planet and really

2 making it a welcoming sort of entranceway to a new  
3 island and a new series of park and public spaces.  
4 This view, again envisioned by the team, gives you  
5 a real great sense of arriving at a place and  
6 again a new way for you to wait as you leave the  
7 island. And again these images are works in  
8 progress so we're working on them continually or  
9 the team is and they will be part of the Master  
10 Plan that comes out next month.

11           The southern portion of the island  
12 is very flat. So this is what the island looked  
13 like on the left when the landfill was created.  
14 This is landfill from the Lexington Avenue subway  
15 in 1905. And then this is what it really looks  
16 like today. So it's not--it certainly has great  
17 potential, a great place for sea and sky but is  
18 flat as a pancake.

19           So here you see a view from the  
20 southern tip, again lovely view of the Verrazano  
21 but not a lot of amenities. So we're working to  
22 create new areas of parkland there. The first, at  
23 the southern tip, so basically where that  
24 photograph was a second ago, will be transformed  
25 to get it to a fabulous promenade with native

2 plantings, providing great habitat for birds and  
3 insects, for people to sort of enjoy. The kinds  
4 of plants that can grow in brackish water near the  
5 sea, enjoy all the smells. So really in  
6 incredible place to feel the spray of the harbor  
7 and also enjoy the great view of the Statue of  
8 Liberty.

9                   And as you can see there will be  
10 lawn for people to picnic as well as native  
11 plantings out there. And these are some examples  
12 of some of the plants that the team is looking at.  
13 And really it's just, again, I go out there now  
14 and the public will be able to at least go out to  
15 this place this summer, but it really will be a  
16 gorgeous place. And again we're really trying to  
17 deliver on sustainability goals at the same time  
18 with storm water management as well as creating a  
19 great public amenity.

20                   We also are working on a really  
21 transformative topography. And again for those of  
22 us who are native New Yorkers, we all take for  
23 granted Prospect Park and Central Park but we have  
24 to remind ourselves that those sites looked pretty  
25 much like Governor's Island back in the mid-19<sup>th</sup>

2 Century. And then Frederick Law Olmstead  
3 transformed them with topography. And we're going  
4 to do the same thing for Governor's Island.

5 So what we're doing now is taking  
6 the debris as we begin to demolish the buildings.  
7 We're recycling that debris and going to use it to  
8 build hills and topography on the island that  
9 create extraordinary views. So this gives you an  
10 idea of what the view will be like from the new  
11 park. This is the actual view. So we went to the  
12 top of an abandoned apartment building and then  
13 took photographs that we then laid out. So this  
14 gives you a sense of how magnificent this park  
15 will be when it is constructed.

16 Shifting more to the near term, our  
17 goals for 2009 are, as I mentioned at the outset,  
18 200,000 visitors. Our first tenant's opening on  
19 time. Unveiling the park and public space Master  
20 Plan and continuing to make progress on capital  
21 projects and infrastructure. We will open on May  
22 30<sup>th</sup>. We'll--the ferry will be free. The programs  
23 and activities will be free. There will be ferry  
24 service to Fulton Ferry Landing on Saturdays as  
25 well, reflecting a lot of input, particularly from

2 Community Board 2 and Community Board 6.

3 The National Park Service, our  
4 partners on the island, will continue their  
5 wonderful tours and educational programs and  
6 interpretive programs. And this summer the entire  
7 perimeter of the island, the entire promenade will  
8 be open for the first time. So visitors will be  
9 able to enjoy those great views of the south.  
10 This will be paved. We're completing our paving  
11 for biking and walking.

12 We have a new area on the island  
13 that we call Picnic Point. It's 8 and a half  
14 acres of green space right across from the Statue  
15 of Liberty. You may recall the Mayor was out in  
16 September to demolish the building. So this is  
17 work in progress. Pre-sod, but that will be a  
18 wonderful picnic area for New Yorkers to enjoy.

19 We're expanding our visitor waiting  
20 room. And we'll use that to exhibit images of the  
21 park, thanks to funding from Borough President  
22 Scott Stringer. We will be opening the Yankee  
23 Pier for the first time so that historic and  
24 educational vessels can dock on the island and  
25 provide programming. We're increasing the

2 opportunities for biking and partnering with a  
3 broad range of cultural organizations and others  
4 to continue our programming tradition.

5           These are just some highlights of  
6 some of the programs. There's still more things  
7 to be announced. We can't tell you everything.  
8 It's a work in progress. We are expanding  
9 miniature golf. There's a major festival of the  
10 arts sponsored by the Dutch government this fall  
11 and a variety of programs throughout the summer.

12           And basically our goal is to make  
13 this island a resource, to live up to the promise  
14 that Council Member Gerson articulated at the  
15 outset, to bring the island back to life by  
16 increasing access, improving the infrastructure  
17 and moving forward with our multi-prong strategy,  
18 in particular a world class park and public space.

19           So without further ado, that was  
20 kind of where we are on this rainy day.

21           CO-CHAIRPERSON NELSON: I will  
22 announce that Council Member Gale Brewer has  
23 joined us.

24           [Off mic]

25           CO-CHAIRPERSON NELSON: That's

2 right. It is. I just had a couple of questions  
3 before I turn it over to Chair Gerson. Are there  
4 any plans that you can foresee to get access from  
5 Brooklyn to Governor's Island?

6 MS. KOCH: Yes. We'll have,  
7 actually access from Fulton Ferry Landing this  
8 summer on Saturdays. Our ferry will make a sort  
9 of triangular route. We are also working on two  
10 other projects, one is a passenger only ferry  
11 landing at the end of Pier 6 at the foot of--

12 CO-CHAIRPERSON NELSON:

13 [Interposing] Shhhh, please over there in the  
14 corner. Sorry about that--

15 MS. KOCH: --at the foot of  
16 Atlantic Avenue. And in addition, a ferry at  
17 Atlantic Basin that would provide vehicle,  
18 pedestrian and bicycle access from the Red Hook  
19 Community.

20 CO-CHAIRPERSON NELSON: Terrific.

21 You're going to estimate 200,000, you may go above  
22 that.

23 MS. KOCH: Right.

24 CO-CHAIRPERSON NELSON: What kind  
25 of vehicle--is it going to be a--

2 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Just for  
3 our service vehicles. Yeah. We don't permit  
4 passenger--we don't permit private vehicles on the  
5 island--

6 CO-CHAIRPERSON NELSON:  
7 [Interposing] - - anyway.

8 MS. KOCH: --but for service and  
9 emergency vehicles.

10 CO-CHAIRPERSON NELSON: Right. Is  
11 that--and is that written into the contractual  
12 agreement between the Feds--

13 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Yes it is.

14 CO-CHAIRPERSON NELSON: --and--it  
15 is.

16 MS. KOCH: It's a car-free biking  
17 oasis.

18 CO-CHAIRPERSON NELSON: Okay. Can  
19 one bring their own bike?

20 MS. KOCH: Yeah absolutely.

21 CO-CHAIRPERSON NELSON: Good.  
22 Good. Did you want to ask a question? Oh. Thank  
23 you Leslie.

24 MS. KOCH: Thank you.

25 [Pause]

2 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: I'll repeat  
3 what I--part of what I stated in my opening  
4 remarks. And that is we are fortunate indeed to  
5 have Leslie Koch as steward in chief of this grand  
6 project, as the presentation reflects. Pursuant  
7 to the procedure that we have followed in the  
8 Committee, I'll just ask a few questions initially  
9 and then we'll rotate around through my colleagues  
10 and I'll--I'm quite confident, come back with  
11 follow-up.

12 So. Let's just talk about the  
13 budget since we're--it's that time of year. Could  
14 you give us, we had postponed this, the initial  
15 hearing time because of negotiations between the  
16 City and the State with respect to joint funding  
17 of Governor's Island for FY '10. My understanding  
18 is that there has been an agreement in principle.  
19 Could you update us--

20 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Sure.

21 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: --on where we  
22 stand with the budget--

23 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Yeah.

24 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: --and we're  
25 all eagerly awaiting final action from Albany, but

2 my understanding is that Albany has agreed, and  
3 when I say Albany I mean all parts of Albany if  
4 you will, to fund Governor's Island. Where do we  
5 stand with expense, the expense budget, the  
6 capital budget contributions anticipated from the  
7 State, from the City, and what are your priorities  
8 for those funds?

9 MS. KOCH: The--

10 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]  
11 And do you need more?

12 MS. KOCH: The Governor, the  
13 Speaker, the State Senator Squadron announced, I  
14 guess, two days ago, that there's \$7 million  
15 included in the State--again I think still the  
16 proposed State budget. I'm not sure, an hour by  
17 hour report, for the operations of Governor's  
18 Island. And I believe that the City, that there  
19 was some comment from the City in the press that  
20 they would match that under the sort of the terms  
21 of the 50/50 agreement. But I can't speak for the  
22 City.

23 And in terms of--so that's the  
24 operating expenses enable us to continue all of  
25 the public programs that I just described and our

2 strong focus has been on maintaining public access  
3 to the island. And we did not request new capital  
4 dollars for this current Fiscal Year from the City  
5 or the State. We are continuing to work with the  
6 existing capital program that we have on  
7 stabilization and infrastructure and we are very  
8 cognizant of the, you know, enormous challenges  
9 that we all face economically. And so we asked  
10 for funds really to focus on public access and  
11 continuing the necessary operations of the island  
12 but deferring some of our capital program.

13 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: The operating  
14 budget of \$14 million--

15 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] \$14  
16 million, that's correct.

17 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: --for FY '10  
18 is that what you had--

19 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Yes.

20 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: --initially  
21 requested?

22 MS. KOCH: We had initially  
23 requested--there've been many stages in this  
24 process--

25 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]

2 Sure.

3 MS. KOCH: --we had initially  
4 requested slightly higher than that. And then the  
5 Board of Directors--

6 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]  
7 How much is slightly higher?

8 MS. KOCH: I believe initially it  
9 was \$16 million or \$18 million, I'm trying to  
10 remember. There have been many versions. But the  
11 Board actually took action and enacted an  
12 austerity budget that was slightly less than that  
13 a few weeks ago, of \$12 million. So our budget  
14 for this coming year will be \$14 million in  
15 operations.

16 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: The \$2 million  
17 on top of the austerity budget will be added for  
18 general purposes or?

19 MS. KOCH: For, basically to  
20 continue, you know, as I just described, all of  
21 our programs, our public access programs, our  
22 stabilization and our continued operations of the  
23 island. So we had been in a situation where we  
24 had to significantly cut back our expenditures due  
25 to some previous funding cash flow issues and so

2 we had done that. But we had always focused on  
3 maintaining our public access.

4 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: So with the  
5 \$14 million, you know, anticipated, will you be  
6 able to stick to the timetable you've outlined--

7 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Yes  
8 absolutely.

9 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: --in your  
10 present--okay. Now turning to the capital budget  
11 though, where do we stand with expenditure of  
12 previously allocated capital funds?

13 MS. KOCH: We have, we are still  
14 expending previously allocated capital funds and  
15 the State agreed to re-appropriate some of the  
16 previously appropriated capital funds so we can  
17 continue to make progress on our stabilization and  
18 infrastructure programs. So we still have some  
19 money, probably about \$35 million in previously  
20 appropriated funds that we are currently  
21 prioritizing to address our infrastructure needs.

22 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: And will that  
23 be fully expended over the course of FY '10,  
24 before FY '10 or in the midst of FY '10?

25 MS. KOCH: I don't have an exact

2 schedule now. You could imagine given the  
3 uncertainty about our budget. One of the  
4 challenges--

5 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]

6 But assuming you still have that available--

7 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Yes. I  
8 haven't revised the schedule but I just wanted to  
9 point out that one of the unique things about  
10 Governor's Island that our colleagues in the  
11 National Park Service also appreciate, is that our  
12 operations budget is critical for our capital  
13 budget 'cause you obviously can't do any capital  
14 projects on an island if you can't get there. So  
15 we have had to make some adjustments to our  
16 capital program given the uncertainty of the last  
17 few months.

18 So we'll be readdressing that  
19 schedule. So I can't give you an exact answer  
20 right at this moment just 'cause we had to scale  
21 back in anticipation of uncertainty I guess is the  
22 best way of putting it. And now given that we now  
23 know that we have 12 months of operating funding,  
24 we will readdress our capital spending. Does that  
25 make sense?

2 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Yeah, no. And  
3 I'm glad you raised that issue 'cause I was going  
4 to get there. I think we all lived through--all  
5 of us concerned for Governor's Island, lived  
6 through that period of uncertainty with a bit of  
7 trepidation and anxiety. But I gather from your  
8 testimony in terms of concrete work and progress  
9 when we're talking about the development of an  
10 island, uncertainty is not a good thing.

11 MS. KOCH: Uncertainty is very  
12 challenging for an island. Obviously it's very  
13 challenging to talk to a prospective tenant or  
14 even a programming partner and not be able to  
15 assure them that there will be a boat to get their  
16 participants or their, you know, or even their  
17 preparatory work out to the island. So that is  
18 challenging to have that year to year uncertainty.  
19 And certainly does affect the development  
20 prospects for the island.

21 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: So as we go  
22 forward with what clearly is going to be a multi-  
23 year process, it seems from your testimony and  
24 from what I believe that it would behoove us to  
25 avoid repetitions, recognizing that this was a,

2 you know, a unique year in terms of the fiscal  
3 crisis, but going forward we should take steps to  
4 avoid protracted period of uncertainty and so that  
5 it will be clear that this is a process that is  
6 not going to stop and start from year to year but  
7 is going to have, you know is going to have a  
8 seamless flow going forward. I mean would you  
9 agree with that?

10 MS. KOCH: I think my husband would  
11 certainly agree with that based on--

12 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]  
13 [Laughing]

14 MS. KOCH: --what it's - - -

15 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]  
16 Well that's important.

17 MS. KOCH: --see - - . Exactly.  
18 But yes, I think, you know, clearly development  
19 projects, but also public programming, you know,  
20 depend on some degree of certainty. And obviously  
21 we can't address the larger fiscal challenges that  
22 we're all facing. But I think that makes sense.

23 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: But going back  
24 to the capital budget, I mean part of the process  
25 involves a significant capital expenditure. I

2 mean we have to demolish buildings--

3 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Um-hum.

4 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: --we have to,  
5 as part of that, we have to undertake asbestos  
6 removal.

7 MS. KOCH: Um-hum.

8 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: From many  
9 structures. Following the demolition of the  
10 buildings we have to shore up the areas. In all  
11 of this, I mean, there are challenges in terms of  
12 protecting the island from the elements, in stormy  
13 weather and other weather. All of these require  
14 capital expenditures. And that's before we get to  
15 constructing new edifices. The lack of a capital  
16 budget outlay for Fiscal '10 at all, is that going  
17 to hinder progress in any of those areas?

18 MS. KOCH: I don't believe so. We,  
19 again, we were balancing the larger fiscal picture  
20 and prioritizing, as I mentioned, public access  
21 and the continued operation of the island so we  
22 can continue our capital programs and our  
23 tenancies. But as we prioritize what the next  
24 steps are on the capital infrastructure program I  
25 believe that using our re-appropriated funds from

2 previous years will enable us to continue making  
3 progress.

4 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: This just to--  
5 well, did you prepare an initial capital budget  
6 request for FY '10?

7 MS. KOCH: The, on the City side,  
8 we're included in the City's multi-year capital  
9 plan so there had been a number identified.

10 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: What was that  
11 number?

12 MS. KOCH: \$7 million and that was-

13 -

14 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]  
15 \$7--

16 MS. KOCH: --before--that had been  
17 identified, you know, some time ago. So I can't  
18 speak to, you know, with stretch-outs--

19 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]  
20 Sure.

21 MS. KOCH: --and 30% cuts what that  
22 number is. But we did not receive capital funding  
23 from the State in this budget and so City funding  
24 is contingent on matching funds from the State--

25 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]

2 So the capital budget's similar to the operating  
3 budget--

4 MS. KOCH: [Interposing]

5 Everything's 50/50 yeah.

6 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: --match. So  
7 the original anticipation was roughly \$14 million  
8 in capital funds, if you did receive that, what  
9 would you have done with it?

10 MS. KOCH: We would have continued  
11 making progress on all the areas I outlined. As  
12 you mentioned, given the scale of the island and  
13 the scale of the buildings that we're responsible  
14 for, even those generous sums of money only enable  
15 us to address, you know, certain aspects of our  
16 infrastructure and stabilization needs. So we  
17 continue to work in all of those areas at any  
18 given time and continue to make progress.

19 But we did not receive, in the  
20 State budget we only received operating funds.  
21 And we had, to be more specific, we had initially  
22 asked for both capital and operating funds, but  
23 again recognizing the fiscal crisis facing the  
24 State we had prioritized our operating funds over  
25 capital funds.

2 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Now, I, you  
3 know, I just go back to my opening statement.  
4 It's in difficult times that we lay our  
5 infrastructure for the future, historically and  
6 currently. I am concerned about the interruption  
7 of the capital budget for the island and the  
8 reduction of it to zero, and I, you know, we'll  
9 certainly look into that further from our end.  
10 Just, well sticking to our process of rotation,  
11 having--let me recognize Council Member Mathieu  
12 Eugene and I will return with additional areas of  
13 questioning. Council Member?

14 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE : I want--

15 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]  
16 Just - - excuse me Council Member. Melissa Mark-  
17 Viverito, Council Member has joined us. Thank  
18 you.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: Thank you  
20 very much. Thank you Mr. Chair. Thank you very  
21 much for your testimony.

22 MS. KOCH: Thank you.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: As, it  
24 seemed that, you know, not it seemed, but all the  
25 activities at the Governor's Island are free,

2 accessible to the community. But in case that the  
3 funding, the budget from the government, you know,  
4 decrease, and you don't have enough budget, would  
5 that impact the activities or the existence of the  
6 program? Do you have any alternative in term of,  
7 you know, keeping those activities going?

8 MS. KOCH: Unfortunately--that's a  
9 very good question and we are very committed to  
10 free public access and free programs. And  
11 unfortunately there really aren't other  
12 alternatives. We don't raise any private money.  
13 And the Federal government pays for the operations  
14 of the National Park Service which manages 22  
15 acres of the island. But we don't receive any  
16 Federal funding for the operations of the island.  
17 So the situation that had been discussed in the  
18 press widely, recently, was that if we hadn't  
19 received State funding we would have been forced  
20 to shut the island down.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: That would  
22 be unfortunate because I--I think we have to keep  
23 that in mind--

24 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Yeah.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: --a

2 beautiful place like that, a wonderful. We have  
3 to make sure that we ensure that it exists--

4 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Yeah.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: --for  
6 generations to come.

7 MS. KOCH: Thank you so much.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: Yeah. In  
9 term of safety, what in--if there is an emergency,  
10 fire or--

11 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Um-hum.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: --or any  
13 type of emergency, do you have a plan to evacuate  
14 the people or to provide necessary assistance--

15 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Yes--

16 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: --to the  
17 people?

18 MS. KOCH: --we pay very close  
19 attention to the safety of not only the visitors  
20 but the tenants and people who are working on the  
21 island. We retain private security personnel on  
22 the island who we expand, obviously, in proportion  
23 to our public visitation. We also work with NYPD  
24 so that they patrol in an appropriate way on the  
25 island. And we also have emergency medical

2 technicians and an ambulance stationed on the  
3 island on all of our public access days, thanks to  
4 our work with FDNY. We have a weather evacuation  
5 plan which we've used in days like today when  
6 people seek shelter. Thankfully we have never had  
7 to evacuate the entire island.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: Um-hum.

9 MS. KOCH: But we have worked with  
10 the Department of Transportation so if in, you  
11 know, one can imagine a very scary situation, we  
12 would have access to the Staten Island Ferry if we  
13 needed to, if we had to do an immediate evacuation  
14 of everyone on the island. So we have those--and  
15 we have drills on those things. And we are  
16 prepared, again, whether we're in sort of the  
17 current operation which is not open to the public  
18 or when the public is on the island.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: You know,  
20 let me ask my last question. You know, I saw that  
21 there are many children, as a matter of fact--

22 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Yes.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: --I see  
24 that, you know, the children may be enjoying--

25 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Yeah.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: --you know,  
3 all the programs that you have. But in terms of  
4 the safety of the children, since the island is  
5 surrounded by water, dictates, you know, is--is  
6 there enough safety for those children?

7 MS. KOCH: Yeah. Well we--

8 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: --because--

9 MS. KOCH: --I will say--

10 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: --in terms  
11 of your--

12 MS. KOCH: --Manhattan is  
13 surrounded by water as well--

14 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE:

15 [Interposing] Yes.

16 MS. KOCH: But we do have a safety  
17 rail around the perimeter of the island. So we  
18 have--

19 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: Does it  
20 then prevent the children to do to the?

21 MS. KOCH: Yes. We have a fence  
22 all the way around the island so there's--there  
23 isn't a place where you can just access the water  
24 unsupervised.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER EUGENE: All right.

2 Thank you very much. Thank you.

3 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Chair Nelson.

4 CO-CHAIRPERSON NELSON: Yeah just  
5 one quick question that's come to mind. The land  
6 filled portion--

7 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Um-hum.

8 CO-CHAIRPERSON NELSON: --of  
9 Governor's Island. Is there a way to check that  
10 for strength?

11 MS. KOCH: Yes. We've been doing  
12 actually quite a lot of work, the design team, one  
13 of the big projects they've been doing is actually  
14 with soil borings, testing the strength of that--

15 CO-CHAIRPERSON NELSON:  
16 [Interposing] Um-hum.

17 MS. KOCH: --for future  
18 construction, also the quality of the soil for  
19 plantings, etcetera. So we know quite a bit about  
20 the composition of the landfill.

21 CO-CHAIRPERSON NELSON: Is any of  
22 that done by say frogmen? The--do you have people  
23 looking--

24 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] We do--

25 CO-CHAIRPERSON NELSON: --into

2 that?

3 MS. KOCH: --work quite a lot with-

4 -

5 CO-CHAIRPERSON NELSON:

6 [Interposing] Frogwomen as the case may be.

7 MS. KOCH: --a subcontractor. I

8 believe we call them divers not frogmen--

9 CO-CHAIRPERSON NELSON:

10 [Interposing] Divers.

11 MS. KOCH: --but they do visual

12 inspections as, dive visual inspections of our

13 seawall--

14 CO-CHAIRPERSON NELSON:

15 [Interposing] Um-hum.

16 MS. KOCH: --all the time. So

17 that's part of our--that's the best way to check

18 your seawall is to go under water. So I have not

19 accompanied them. I'm not able to do that--

20 CO-CHAIRPERSON NELSON:

21 [Interposing] Um-hum.

22 MS. KOCH: --but we do work with

23 them all the time.

24 CO-CHAIRPERSON NELSON: Good.

25 Thank you. Okay thanks.

2 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: And just to  
3 complete my round of questioning on the budget, in  
4 the past, is my recollection correct that years  
5 past, funding for Governor's Island was base-lined  
6 at least in the City budget, and I'm not sure  
7 about the State budget, do you have any  
8 recollection of that?

9 MS. KOCH: I don't think it was  
10 base-lined, it was included in the multi-year  
11 capital plan of the City so the City each year was  
12 prepared to put in, again whatever the amount was  
13 specified in the Five Year Capital Budget, but  
14 it's also been clear that that specific amount of  
15 funding was contingent on matching funds from the  
16 State. And because the State budget precedes the  
17 City budget in timing, the amount that we receive,  
18 so for example, this past year--the year that just  
19 concluded 'cause we operate on a State Fiscal  
20 Year, we received \$10 million from the City and  
21 \$10 million from the State. So it is always  
22 conditional on how much money is given by the  
23 State.

24 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: And at the  
25 State, was there a time when the Governor's Island

2 either, for capital or expense, was base-lined?

3 MS. KOCH: There was, at the  
4 outset, at the creation of GIPEC, an MOU signed  
5 between the City and the State that specified that  
6 the operating level, the first three years of  
7 operating budget, but it did not at the time the  
8 MOU was signed include specific amounts for  
9 capital, those were discussed probably in the '03-  
10 '04 timeline although they were not received by  
11 GIPEC until 2006.

12 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: But the first  
13 three years of operating expenses.

14 MS. KOCH: Yes.

15 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: And would it  
16 be helpful going forward if we could kind of  
17 reinvent and have a similar MOU for the next 10,  
18 15 years or?

19 MS. KOCH: I mean I leave, you  
20 know, those kinds of questions, obviously, for the  
21 City and State to decide what the right governance  
22 model is for Governor's Island and their joint  
23 funding and oversight of the corporation but I  
24 think that, you know, you have correctly  
25 identified the concerns about stability can be a

2 distraction from the other challenges of managing  
3 an island and bringing it back to life for New  
4 York City.

5 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Council Member  
6 Brewer.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Thank you  
8 very much and Leslie Koch, congratulations on  
9 everything that you're doing. I think other  
10 islands are jealous because you're the best  
11 administrator.

12 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Coming from  
13 Council Member Brewer, that's quite a compliment.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO:  
15 [Interposing] I'm jealous.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Yeah,  
17 she's--she's--Melissa's jealous. We don't get  
18 into that.

19 My question is with the ferry and  
20 cost and budget. How, does that come out of your  
21 budget?

22 MS. KOCH: Yes absolutely.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: And so how  
24 much does that cost? And can you, I mean  
25 obviously people would like to have it more often,

2 do you feel that you need to do that during the  
3 summer or is it--

4 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] What we've  
5 done--

6 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: --  
7 sufficient.

8 MS. KOCH: --this summer, actually,  
9 is increase the capacity, so we now take 970  
10 people and we don't permit vehicles. So we permit  
11 several hundred bicycles out of the--including the  
12 970, so we actually haven't had a, I think, a  
13 sold-out, again, there's no charge, ferry run yet.  
14 We do supplement the ferry service on Saturdays,  
15 our big programming days with an additional  
16 private ferry operator. But our year-round ferry  
17 service 'cause we run the ferry 365 days a year  
18 'cause we work on the island, as do all the  
19 capital projects we mentioned and the National  
20 Park Service, does cost, I think, approximately  
21 about \$3 million a year--

22 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:  
23 [Interposing] Okay.

24 MS. KOCH: --but we don't charge  
25 anything to the public, to visitors--

2 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:

3 [Interposing] Okay.

4 MS. KOCH: --to use the ferry.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: And you  
6 should not. That's how it should be. The  
7 stimulus package, even--that is Federal money, but  
8 it's also available. Is that something that you  
9 have thought about in any way, shape or form--

10 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Yes. We  
11 have provided information both to the City and the  
12 State about our projects that would qualify for  
13 stimulus funding, that would be shovel ready, and  
14 that would include continuing our demolition and  
15 some additional transportation infrastructure  
16 work, but I haven't yet received word whether our  
17 projects have been included in the list that the  
18 State and City have their priorities.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay--

20 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]  
21 Could you just--excuse me Council Member can you  
22 just elaborate on that? What demolition projects  
23 and what transportation--

24 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Oh so--

25 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: --Department--

2 I think Council Member Brewer asked a very  
3 important question.

4 MS. KOCH: Yeah. So in the--in  
5 demolition we phased our demolition and again our  
6 focus was on prioritizing the demolition work that  
7 would create the most immediate public benefit, so  
8 the green space that I alluded to, but we still  
9 have several large apartment buildings and some  
10 smaller properties on the island that are slated  
11 for demolition that we have not yet received the  
12 funding for.

13 Again, according to the stimulus  
14 criteria, because things need to have design  
15 documents and be shovel ready, those projects  
16 would be eligible according to my understanding of  
17 the stimulus package. And in addition, a modest  
18 number, and I don't, unfortunately, have the  
19 number in front of me but I can follow up, of some  
20 transportation infrastructure projects would  
21 qualify for stimulus funding according to the  
22 criteria that I'm familiar with.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: All right.  
24 But if we can use transportation money but there's  
25 no money for parks. So everybody in the world is

2 finding a way to make a park a transportation  
3 vehicle. That's what's going on--

4 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Right.

5 And our park, obviously, because we're just at the  
6 Master Plan phase would not qualify for stimulus  
7 funding.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay. The  
9 issue of employment dollars, there are a lot of  
10 summer youth employment, etcetera. There are more  
11 WIA monies. Is that something that you've thought  
12 about in terms of Federal dollars?

13 MS. KOCH: I haven't. That's a  
14 wonderful idea and I should follow up 'cause I  
15 don't think that we've done any serious  
16 investigations on that--

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:  
18 [Interposing] Okay. Because there is employment  
19 money, summer and year-round that would be, I  
20 would think, it would be a wonderful opportunity  
21 for--

22 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Right.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: --for you.  
24 The other question I have is working with Maggie  
25 Boepple, I think that's quite a duo, the two of

2 you making that happen--

3 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Thanks  
4 again.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: --so if you  
6 two can't figure out how to make something happen,  
7 nobody can. So my question is in terms of the  
8 artists, how are you--how is that being funded?  
9 How could it be expanded? What a great idea,  
10 etcetera 'cause I know Maggie's very excited about  
11 it.

12 MS. KOCH: Yeah. It's an artist  
13 studio project. The Lower Manhattan Cultural  
14 Council will occupy 14,000 square feet of space.  
15 Governor's Island undertook the sort of base rehab  
16 building of the building, so asbestos and HVAC and  
17 bathrooms, sort of the basic necessities of life.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: That's been  
19 done? That's done--

20 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Yes. We  
21 haven't finished quite yet but it's happening as  
22 we speak. And then the Lower Manhattan Cultural  
23 Council's responsible for basic utility charges  
24 but we are not charging them rent. And the  
25 program will allow artists to work basically 9:00

2 to 5:00 so to speak, year-round as well as  
3 weekends in the summer.

4 They will choose the artists.

5 We're not getting involved in that. We're simply  
6 the landlord. And we would love to see more  
7 artist studio programs where we recognize, the  
8 Mayor, I think, identified this in his State of  
9 the City, the importance of artists to the fabric  
10 of the City, the economy of the City. And we are  
11 very eager to see how this project which obviously  
12 is a different kind of studio program than others  
13 on the mainland as it were, works, and we're  
14 thrilled to partner with LMCC.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Right. And  
16 during the summer, is there revenue--there's a  
17 little bit from the, I guess, the food vendor and  
18 so on. I mean I've been there--

19 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Right.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: --one  
21 wonderful person. But so down the line, even  
22 though you don't have the full capital and so on,  
23 I think, and Alan knows this better than I did,  
24 but you've turned down, to your credit, some of  
25 the insane applications that came your way. And

2 now the question is, you are going to be  
3 reevaluating all of that.

4 If you could just--I know you--I  
5 saw your materials, but just to give me a sense of  
6 what the future looks like. I would like to get  
7 rid of all of that. And be able to have low-rise  
8 type of--I mean if we had our druthers the  
9 government would pay for everything and it would  
10 be open space forever. That's what we would like.  
11 So how do we get there?

12 MS. KOCH: Right. I think the  
13 vision is really mixed use 'cause you--'cause again  
14 in the case of Governor's Island we have a number  
15 of empty buildings--

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:

17 [Interposing] Right. I understand that.

18 MS. KOCH: --'cause they're  
19 landmarked--

20 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:

21 [Interposing] Just don't build any--

22 MS. KOCH: --they're not--

23 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: --don't--

24 MS. KOCH: --going to go away--

25 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: --um-hum.

2 MS. KOCH: --and we don't want them  
3 to go away. So they need tenants. And that, you  
4 know, by having a variety of uses in addition to  
5 open space, that's really how a place comes to  
6 life. I think the challenge that we face is, in  
7 addition to the geographic challenge of the island  
8 and the fact that it was closed for so long and  
9 people, until very recently, hadn't really  
10 experienced it, obviously, as you look at  
11 potential users, there's been discussion in the  
12 past of hotel, conference center, something that's  
13 missing in New York, expansion of existing  
14 universities, office space and a variety of other  
15 uses.

16 Unfortunately at the moment there  
17 isn't a viable pool of prospective tenants who are  
18 seriously interested in pursuing that. We will  
19 continue to work with any tenant. And we meet  
20 with everybody who has any interest in Governor's  
21 Island. And we are hopeful that over time, again  
22 as the economy turn around, that we will see more  
23 robust interest from a variety of uses. But we do  
24 expect that there will be some new construction on  
25 the island in carefully designated development

2 zones as well as tenancies in the historic  
3 buildings.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay. And  
5 what is the technology on the island now in terms  
6 of wireless, etcetera?

7 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: I was waiting  
8 for that.

9 MS. KOCH: We are not wireless. We  
10 don't have wireless technology on the island.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay. Is  
12 that something that--

13 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Your cell  
14 phone does work though.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Right. But  
16 not for data, just for cell--

17 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Yeah, just  
18 cell phone.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay. And  
20 the final question, would the bicycles still be  
21 free this summer?

22 MS. KOCH: Yes. They will be free  
23 on Fridays, just as they were last summer--

24 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:  
25 [Interposing] And then on the weekends are the?

2 What happens--

3 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] There's a  
4 rental charge, somewhere between \$10 and \$15 for 2  
5 hours which is less than at most rental facilities  
6 in the City. And those are on Saturdays and  
7 Sundays. And it's Bike and Roll--

8 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:

9 [Interposing] Okay.

10 MS. KOCH: --is the company that  
11 does that--

12 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:

13 [Interposing] Okay. And does NYC & Company do an  
14 adequate job of marketing that Governor's Island  
15 exists in other parts of the world so that you can  
16 get more people there?

17 MS. KOCH: Yes.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:

19 [Interposing] Not that I'm--

20 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Yeah.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: --I know  
22 that we want--I want to make sure there's enough  
23 room for New Yorkers also but--

24 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Yeah. We  
25 very much focus on New Yorkers but we work very

2 closely with George Fertita and his team and in  
3 fact if you remember the beautiful subway and bus  
4 shelter ads, those were actually designed by NYC &  
5 Company. And they were a great new set of images  
6 for the island. And they promote us in all ways  
7 possible. And we work very closely with them and  
8 in particular, as you know, it's the  
9 Quadricentennial this year of Henry Hudson, so we  
10 are working both with George Fertita and his team  
11 as well as the Governor's Office on their plans  
12 for the Quadricentennial so we'll be included in a  
13 whole set of promotions, both for New Yorkers and  
14 for foreign tourists round Henry Hudson.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay.

16 Thank you.

17 MS. KOCH: Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Okay. Just  
19 back to the budget for one moment: the--what was  
20 the amount that you had identified as, as part of  
21 your stimulus request for the demolition and  
22 transportation--

23 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] I don't--  
24 okay, unfortunately I don't have the amount in  
25 front of me. I believe that the amount for

2 demolition was about \$20 million but I just--I  
3 can't recall off the top--

4 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]  
5 Um-hum.

6 MS. KOCH: --the other amount off  
7 the top of my head but we'll follow up and get  
8 that to you--

9 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]  
10 Okay and transportation was significantly less.

11 MS. KOCH: I believe it was smaller  
12 that--

13 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]  
14 You--okay please--

15 MS. KOCH: --but I don't want to  
16 make up a number and be wrong so.

17 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Okay. No,  
18 please I appreciate--

19 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] We'll  
20 follow up with Lyle.

21 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: That would be  
22 great 'cause we're going to hopefully play an  
23 active role in some of those discussions--

24 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Um-hum.

25 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: --and the more

2 information we have the better we can--

3 MS. KOCH: [Interposing]

4 Absolutely.

5 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: --be of

6 support. Speaking of transportation, I just want

7 to.. the issue of accessibility for persons with

8 mobility limitations and challenges. Is there

9 available throughout the island electric vehicles,

10 golf carts--

11 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Um-hum.

12 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: --or that sort

13 of--

14 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Yes. We

15 have electric trams that are available for free on

16 the island that conduct regularly scheduled tours,

17 all, during all of our public access days.

18 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: But beyond,

19 beyond the scheduled tours, you know, many places

20 have a kind of golf cart type accommodations so,

21 you know, an individual, since, you know, we can't

22 take a vehicle on the island which I agree is a

23 good thing, but some folks who aren't that mobile

24 and don't want to be dependent on a tour, and the

25 island may not lend itself, you know, in all cases

2 for, you know, just pushing a wheelchair to get  
3 all around, could we have a system whereas there  
4 could be, you know, many slow-moving electric, you  
5 know, carts or facilities that, you know,  
6 individuals or their families can self-power and  
7 self-drive to get around the island?

8 MS. KOCH: There's really only a  
9 couple of places on the island where, again, given  
10 its natural topography, the slopes would not be  
11 appropriate for a wheelchair. But actually most  
12 of the island is at an appropriate grade for  
13 people with wheelchairs. We have--

14 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]  
15 Well, even besides the grade thing, some people  
16 just, you know, someone has to push it and.. people  
17 are more independent--

18 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] We--

19 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: --if they have  
20 the availability--

21 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Yeah. We  
22 haven't really received that request before. And  
23 our focus really again given sort of the peaceful  
24 nature of the island and is to really have the  
25 minimum number of vehicles that, even green

2 vehicles, on the island. So we do have--we have  
3 expanded the number of trams that are available so  
4 they function both as a tour and a shuttle service  
5 for people who don't want to walk. And they've  
6 proved to be very popular which is why, again,  
7 working with NYPA, we have expanded our use of the  
8 trams. But at the moment we don't have any plans  
9 to go beyond the three trams that we currently  
10 have--

11 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]

12 Do you have anyone working with you as an advisor  
13 or consultant from the disabilities community?

14 MS. KOCH: We don't have anyone  
15 specifically from that community but we don't--  
16 we'd actually, you know, we work with everyone who  
17 comes to the island and we respond to their  
18 requests and also the advocacy community. And we  
19 are happy to look into that but that isn't a--that  
20 isn't a request that we've ever received before.

21 MS. KOCH: Okay. I think going  
22 forward as we're planning and we made this point  
23 in any number of development issues in my District  
24 and beyond, that is something--and we'll certainly  
25 follow up, that probably, you know, we want, as we

2 want Governor's Island to be a model in every  
3 respect.

4 We want it to be a model of  
5 accessibility, ranging from, you know, play areas  
6 to just the ability to traverse independently. I  
7 mean, for example, I was a little concerned in one  
8 of the depictions you showed someone in a  
9 wheelchair on cobblestones. And depending on how  
10 the cobblestones are outlaid, in most cases,  
11 wheelchairs and cobblestones, and I know this from  
12 experience, don't go together. And I just think  
13 to, you know, get it right, it would be a good  
14 idea--

15 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Well--

16 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: --to  
17 incorporate early on or have the park designers  
18 incorporate early on someone who, you know, has  
19 expertise and familiarity with the--

20 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Well our  
21 park design team does have that expertise and the  
22 park is designed to be accessible. And so in fact  
23 one of the hills that I showed is specifically  
24 designed so that somebody--it's at the exact, the  
25 grade that is specified in ADA requirements so

2 that someone in a wheelchair can very easily  
3 ascend and take advantage of that view. So  
4 absolutely, one of the design principles for the  
5 park is accessibility.

6 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: It's one thing  
7 to design a park or an area to meet legal  
8 requirements. It's an additional step to design  
9 it to be optimally and, you know, accessible, you  
10 know, accessible--

11 MS. KOCH: [Interposing]  
12 Absolutely.

13 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: --beyond legal  
14 requirements. And, you know, again that, the  
15 ability to get around the island independently is  
16 one challenge without having to take a tour--

17 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Um-hum.

18 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: --so maybe we  
19 could follow-up and--

20 MS. KOCH: [Interposing]  
21 Absolutely..

22 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: --and identify  
23 someone who could work with us on those issues.

24 MS. KOCH: Happy to continue that  
25 conversation.

2 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: So the  
3 timetable for the park plan, the Master Plan will  
4 be released when again?

5 MS. KOCH: The Master Plan will be  
6 released the end of May, beginning of June, the  
7 first week that we're open. And that will be  
8 available for public comment both online and at  
9 the island. And then we will have conversations  
10 with the City and State about what might be a  
11 realistic timeline for construction but we don't  
12 know beyond the Master Plan at this point.

13 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: So you don't  
14 really have--okay so it will be the Master Plan,  
15 there'll be a timetable for input, presumably  
16 following the input there'll be a period of  
17 review of the input and any--making any changes  
18 which the input would generate.

19 MS. KOCH: Yes. But we don't have  
20 funding for the stages that follow that. So  
21 that's one of the questions that will, you know,  
22 for the City and the State in terms of, again  
23 given the fiscal challenges that the City and  
24 State face now, kind of when this project would be  
25 prioritized for construction. So I can't speak

2 for that at this time. Just I, that's going to be  
3 an ongoing conversation.

4 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Oh okay. But  
5 what about the time period between release of the  
6 Master Plan and preconstruction finalization--

7 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Yeah--

8 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: --of the  
9 design? Do we have funding to allow the  
10 consultants to complete the design, incorporating  
11 the public input coming back with, you know,  
12 whatever revisions are necessary and submitting  
13 something to the Board and to the other  
14 authorities to get final approval in anticipation  
15 of construction?

16 MS. KOCH: We will be having  
17 conversations with the City and State after  
18 release of the Master Plan as we, of course,  
19 collate the public input. But whether there will  
20 be a decision by the GIPEC board to go to the  
21 schematic design phase, one of the challenges is  
22 you really want to go to that next phase when you  
23 have a sense of when construction will happen.  
24 It's a more cost effective use of public dollars.  
25 So that will be an ongoing conversation once the

2 Master Plan is released.

3 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: I don't  
4 understand--I understand why we can't--I mean let  
5 me ask this. The West 8 contractors who are doing  
6 the design, does their contract include, or does  
7 funding for them, include work beyond the release  
8 of the Master Plan, including the phase of  
9 reviewing the input, incorporating the input and  
10 coming back with any revisions--

11 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Right.

12 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: --is that  
13 phase currently funded?

14 MS. KOCH: I think we're talking  
15 about, just to clarify, the West 8 contract would  
16 cover all of their services through construction.  
17 But that work is authorized in different phases.  
18 So we will certainly receive all of the public  
19 input, prioritize all of the public input, but  
20 then there will need to be a decision about  
21 whether the project proceeds to the next phase.

22 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: So currently  
23 there's not funding to come back for a--with a  
24 revised scheme after input is received--

25 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] For the

2 next phase which would be--it's called schematic  
3 design--

4 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]  
5 Okay. Is there funding for schematic design?

6 MS. KOCH: The decision hasn't, has  
7 not yet been made by--

8 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]  
9 Okay.

10 MS. KOCH: --the GIPEC board about  
11 whether or not it is prudent to proceed to  
12 schematic design. And one of the factors that  
13 would be taken into account is that it is  
14 generally thought to be more cost effective to  
15 proceed to that next stage when you have a sense  
16 of a construction timetable which we don't  
17 currently have.

18 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: does the \$14  
19 million allow for FY '10 funding, if you chose, of  
20 the schematic design? Or--

21 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] The--

22 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: --would you  
23 need additional funding?

24 MS. KOCH: The design fees come out  
25 of our capital budget. So we--

2 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]

3 And we have no capital budget.

4 MS. KOCH: No. We have re-  
5 appropriated capital funds. But it involved a  
6 decision about what is the appropriate, most cost  
7 effective use of public dollars. And so it would  
8 be part of a larger conversation--

9 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]

10 Right.

11 MS. KOCH: --about what the  
12 timeline is for the construction of the park. And  
13 we have not yet had that conversation because I  
14 think that conver--one of the components of the  
15 Master Plan is a sense of the phasing costs of the  
16 park and so that will be part of the conversation  
17 once the Master Plan is released.

18 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Okay. I

19 understand that--

20 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] You do.

21 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: --but my  
22 question is do you have funds in hand, and I  
23 appreciate the clarification, so specifically, do  
24 you have funds in hand from unspent capital  
25 dollars to allow putting it--recognizing a

2 decision has to be made, do you have the money in  
3 hand to cover the schematic design phase if you  
4 were to choose to do so. This--

5 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] We--

6 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: --upcoming  
7 Fiscal Year.

8 MS. KOCH: We would need to consult  
9 with our Board of Directors about the priorities  
10 for the capital plan and make choices about our  
11 capital plan priorities about whether schematic  
12 design fees, as opposed to other capital  
13 priorities. And we go through that prioritization  
14 every year because as I mentioned, the capital  
15 needs of the island always exceed what our capital  
16 budget is.

17 So that would be part of our normal  
18 process with our Board to look at those priorities  
19 and again, we have not yet had that conversation,  
20 only because one of the question that will be  
21 raised which we are addressing in the Master Plan  
22 is sort of phasing questions, etcetera, as to how  
23 long it will take to build that. So we expect  
24 that to be part of the public dialog--

25 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]

2 I--

3 MS. KOCH: --which is something  
4 that hasn't happened yet but is not--has not been  
5 unanticipated.

6 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: I'm just very  
7 concerned again with the interest of going  
8 forward, we're going to have this release, we're  
9 going to have a period of input, and then we're  
10 going to come to a standstill. I mean I just know  
11 how, you know, we've been through similar  
12 standstills in other unrelated projects in the  
13 District I represent and elsewhere. And if we  
14 don't plan at the beginning of a Fiscal Year for a  
15 continuation of the project, it's all too likely  
16 that, you know, we're going to have needless  
17 delay.

18 So I am very concerned that we  
19 don't have, you know, an expectation of further--  
20 an affirmative expectation of funding for that  
21 schematic design period. How much capital funds  
22 do you have unallocated in hand?

23 MS. KOCH: I--

24 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]  
25 Of the \$35 million?

2 MS. KOCH: I can't answer that  
3 question off the top of my head--

4 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]  
5 Well can--

6 MS. KOCH: --but I'd be happy to  
7 get back to Lyle.

8 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Okay. And  
9 then, just one last area, turning to the non-park  
10 phase of the island, any development there? Any  
11 timetable? Any next steps in terms, at this  
12 point, on the table, in terms of identifying and  
13 beginning the process or of identifying the non-  
14 park uses? You mentioned several earlier in your  
15 testimony--

16 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Um-hum.

17 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: --and you did  
18 a great job in identifying a range of  
19 possibilities--

20 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Right.

21 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: --do we have  
22 any next steps planned for this upcoming Fiscal  
23 Year?

24 MS. KOCH: At the moment we don't  
25 have any immediate next steps identified. Our

2 philosophy and the approach we've taken both for  
3 the artist's studio program as well as the  
4 entertainment venue, so LMCC--which resulted in  
5 successful tenancies, is that we issue RFPs when  
6 we have a sense that the market, that there's  
7 interest for an appropriate use on the island.

8                   And at this moment, there is not an  
9 immediate RFP on the horizon but we continue to  
10 work to understand the overall market, the uses of  
11 Governor's Island and meet with any prospective  
12 tenants or even speculative tenants who might have  
13 some interest in the island. So I am hopeful that  
14 we could release future RFPs but we don't have any  
15 plans at the present time.

16                   [Pause]

17                   CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Well just to  
18 wrap it up on that point, as--one of the uses that  
19 GIPEC has identified as a possible scenario for  
20 the island is an academic use, a science--a  
21 possible science--and we--I think you referred to  
22 it as one of the scenarios was the Island of the  
23 Future, which would incorporate some facility  
24 dedicated to learning or research or conferencing  
25 in the fields of science or technology. And as

2 you know this is a discussion you and I--

3 MS. KOCH: [Interposing]

4 Absolutely.

5 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: --have had.

6 And I look forward to continuing to have that  
7 discussion. And we've had a series of task force  
8 meetings and we'll be producing soon, some  
9 recommendations for a next step.

10 But I would anticipate that among  
11 our recommendations would be that government and  
12 presumably that means GIPEC or certainly must  
13 include GIPEC, rather than wait for interest to  
14 come to the island, at least set up a process,  
15 whether it's a commission to, or some other next  
16 step, to proactively see what steps government  
17 should take to bring or could take to bring that  
18 type of feasible use to the island.

19 You know, throughout the country,  
20 including in New York State, governments in  
21 collaboration with the private sector and the  
22 academic sector have created centers of  
23 innovation, you know, the--

24 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Um-hum.

25 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: --Research

2 Triangle, Austin, Texas, I could go through the  
3 list. But I believe the history of those  
4 successes is not that we, government, just waited  
5 for somebody to come forward and say we want to do  
6 this, but government actively reached out to try  
7 and create and forge the collaboration at least to  
8 explore whether or not such a use was feasible.  
9 And if it was, then took the steps to implement  
10 it.

11 So it seems to me while we're in  
12 this fiscally imposed, if you will, holding  
13 pattern, that would be a good time for us to take  
14 this discussion to the next phase and create a  
15 commission or, you know, we're bringing together  
16 the best experts in the field with the best  
17 planners, with your great leadership to kind of  
18 explore what type, if any, facility in that  
19 academic realm and that science and technology--

20 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Um-hum.

21 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: --realm makes  
22 sense and what is needed. What is needed within  
23 the City and the metropolitan area to fill, you  
24 know, missing voids in that sector, as we've done  
25 with biotech on the Upper East Side and elsewhere.

2           There are other tech fields that  
3 maybe, or conferencing needs, that have been  
4 identified as prospects. But they're not going to  
5 happen if we don't take, you know, steps to see if  
6 we can make them happen. And so I just urge that  
7 we all--

8           MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Um-hum.

9           CHAIRPERSON GERSON: --think about  
10 what steps those might be in the months ahead.

11           MS. KOCH: Right. Great, I  
12 wholeheartedly agree. We embrace all forms of  
13 discussion on future uses for Governor's Island,  
14 especially those, as you've identified. And I was  
15 just distinguishing between the RFP which is the  
16 last--

17           CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]  
18 Right.

19           MS. KOCH: --stage of the process  
20 and then the kinds of dialog which we would love  
21 to participate in stimulating.

22           CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Terrific.  
23 Well then we'll look forward to continuing the  
24 conversation. We thank you for your presentation,  
25 for your time, and most of all, as I said, and

2 I'll say it again, for your ongoing stewardship.  
3 And a happy spring, and we look forward to a  
4 wonderful summer and spring season. I'm looking  
5 forward to making it this year to the opening  
6 Family Day Festival--

7 MS. KOCH: [Interposing] Excellent.  
8 On a bicycle I hope.

9 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: --and--on a  
10 bicycle. There you go.

11 MS. KOCH: Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Okay. Thanks  
13 a lot. And we will now hear from a--oh--

14 [Off mic]

15 [Pause]

16 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Okay. We  
17 will--now my pleasure to call Chief Michael  
18 Weinlein from FDNY and your team which Chief, we  
19 will look forward to your introducing.

20 [Pause]

21 [Off mic]

22 [Witnesses getting settled]

23 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Chief, it's  
24 always a pleasure to welcome you and please  
25 introduce your colleagues and we look forward to

2 hearing what you have to say.

3 BOROUGH COMMANDER MICHAEL WEINLEIN:

4 Good morning Chairmen Gerson and Nelson, and the  
5 Council Members. I am Michael Weinlein, FDNY's  
6 Manhattan Borough Commander. And with me today is  
7 Emergency Medical Service Division Chief James  
8 Booth. Thank you for the opportunity to speak  
9 with you today about Governor's Island and the  
10 Fire Department's plans for responding to the  
11 Island in the case of an emergency.

12 As you know, in January the Mayor  
13 unveiled his Preliminary Budget for Fiscal Year  
14 2010. That budget reflects the increasingly  
15 difficult times we are facing. It includes  
16 significant reductions for all City agencies,  
17 including the Fire Department. As part of our  
18 budget reduction, we disbanded the Governor's  
19 Island Fire Protection Unit.

20 That Unit consisted of one officer  
21 and two firefighters--

22 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]

23 Excuse me Chief. I'm just being told that I need  
24 to ask you to just pull the microphone up a little  
25 bit and closer 'cause we're--thank you.

2 BOROUGH COMMANDER WEINLEIN: Okay.

3 That unit consisted of one officer and two fire  
4 fighters and several pieces of fire apparatus.

5 Since the time the Fire Department  
6 has had a Unit assigned to Governor's Island, we  
7 have had minimal fire activity on the island, even  
8 after construction work increased over the last  
9 several years. Going forward, we will continue to  
10 maintain the fire apparatus, which consists of  
11 three engines, two ladder trucks, a brush fire  
12 unit and an ambulance, on Governor's Island at all  
13 times.

14 We have in the past, we will  
15 continue to send Fire Department personnel to  
16 Governor's Island for pre-planned events. For  
17 example, for scheduled events where 100 to 500  
18 people are expected, we would assign an officer  
19 and 3 firefighters; for events where 500 to 1,000  
20 people are expected to attend, we would assign an  
21 officer and 5 firefighters. For events where more  
22 than 1,000 people are expected, the Fire  
23 Department commitment will be determined by a  
24 number of factors, including what kind of event is

2 being held and whether special effects or an open  
3 flame for cooking is to be used.

4 For these events, we would generally  
5 assign 2 officers and up to 10 firefighters. For  
6 certain pre-planned events on Governor's Island,  
7 we would devote apparatus, EMS resources dependent  
8 upon the nature of the event. However, for most  
9 of the events that expect a crowd of more than  
10 5,000 people, the event sponsor provides EMS  
11 through a contracted EMS provider.

12 As we always have and we will  
13 continue to work with the Governor's Island  
14 Preservation and Education Corporation to  
15 determine their needs. Since the closure, we have  
16 issued FDNY handie-talkie radios and chargers to  
17 the Governors Island ferry service and the  
18 security staff, which will be used to communicate  
19 with responding fire chiefs.

20 Captain Ryan, who previously served  
21 on the island, has been assigned to the Manhattan  
22 Borough Command to be the Governors Island  
23 Liaison. He will ensure that all apparatus,  
24 equipment and quarters are checked weekly, that  
25 hydrants on the island are inspected twice a year

2 and that the buildings on the island are inspected  
3 in accordance with the Fire Prevention  
4 Regulations.

5 Currently, no buildings are under  
6 demolition, but we, you know, talked about this  
7 morning there may be future demolition of  
8 buildings. When this occurs, the inspection of  
9 these sites will be coordinated with the  
10 Construction, Demolition and Abatement team that  
11 has been established in our Fire Prevention  
12 Bureau.

13 This is a very bleak budget, as is  
14 the forecast for City revenues for the next  
15 several years. To provide some context, the Fire  
16 Department is scheduled to close 11 fire companies  
17 by July 1 of 2009, and 5 more by January 1, 2010.  
18 This budget also calls for the elimination 30  
19 ambulance tours and the cancellation of our  
20 January class and we have no plans for our future  
21 classes to hire any new additional firefighters.  
22 We looked at the minimal activity on Governor's  
23 Island and could not justify the cost, given the  
24 extraordinary cuts the agency was expected to  
25 take.

2 We developed a response plan for the  
3 island and will continue to use our finite  
4 resources as efficiently and effectively as  
5 possible to enable us to continue to serve the  
6 public. We remain committed to that and, as  
7 always, appreciate the support of the New York  
8 City Council during these difficult times.

9 Thank you for the opportunity to  
10 speak with you today. I would be happy answer any  
11 questions.

12 [Pause]

13 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: If there's a  
14 school trip involving less than 100 children and  
15 students to the island or a school Little League  
16 event involving less than 100, there will be no  
17 FDNY personnel on the island, is that my  
18 understanding of the plan?

19 BOROUGH COMMANDER WEINLEIN: Well--

20 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]  
21 Correct?

22 BOROUGH COMMANDER WEINLEIN: Fire  
23 personnel. There will be--

24 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]  
25 FDNY, Fire personnel, yes.

2 BOROUGH COMMANDER WEINLEIN: --there  
3 will be EMS personnel during the summer days that  
4 when there is an open, open, you know, days in the  
5 summer.

6 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: So.

7 [Pause]

8 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: So let me just  
9 ask, well, let's then turn to EMS for a moment.  
10 What is the allocation of EMS resources over the  
11 course of the year at Governor's Island.

12 BOROUGH COMMANDER WEINLEIN: You  
13 want to take that Jim?

14 CHIEF JAMES BOOTH: Yeah. Currently  
15 we would assign a basic life support unit which is  
16 staffed by two emergency medical technicians on  
17 the open days on the island.

18 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: So there will  
19 be one BLS throughout the open season.

20 CHIEF BOOTH: That would be correct,  
21 yes.

22 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: And is that the  
23 three days when the island is open to the public  
24 or does that include the rest of the days when,

2 you know, we just have island personnel there with  
3 occasional visitors?

4 CHIEF BOOTH: It would only be on  
5 the days it's open to the public to my knowledge.

6 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: So God forbid,  
7 someone who works on the island goes into cardiac  
8 arrest. There's not EMS personnel there to  
9 respond?

10 CHIEF BOOTH: On the days when it's  
11 not open to the public currently that's the way it  
12 is, yes.

13 BOROUGH COMMANDER WEINLEIN: It's my  
14 understanding that there are people on the island,  
15 as part of GIPEC that are trained in first aid and  
16 medical care. So. They would do an assessment,  
17 let us know what's happening. As we, like I said,  
18 I mentioned in the testimony, we have radios back  
19 and forth and we'll be able to appropriately  
20 respond with whatever we would need to respond  
21 with.

22 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: What is the  
23 anticipated response time a) by fire fighters in  
24 the event of a fire incident and b) by EMS

2 personnel in the event of a health incident  
3 requiring EMS personnel?

4 BOROUGH COMMANDER WEINLEIN: That  
5 would vary--

6 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]  
7 When on those days when you don't have personnel  
8 on the island. What is your estimated response  
9 time? If a fire breaks out, how long will it be  
10 to get a fire fighter to the island?

11 BOROUGH COMMANDER WEINLEIN: That's  
12 a vary--varying time for that because depending in  
13 where the ferry service is, at the moment, when we  
14 are needed to come there or not, it'll make a  
15 difference. But we anticipate between 20 to 30  
16 minutes to be getting on--to be able to respond to  
17 the island.

18 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: To--so the  
19 response, the backup plan assumes accessibility to  
20 the Governor's Island ferry or are--is there a  
21 dedication of FDNY fire boat capability?

22 BOROUGH COMMANDER WEINLEIN: The  
23 Governor's Island ferry would be our first choice.  
24 It's the normal operating procedure to get over  
25 there. And if that's available that's where we

2 would like to go to. Second choice that we would  
3 choose is our marine company transporting people  
4 over to the island. And we do have a third choice  
5 of using the elevators in the tunnel as well but  
6 that's in case everything else on the water  
7 wouldn't work for us.

8 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: I'm sorry,  
9 could you elaborate on that, how would the  
10 elevators to the island work?

11 BOROUGH COMMANDER WEINLEIN: There's  
12 a--

13 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]  
14 And they go from where to where and what would be  
15 the time--

16 BOROUGH COMMANDER WEINLEIN: In the  
17 Brooklyn Battery Tunnel there's an elevator that  
18 goes up to the island through the vent shaft. So  
19 we would have the accessibility to use that and  
20 notify the Brooklyn Battery Authority people and  
21 they would meet us and would escort us to the  
22 elevator and be able to use the elevator to get up  
23 and down.

24 CO-CHAIRPERSON NELSON: Just a quick  
25 thing.

2 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Chair Nelson.

3 CO-CHAIRPERSON NELSON: Excuse me.

4 Borough Commander, when the Harbor School opens, I  
5 don't know exactly when, 2010, 2011--

6 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]  
7 September 10<sup>th</sup>.

8 CO-CHAIRPERSON NELSON: --September  
9 10<sup>th</sup>? This year?

10 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Um-hum. No  
11 this--next year--

12 CO-CHAIRPERSON NELSON:  
13 [Interposing] Oh a year from September--are there  
14 any plans in place to have a presence there at  
15 all?

16 BOROUGH COMMANDER WEINLEIN: We  
17 continue to work with GIPEC on their needs--

18 CO-CHAIRPERSON NELSON:

19 [Interposing] Um-hum.

20 BOROUGH COMMANDER WEINLEIN: As this  
21 gets more fully vetted out and we see that  
22 everything's on time, and we see that the  
23 construction is being done, the ability to occupy  
24 that school in September, we'll have more  
25 discussions with them about the amount of people

2 that will be there, the amount of students,  
3 teachers, support staff. And then we can make a  
4 further--a better determination of what kind of  
5 resources we would need.

6 CO-CHAIRPERSON NELSON: Good. So  
7 that plan is on the drawing board to get together  
8 prior to the opening. Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: I'm glad you  
10 raise that Chair Nelson 'cause I mean is the  
11 question how much resources to put there or is the  
12 question whether or not to put resources there. I  
13 mean you can't seriously be thinking about opening  
14 a school without, you know, EMS presence and, you  
15 know, restoring at least the minimal amount of  
16 staffing for basic fire response, can you?

17 BOROUGH COMMANDER WEINLEIN: Those  
18 decisions haven't been made yet. It's still a  
19 year, year and a half away. I don't--I haven't  
20 been involved in any of those discussions as to  
21 what the exact total commitment would be. But we  
22 will, we will continue to talk with GIPEC about  
23 what is the commitment. How many people are going  
24 to be there? And then we'll have those  
25 discussions.

2 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: So if there is,  
3 going back to the EMS personnel, if there is a  
4 school trip or visit, you know, as I believe we've  
5 had and seen from time to time over the course of  
6 the year, other than the three days, the normal  
7 three days of opening during the open season, does  
8 the Department have plans for--on an event by  
9 event basis, trip by trip basis, to send EMS  
10 backup personnel? Or you're notified that a class  
11 or a group of visitors from wherever are coming  
12 and you send someone there? Or if it's less than  
13 100 are we relying on the first aid backup?

14 CHIEF BOOTH: I'm not aware of any  
15 specific plan. I think everything would have to  
16 be handled on a case by case basis, if we were to  
17 have a number of people there for a specific event  
18 that would be something that would be worked out  
19 on a case by case basis.

20 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: And you said  
21 for over--for an event involving over 5,000  
22 personnel there would be contracting between the  
23 event sponsor and, well that's my question, you  
24 said there would be provision through coverage by  
25 the event sponsor. Does that coverage anticipate

2 payment to the City to cover the costs of City  
3 deployment? Or does that involve a requirement  
4 that the event sponsors bring in private  
5 personnel?

6 CHIEF BOOTH: That would be  
7 addressed under Part 18 of the New York State  
8 Sanitary Code that the event sponsor would have to  
9 make provisions for the emergency medical services  
10 for the participants and the people that are  
11 attending at, I believe, at their cost to whatever  
12 vendor they contract with.

13 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: And who  
14 oversees the process to make sure that they  
15 contract with a qualified vendor? Is that your  
16 Department's responsibility? Do they have to get  
17 your sign-off or does anyone?

18 CHIEF BOOTH: There is a, I believe,  
19 they are required to file for a permit. And I  
20 believe part of the permit process is to  
21 demonstrate that they have contracted out the  
22 appropriate services.

23 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: And do you, are  
24 you going to review a permit before it's approved?

2 Does it have to go through your desk or your  
3 surrogate?

4 CHIEF BOOTH: I do not believe that  
5 the Fire--EMS has the oversight of a specific  
6 permit with an outside contractor.

7 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Who does?

8 CHIEF BOOTH: I would imagine that  
9 would be delineated in the permit process and  
10 demonstrated that they have the appropriate  
11 certified ambulance service available. I don't  
12 know who would oversight that. I could find that  
13 out for you.

14 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Could you  
15 please?

16 CHIEF BOOTH: Sure.

17 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: I mean I'm just  
18 a little, and look, no one, no one questions the  
19 dedication of each of you and the overall  
20 department to the protection of the people of the  
21 City of New York. I mean... you know, that's a  
22 given and we appreciate the day to day  
23 professionalism and bravery that you two  
24 gentlemen, you two officers exemplify and as we've  
25 come to expect from the crew.

2                   But I just don't get the reasoning.  
3 I mean I understand the numbers but when you're  
4 talking about an island, it doesn't seem to me you  
5 can go just by the numbers. You're talking about  
6 an island that has brush; that has dry seasons;  
7 where a spark could ignite, you know, a wild fire  
8 of significant proportions. An island with  
9 historic buildings that, including wooden frame  
10 buildings, in an island where there are going to  
11 be people.

12                   I mean the numbers will vary from  
13 day to day, but there are going to be people who,  
14 you know, could get--find themselves in an  
15 emergency, either fire situation or medic  
16 situation. And look, I think we all know that  
17 someone trained in first aid as I've been trained  
18 in first aid in previous incarnations of my life,  
19 when I was a lifeguard and when I was in the  
20 service, that's not the same as a medic or a  
21 technician in your service.

22                   And to leave an island totally  
23 unprotected or 20 to 30 minutes under the best  
24 scenarios, I mean I just don't get it. I mean,  
25 and my nightmare is, God forbid something happens

2 and we get this, you know, people are going to say  
3 what were they thinking.

4 I mean we're rolling the dice aren't  
5 we? We're really rolling the dice and taking a  
6 chance that we don't have a spark that sets up a  
7 wildfire situation, and we don't have somebody  
8 that everyone on the island is in perfect cardio  
9 fitness health, and no one is going to, you know,  
10 find themselves in the throes of a stroke or a  
11 heart attack. And so they can afford to wait the  
12 20 or 30 minutes.

13 But I mean isn't that what we're  
14 doing? We're taking that gamble. We've elected  
15 as a City to gamble on the fact, on the hope, that  
16 those situations will not occur.

17 BOROUGH COMMANDER WEINLEIN: Well I  
18 was, I believe I was invited here to talk about  
19 the response plan. This is talking about the  
20 priorities of where our fiscal restraints are.  
21 And those decisions are made--

22 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]  
23 Okay.

24 BOROUGH COMMANDER WEINLEIN: --at a  
25 different area than I make those decisions at.

2 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Fair enough.  
3 Fair enough Chief. And I'll direct my, my point  
4 at the Administration. And we're certainly going  
5 to follow up with them and work to restore at  
6 least a basic level of coverage. I just wanted to  
7 see if I was missing something, if there was some  
8 point that, you know, in the plan that, you know,  
9 that would alleviate my concerns that I've just  
10 overlooked. But... the equipment will remain on the  
11 island, will be periodically inspected and you'll  
12 have access to, you know, water and all the  
13 material that you need should you have to send  
14 personnel to fight a fire on the island.

15 BOROUGH COMMANDER WEINLEIN: Yeah.  
16 The equipment remains there. It gets checked  
17 every week. We send an officer and two  
18 firefighters out to check the equipment, make sure  
19 everything's working. If something needs repair,  
20 they make sure that gets taken care of, that it  
21 gets off the island, gets repaired and gets back  
22 to the island.

23 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Have you done  
24 any analysis, you the Department, as to how  
25 frequently with these different events, with these

2 different numbers, I mean GIPEC must have some  
3 idea, roughly, of how many days that they'll have  
4 folks on the island at the different levels that  
5 you cited requiring the assignment of personnel,  
6 fire fighting and EMS? So do you have a  
7 projection as to how many days under the plan  
8 you'll be sending members of the Department to the  
9 island? And what is the cost of that? What is  
10 the cost of the, the projected cost for Fiscal  
11 '10, of the backup coverage that the plan  
12 requires?

13 BOROUGH COMMANDER WEINLEIN: The--we  
14 will continue to have those discussions with GIPEC  
15 but until, you know, these last few days we didn't  
16 know whether or not the island would be open this  
17 summer or not. So we'll have those conversations  
18 with GIPEC and come out with some sort of estimate  
19 on what that would cost us for this year.

20 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Okay. And  
21 would you provide that to the Committee when you--

22 BOROUGH COMMANDER WEINLEIN:  
23 [Interposing] Sure.

24 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: --have that?  
25 Do you have any, though, sense at this point of

2 the cost differential between the current costs  
3 and the projected costs of the backup plan with  
4 respect to Governor's Island? How much money are  
5 we saving? 'Cause there's going to be some cost,  
6 I mean there's a certain number of days that  
7 you'll, under the plan you outlined, you'll have  
8 to send a fire, you know, EMS or fire fighting  
9 personnel there. So that has a cost. So what is  
10 the cost differential? How much are we actually  
11 saving by shutting this down?

12 BOROUGH COMMANDER WEINLEIN: We'll  
13 have to work those numbers and get back to you on  
14 that. It's just, it's the limited amount of days  
15 that the island's open compared to 365 days a  
16 year. It should be a fairly minimal amount of  
17 number compared to what the savings that OMB has  
18 given us is.

19 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Well how much  
20 does the City save by closing, what is the gross  
21 amount, without factoring in the expense that  
22 you'll incur when you send people to the island,  
23 what is the cost saving just of closing down this,  
24 you know, the Governor's Island fire house?

2 BOROUGH COMMANDER WEINLEIN: \$1.1  
3 million a year.

4 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: \$1.1 million.  
5 And that includes the EMS component?

6 BOROUGH COMMANDER WEINLEIN: Well  
7 the savings is because we had the fire unit on the  
8 scene. There was no EMS unit that was--

9 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]  
10 The fire unit performed the EMS function.

11 BOROUGH COMMANDER WEINLEIN: Right.

12 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Okay so \$1.1  
13 million, so it just seems to me, you know, there's  
14 always, you know, a little bit of an extra per  
15 unit or per individual cost when it's done on, you  
16 know, not as a permanent assignment but on an as-  
17 needed basis, so the cost's got to be, you know, a  
18 few hundred thousand dollars, it seems to me, at  
19 least. And so we're actually talking about a net  
20 savings of, you know, less than \$1 million,  
21 between probably, you know, in the hundreds of  
22 thousands of dollars. And for that we're taking  
23 this gamble of risk to damage to property and  
24 destruction of lives. I, I just don't get it.

2 BOROUGH COMMANDER WEINLEIN: But you  
3 also have to understand that we're required to  
4 also close 11 other units that are City--that are  
5 in a part of the City that was much heavily more  
6 populated, go on many, many, many runs in there  
7 and affect many more citizens of this City and  
8 visitors of this City, that we're required to  
9 close as well.

10 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]  
11 And I, I have similar comment about those  
12 closures. And you're right, in some cases, those  
13 closures create an even greater risk. But of  
14 course there is a difference. I think in each of  
15 those situations, when I asked the Chief the  
16 projected, you know, backup response times, it was  
17 no where near 20 to 30 minutes, except for City  
18 Island, you're not talking about an entire island.

19 You're talking about, you know,  
20 where there is an inland backup which we don't  
21 have here. All right. Well listen again, I can--  
22 you're correct. These are not remarks directed at  
23 you. You've been very informative. Oh. And just  
24 one last question, then I'll recognize my  
25 colleague.

2 On those situations when in the plan  
3 it calls for EMS personnel, but not FDNY fire  
4 fighting personnel, will the personnel come from  
5 the EMS component of the Department or the Fire  
6 Fighting Department was trained, because we know  
7 engine companies do, as you pointed out, backup  
8 medic work, will the personnel come from the EMS  
9 core or from the fire fighting core, or will that  
10 be determined on a case by case basis?

11 BOROUGH COMMANDER WEINLEIN: I  
12 believe I understand the question. The fire  
13 fighting core throughout the Department is based  
14 on a variety of different levels. Fire fighters  
15 are trained to CFRD. And then we have EMTs and  
16 then we have paramedics. If it's EMS only, it'll  
17 be EMTs that'll be assigned--

18 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]  
19 That was what I wanted to know.

20 BOROUGH COMMANDER WEINLEIN: Okay.

21 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Okay. Thank  
22 you. Excuse me. We have been joined by a member  
23 of the Lower Manhattan Redevelopment Committee who  
24 has a question. And--

2 COUNCIL MEMBER YASSKY:

3 [Interposing] Well it's--

4 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: --maybe more  
5 than one question. But has questions and Council  
6 Member David Yassky has been an extraordinary  
7 member of this Committee and very helpful, so it's  
8 a pleasure to recognize him.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER YASSKY: Well thank  
10 you Chair. It's really just one, a comment. I--  
11 and I apologize. I'm going to have to--I have a  
12 1:00 o'clock meeting that I'm going to have to  
13 excuse myself for. But I just want to say, you  
14 know, sometimes oversight hearings the impact of  
15 them is not always immediately obvious.

16 I'm, I feel confident that your  
17 scheduling this hearing and your dogged oversight  
18 resulted in the funding decision because, you  
19 know, when people know that they're going to have  
20 to come and explain the status of something, it  
21 pushes forward the decision-making process that  
22 otherwise can drag on.

23 So I just wanted to thank you for  
24 that because I think the open, you know, having  
25 governance out in the public, I know, I have yet

2 to have been there in the kind of sense of public  
3 opening, although I've been to the island a few  
4 times, but I've--many of my constituents have  
5 mentioned to me that they've been there. And you  
6 can go and you can bike and you can enjoy, and  
7 it's really a space like nothing else in all of  
8 New York City.

9 So ensuring that it's going to be  
10 open again this summer, I think was a very, very  
11 important priority. And I just appreciate your--  
12 the work of the Committee in contributing to  
13 making sure it would be. I just wanted to thank  
14 you for that Mr. Chairman.

15 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Thank you  
16 Council Member. That work would not have been  
17 possible without your contributions. So thank you  
18 very much. Chiefs, thank you very much. We're  
19 certainly going to do everything we can to give  
20 you the resources that you need to protect us, as  
21 you do so bravely and professionally every day of  
22 the year.

23 BOROUGH COMMANDER WEINLEIN: Thank  
24 you. And we appreciate that as well.

25 CHIEF BOOTH: Thank you.

2 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Thank you.

3 Okay. What's her title?

4 [Pause]

5 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: We now look  
6 forward and welcome Superintendent Patti Reilly  
7 from the National Park Service and your team,  
8 please come forward and introduce yourself and  
9 them and thank you very much for being here and  
10 for all the great work we know you're doing on the  
11 island, and beyond.

12 SUPERINTENDENT PATTI MS. REILLY:

13 Thank you Councilman Gerson. And it's certainly a  
14 pleasure to be here and a privilege to have the  
15 opportunity to come before you. And I'd like to  
16 introduce Mike Shaver who is the Supervising Park  
17 Ranger and Mike and my predecessor Linda Neal are  
18 really responsible for the accomplishments that we  
19 want to share with you today. And we appreciate  
20 this opportunity for your time.

21 **Governor's** Island National Monument,  
22 a unit of the National Park System, comprises 22  
23 acres of the 172-acre Governor's Island.

24 Established by proclamations made by Presidents  
25 William J. Clinton in 2001 and George W. Bush in

2 2003, the National Monument was established to  
3 preserve and protect Castle Williams and Fort Jay  
4 for the benefit of present and future generations.

5 Governor's Island has long been a  
6 strategic location in one of the country's most  
7 important harbors. And Castle Williams and Fort  
8 Jay are among the best remaining examples of early  
9 American coastal fortifications. These forts, the  
10 National Historic Landmark District, and the  
11 greater island provide the context for  
12 understanding the vital role Governor's Island has  
13 played in the defense and development of New York  
14 City.

15 Since the summer of 2003, the  
16 National Park Service has offered ranger-guided  
17 and self-guided tours of the National Monument and  
18 surrounding historic district and, in  
19 collaboration with GIPEC, has sponsored public  
20 programs and special events on the island. NPS  
21 and GIPEC are securing public funds to maintain,  
22 repair and rehabilitate their respective historic  
23 structures and are cooperating in the development  
24 of Governor's Island for the benefit of the people  
25 of New York and the United States.

2                   Additionally, we have completed our  
3 General Management Plan for the monument, a long-  
4 range planning document, which will guide the  
5 management of the park for the next 15 to 20  
6 years.

7                   During our first summer in  
8 operation, our program served 4,000 visitors. By  
9 2008, the National Park Service had provided  
10 tours, lectures, programs and events for about  
11 123,000 of the 128,000 total visitors to the  
12 island. Our living history programs offer  
13 visitors exciting opportunities to understand the  
14 significance of Castle Williams and Fort Jay.

15                   One very popular example is our  
16 Civil War Heritage Weekend program where history  
17 comes to life for people of all ages, providing a  
18 unique and unparalleled experience for visitors to  
19 reconnect with the City's rich Civil War heritage.

20                   Although the island is currently  
21 only open to the public during an extended summer  
22 season, since the creation of the National  
23 Monument, we have attracted and served nearly a  
24 quarter of a million visitors, most of them New  
25 Yorkers. This summer, in collaboration with

2 GIPEC, the National Park Service has scheduled  
3 many popular recurring programs as well as new  
4 events that interpret and enliven the National  
5 Monument.

6 From arts and performance festivals  
7 with well-known international and national  
8 artists, joint lectures and cultural  
9 demonstrations on the Dutch farming heritage of  
10 New York Harbor, youth programs, to Civil War and  
11 Army heritage living history weekends with the  
12 U.S. Military Academy and re-enactors from all  
13 over the northeast, numerous private and public  
14 organizations have already dedicated time and  
15 resources to working with us on programming the  
16 upcoming season.

17 The instruments that transferred the  
18 island to GIPEC and the National Park Service  
19 distinguished between the City/State agency and  
20 the Federal government as two separate owners and  
21 operators of the island, each with their  
22 respective missions, mandates and  
23 responsibilities. Since that time, our  
24 preservation mission and visitor service  
25 operations have been almost completely dependent

2 on the State and City of New York for vehicle and  
3 pedestrian transportation to and from the island,  
4 and for the provision of electricity, running  
5 water, other utilities, pest control and grounds  
6 maintenance.

7           The National Park Service has  
8 operated the national monument under the  
9 presumption that these vital services would  
10 continue without interruption as required as a  
11 condition in the 2003 deed of conveyance to GIPEC  
12 which, in particular, explicitly provides that  
13 GIPEC has an obligation to cause the Island  
14 Property to be publicly accessible at all times in  
15 perpetuity. We have been watching with some  
16 concern the discussions concerning GIPEC's  
17 funding. Should this not be resolved, public  
18 access to the National Monument would, at best, be  
19 likely restricted more than it already is, be  
20 curtailed all together, or visitors may have to  
21 pay a fee to get there.

22           In addition to the impact on  
23 visitation, our historic preservation mission  
24 would be significantly impaired. After years of  
25 repeated funding requests, this year the National

2 Park Service finally has capital projects  
3 scheduled or anticipated for the National Monument  
4 totaling more than \$10 million. We have close to  
5 \$2 million dollars in projects set to begin this  
6 spring to replace Fort Jay's roofs and boilers, to  
7 begin restoration of the fort's unique historic  
8 eagle sculpture, the oldest sculpture of its kind  
9 in the country, and to begin hazmat removal at  
10 Castle Williams.

11 We are very excited to say that we  
12 received in this year's annual appropriation \$1.35  
13 million toward the restoration of Castle Williams.  
14 We are grateful to Congressman Nadler for his  
15 leadership in securing this support. We have a  
16 \$3.8 million authorization to repair the National  
17 Park Service's dock, which would allow for ferry  
18 service to our dock and serve as an emergency back  
19 up to GIPEC's docks. This includes \$475,000 from  
20 New York State Department of Transportation.  
21 Another \$2.9 million is awaiting approval for  
22 hazmat abatement at Fort Jay.

23 Finally, as a result of the recently  
24 passed Federal recovery act, we may also receive  
25 \$5.6 million to complete hazmat removal and

2 limited structural repairs to Castle Williams,  
3 making it possible for public access and  
4 enjoyment. Should the services we currently rely  
5 on from GIPEC not continue, this situation would  
6 seriously impact our construction program as well  
7 as the safety and health of our employees.

8           Lastly, the National Park Service is  
9 also deeply concerned about the Fire Department's  
10 recent decision to shut down operations on  
11 Governor's Island. We believe the response time  
12 for FDNY to transport fire personnel and equipment  
13 from Brooklyn to the island places the structures  
14 on both the national monument and historic  
15 district at significant risk.

16           The 2003 deed provides that GIPEC  
17 shall endeavor to cause the City to provide, or if  
18 the City does not do so, shall provide, necessary  
19 and appropriate fire and emergency services to the  
20 monument property and the island property without  
21 cost to the monument operator. Since the 1830s,  
22 this is the first time the island is without  
23 organized on-site fire protection. To protect the  
24 Federal property placed in trust to the National  
25 Park Service on behalf of the people of the United

2 States, we intend to closely examine the  
3 obligations of the City and State to provide the  
4 necessary and appropriate fire and emergency  
5 services on the island.

6 Clearly, challenges lie immediately  
7 ahead for Governor's Island. But we are hopeful  
8 and excited for a record-breaking 2009 season, and  
9 for the many improvements, both big and small,  
10 that are sure to one day make this treasure in the  
11 harbor a world-class destination truly worthy of  
12 this great city. However, this goal cannot be  
13 accomplished without the active participation and  
14 support of all parties with a stake in Governor's  
15 Island.

16 We appreciate this opportunity and  
17 entertain any questions.

18 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Well thank you  
19 very much Superintendent. Thank you very much for  
20 your leadership in the role your service plays in  
21 preserving and creating this island for the  
22 future. And I appreciate your remarks and the  
23 accentuation with the point that we've had fire  
24 service since the 1830s and, you know, I think as

2 you heard, I'm incredulous at the--that there  
3 would even be a thought of discontinuing that.

4 The work that you are going forward  
5 with, and we too appreciate the efforts of  
6 Congress Member Jerry Nadler, but the preservation  
7 work, the upgrade work, does that involve  
8 contractors and workers using things--

9 MS. REILLY: [Interposing] Yes.

10 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: --like  
11 soldering and torches and electricity and things  
12 which inherently create the possibility of, you  
13 know, fire situations?

14 MS. REILLY: Yes. There's certainly  
15 a concern for, as the construction program expands  
16 and more work is done, that does increase the  
17 likelihood and activities in those areas that you  
18 just described.

19 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: And does the,  
20 does your service provide any fire protection--

21 MS. REILLY: [Interposing] We are  
22 not mandated to, by deed, that was the  
23 arrangement--

24 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]  
25 That was what I thought.

2 MS. REILLY: --that's worked out.

3 Yeah.

4 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: And what about  
5 EMS backup protection? Do you have among your  
6 cadre, paramedics or the equivalent personnel who  
7 can respond to, God forbid, a cardiac arrest or  
8 other emergency medical situation?

9 MS. REILLY: Let me let Mike respond  
10 to that--

11 MR. MICHAEL SHAVER: [Interposing]  
12 We have one emergency medical technician on our  
13 staff. It was a commitment we made, very early  
14 on, when the Park Service arrived on Governor's  
15 Island. Also GIPEC's security contractor, in view  
16 of recent events, has requested their security  
17 contractor to have emergency medical technicians  
18 on their staff. So on the island there is,  
19 between our staff and their contractors, anywhere  
20 from one to three people who are capable of  
21 getting things, you know, keeping things in check  
22 until we can transport them to a nearby hospital.

23 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: But does that,  
24 in your estimation suffice in lieu of the presence  
25 of someone from the Fire Department, trained in--

2 and with the equipment normally provided to that  
3 personnel to deal with medical situations?

4 MS. REILLY: It's not, I think a lot  
5 of it is also the sliding scale in terms of the  
6 number of visitors that are on the island. So I  
7 think--

8 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]  
9 That's a good point.

10 MS. REILLY: --that, that the--  
11 obviously the need for additional personnel is  
12 exponential given the number of visitors that are  
13 there.

14 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Let me turn to  
15 a more--by the way, I mean having been on the  
16 island, previously, you know, the island, when it  
17 was a Coast Guard installation did, of course,  
18 have a medical facility--

19 MS. REILLY: [Interposing] Um-hum.

20 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: --a hospital of  
21 sorts. Is that... is that available to serve at all  
22 as a backup or--

23 MR. SHAVER: [Interposing]  
24 Historically, what they did, they had a clinic  
25 that had a small emergency function.

2 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Right.

3 MR. SHAVER: But most of anything  
4 that got beyond that was transported to the City.  
5 That facility now is the location for the new high  
6 school. So--

7 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]  
8 So that's totally--

9 MR. SHAVER: --that's--

10 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: --unavailable.

11 MR. SHAVER: --that's totally gone.  
12 The Fire Department though has pre-staged an  
13 ambulance out there, fully equipped ambulance so  
14 that's part of the--

15 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]  
16 But just no one to operate it.

17 MR. SHAVER: Well...

18 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: [Interposing]  
19 That's--you don't have to respond--

20 MR. SHAVER: [Interposing] It's  
21 there. It's there Councilman.

22 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Yeah, we have  
23 truck, we have equipment and no personnel. All  
24 right. Let's, on a positive note, are you playing  
25 a role in plans for this Quadricentennial, the

2 400<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, you know, Governor's--Henry  
3 Hudson and Dutch settlement, you know, Governor's  
4 Island historically played a role in Dutch  
5 settlement of New York. So are there any plans  
6 between you and GIPEC in commemorating that big  
7 time? Or not so big time? But...

8 MS. REILLY: We've been in  
9 discussion and there are some activities that--not  
10 only with GIPEC but just also with some other  
11 National Park sites along the Hudson. And so I  
12 think in terms of just waiting for some of the  
13 budgetary implications to understand how many of  
14 those activities could actually unfold for the  
15 next year.

16 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Well we'd like  
17 to play a role in support of that. And we've been  
18 very interested, you know, it's a shame, we have  
19 in Lower Manhattan and including Governor's Island  
20 and indeed throughout much of New York, a history  
21 that is at least as rich, if not richer, than  
22 places elsewhere in the country which we typically  
23 think of for their historic interest.

24 I mean, you know, Boston has the  
25 Freedom Trail. Philadelphia has the Liberty Hall.

2 Williamsburg, of course, has those great  
3 commercials. But we have as rich a history as  
4 each of those places but we don't, you know,  
5 commemorate it, celebrate it, enhance it, market  
6 it, as much as we should.

7 And certainly Governor's Island is  
8 part of that. And you've done a great job in, you  
9 know, preserving and in marketing this history.  
10 So would you, could we follow up this hearing and  
11 meet and see what is planned? How we and the  
12 Council and we and the community can partner with  
13 you and support you in really bringing out this  
14 wonderful history that--so all New Yorkers and  
15 visitors can learn and enjoy it?

16 MS. REILLY: That would be  
17 wonderful. And as you so noted in terms of  
18 marketing, Governor's Island National Monument is  
19 part of National Parks of New York Harbor and so  
20 New York is pretty fortunate in having quite a  
21 number of National Parks right here in its  
22 backyard, which is an entrée to 390 other fabulous  
23 places. And so we look forward to the opportunity  
24 to see how we may raise the profile but also raise  
25 the opportunity for all New Yorkers and others as

2 a destination place and to take part in  
3 activities.

4 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Well that's  
5 great. And one last point. I know in one  
6 conversation I had, and we look forward by the way  
7 to having that conversation, I know Congress  
8 Member Nadler was concerned at one point about  
9 funding for asbestos removal from--

10 MS. REILLY: [Interposing] Yes.

11 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: --has that not  
12 been provided?

13 MS. REILLY: They, the money this  
14 year, the \$1.35 million, is going to start that  
15 job for us. We, as I think you, I stated earlier,  
16 we are awaiting word on the recovery act package.  
17 And should we get that, that will really take us,  
18 in terms of hazmat removal from Castle Williams,  
19 and it will allow access in there. So we are very  
20 hopeful that that will happen.

21 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Well what is  
22 the amount that you would love to receive from the  
23 Federal stimulus or recovery act for those  
24 purposes?

2 MS. REILLY: We're looking at \$5.6  
3 million.

4 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Okay. Well  
5 thank you very much Superintendent--

6 MS. REILLY: [Interposing] Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: --we'll  
8 continue to be in touch.

9 MS. REILLY: We look forward to  
10 seeing you on the island.

11 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: I look forward  
12 to being there. And now some folks who have been  
13 on the island and love the island as much as  
14 anyone and have contributed above and beyond their  
15 share to its recreation for all of us...

16 [Pause]

17 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Robert Pirani  
18 from the Governor's Island Alliance. Is Tom Fox  
19 here, I saw him a moment ago? He had to leave  
20 unfortunately. Michael Levine from Community  
21 Board 1 which includes the island, and Roland  
22 Lewis, did he have to leave? Okay. Is there  
23 anyone else here--oh Rick Bell from the American  
24 Institute of Architecture. And I think we have--

25 [Off mic]

2 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Rick you need  
3 to fill out one of these tickets. That's why I  
4 didn't... but please do so and then take your place.  
5 And Robert why don't you kick it off? And let me  
6 thank you for your incredible, tireless,  
7 indefatigable leadership in keeping Governor's  
8 Island moving forward. It's been a pleasure to  
9 work with you and be inspired by you.

10 MR. ROBERT PIRANA: Well Alan, let  
11 me thank you for those very, very kind words. And  
12 let me return the compliment by saying and maybe  
13 starting my testimony by saying that the last time  
14 we were--I think when the hearing was scheduled, I  
15 think a number of us were wearing life jackets  
16 and--outside the steps of City Hall. And I think  
17 thanks to your leadership and your pursuit and  
18 attention to this issue, we're all very happy,  
19 obviously, that the funding did come through in  
20 the State budget and with the City match which  
21 will presumably be there. We'll look forward to a  
22 great summer season.

23 I'll also note and thank you for  
24 your support of the Opening Day Family Festival  
25 which this year will be on May 30<sup>th</sup>. And I'll also

2 note that that will include, I believe, a play  
3 about Henry Hudson. So maybe you'll come out and  
4 we'll toast you or your support of it and the  
5 Council's support of it. And again I think it's  
6 the Arm of the Sea Theater will be instructing the  
7 kids about Henry Hudson's arrival 400 years ago.

8 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: I look forward  
9 to that.

10 MR. PIRANI: So with that, again,  
11 let me--I handed out some written testimony. I  
12 also, as you know, the Alliance is a coalition of  
13 more than 50 civic organizations, AIA New York and  
14 CB 1 is sitting here with me are 2 of them.  
15 Unfortunately 2 others had to leave, Metropolitan  
16 Waterfront Alliance and New York Water Taxi, and I  
17 have actually distributed their testimony as well,  
18 so you have copies of that as well.

19 Let me just summarize in the  
20 interest of time. Some of the testimony I handed  
21 in, and go back to something you pointed out a  
22 few, you know, earlier when Leslie Koch was here.  
23 You know, while we're all thrilled with the  
24 progress that's been made on the island in the  
25 last few years, I think the budget discussions

2 this spring, as you alluded to really remind us  
3 that the path forward is somewhat unclear. And  
4 the fact that we had to spend so much time and  
5 energy simply to keep the island operating, I  
6 think is testimony to the fact that we need to  
7 come up with a sort of long term reliable strategy  
8 for moving forward.

9 And I would submit that that  
10 involves three elements: first of all and perhaps  
11 at its heart, consistent and reliable funding  
12 that's needed from the Federal, State and City  
13 level; you know, I, we certainly share your  
14 concern about the firehouse.

15 We also would share with you the  
16 possibility, the hopefully possibility that in  
17 addition to the City and State money that will be  
18 coming forward in the budget there may be some  
19 stimulus money that's available. Right now the  
20 Park Services, our understanding is that the Park  
21 Service is currently making those determinations  
22 in particular and as is the City and State on  
23 stimulus. And obviously a note from the Council  
24 to the folks that are making those decisions at  
25 this time would be very timely, reminding them of

2 the importance of the island. And it's something  
3 we'd be happy to follow up with you about.

4 The second, you know, sort of by-  
5 word is really sort of the idea of transparent  
6 and, you know, making sure that the governance of  
7 the island has the structure it needs. You know,  
8 it's clear that sort of the three-headed structure  
9 currently in place with--between the City, State  
10 and Empire State Development Corporation is, you  
11 know, doesn't always work as smoothly as one would  
12 like. I think everyone acknowledges the need for  
13 shared responsibility but management divided among  
14 parties is often difficult.

15 The Mayor, as you know, put forward  
16 the proposal that the City take over the island  
17 during the budget discussions. And, you know, I  
18 think it's fair to say that, you know, the City  
19 has certainly been there for the island over the  
20 past few years and has made their commitment, long  
21 term commitment known. You know, so we're--we've  
22 been--the Alliance, while we haven't taken a  
23 position one way or the other, I just want to  
24 leave you with these thoughts.

2 First of all, that addressing  
3 governance over the next year or several months is  
4 an important issue. We can't walk away from that  
5 discussion. That for us as an alliance we'd like  
6 to see resulting from that, whoever the eventual  
7 sort of party is, whether it's the City, whether  
8 it's the State, whether it's some sort of hybrid,  
9 but what we want to see is clear and transparent  
10 decision-making and accountability; and a  
11 continued ability to tap into City, State and  
12 Federal sources of money; flexibility in terms of  
13 design, implementation and procurement.

14 And this leads me to my last point,  
15 certainty in regards to planning and programming  
16 commitments. And in particular we've always  
17 envisioned, as done with Hudson River Park, is  
18 that once a Master Plan was completed, that in  
19 fact ESDC's role, you know, traditionally ESDC  
20 doesn't have a long term stewardship stake in the  
21 properties that they manage, but that there, once  
22 a Master Plan was in place that their role would  
23 fade and in fact there would be a new entity  
24 created, again, City, State, partnership,  
25 whatever.

2 And that the parklands that were  
3 identified under the Master Plan would become  
4 mapped State or City parklands so that the vision  
5 that Leslie described is in fact embodied for  
6 future generations and protected into the future.

7 Let me close by talking about the  
8 idea of that Master Plan. We're obviously very  
9 excited by the prospect of the Park Master Plan.  
10 There's a lot of exciting features to it to  
11 applaud. In particular the things that we're  
12 going to be looking for going forward when they  
13 release the plan is the idea of this, you know,  
14 the reason to create a plan now is to create a  
15 strong public space framework that you can sort of  
16 hang the development off of.

17 So we want to make sure that that  
18 plan kind of affirms the campus quality of the  
19 island as a whole. And that, in fact, some of  
20 the--we believe that some of the decisions about  
21 the development sites, in fact, probably need to  
22 be articulated now so that the Park Master Plan  
23 can sort of encompass them and respond to them.  
24 You know, that's sort of, in some ways, kind of a  
25 very basic plan and concept and something that we

2 look forward to in the Master Plan and something  
3 we'll be talking to GIPEC about as that plan goes  
4 forward.

5 We also, and I think Leslie touched  
6 on this, that, you know, the plan that comes  
7 forward needs to enable phasing of both park and  
8 island development for all the obvious reasons.  
9 You know, we're concerned that right, as of this  
10 moment, there haven't been decisions made about  
11 where we're going to go forward once the Park  
12 Master Plan is released.

13 You know, it's clear in our mind  
14 that the next steps are in fact to move into  
15 schematic design and into, you know, the  
16 environmental review process. That'll take  
17 another year, you know, or something on that order  
18 of magnitude. And that in fact there's no reason  
19 to, you know, we certainly recognize the need to  
20 create a Park Master Plan that's flexible and that  
21 can adapt with changing circumstances and changing  
22 needs. It'll be a long term process to see it  
23 built out. But at the same time that Park Master  
24 Plan that should go forward.

2 And then finally we also want to  
3 make sure that the plan is sustainable  
4 financially. That we don't create a park that is  
5 too expensive to maintain and while we don't  
6 envision the park, the development on the island,  
7 paying for that sort of self--you know, creating a  
8 park that pays for itself, we certainly recognize  
9 that those developments will contribute to the  
10 maintenance of the island over time. And we don't  
11 want to create a structure that demands too much  
12 development.

13 So with that, let me again thank you  
14 for your leadership on this issue and pass the  
15 baton over to my fellow alliance members.

16 [Off mic]

17 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: I think--

18 MR. MICHAEL LEVINE: I don't think  
19 I'm on.

20 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: There you go.

21 MR. LEVINE: I'll try again. My  
22 name is Michael Levine. I am the Director of  
23 Planning for Community Board 1. And thank you Rob  
24 for a wonderful summary of the concerns of the  
25 public. I'd like to thank you for the opportunity

2 to address you today on behalf of Julie Menin,  
3 Chair of the Board, Robert Townley, the Chair of  
4 our Waterfront Committee and the entire Community  
5 Board 1, which serves all of Lower Manhattan.

6 You have copies of the testimony. I  
7 will be brief and I'll try to summarize and state  
8 that the two major concerns for Community Board 1  
9 are concerns that you, Council Member Gerson, have  
10 stated today.

11 Number one, the closure of the  
12 firehouse. CB 1 is very, very concerned and very  
13 upset and we have spoken to the members of the  
14 Fire Department. And we interviewed them prior to  
15 the closure when they made the announcement. We  
16 feel that it is truly a danger to anyone visiting  
17 the island if we do not have a continuing  
18 presence, particularly when attendance on the  
19 island is low.

20 We have historic structures. We  
21 have residents of CB 1. We have visitors from  
22 around the City, around the State, the country and  
23 the world. We should not be taking any chances  
24 and not have round-the-clock personnel on the  
25 island. So we support any efforts you may

2 endeavor to make sure that the staff is returned  
3 to Governor's Island on a full-time basis. So we  
4 thank you for your concern and your interest.

5 Number two, we are equally concerned  
6 about budget issues. And we are thrilled that you  
7 and our State legislators have taken such an  
8 active role in guaranteeing and continue to work  
9 on the issues related to funding for capital and  
10 expense budgets. And we thank you for these  
11 efforts and we support any future efforts you and  
12 our State legislators will take to make sure that  
13 the island remains open, that all construction  
14 occurs, and that the Master Plan is in fact  
15 accomplished. So we're very, very happy to see  
16 progress on the budget front.

17 I'd like to talk for a moment, and  
18 this is the concluding portion of the testimony,  
19 about the future plan for use of the island. You  
20 made reference to this earlier when you talked  
21 about uses. We in CB 1 are very concerned that  
22 the island be an active recreation source for  
23 residents of CB 1 as well as the City and the  
24 State and the full United States, and anyone who  
25 visits. As you heard from Leslie Koch's

2 announcement earlier, a great deal of the visitors  
3 to Governor's Island are residents of CB 1. The  
4 date is collected by zip code and it does show  
5 that a lot of people are from this area.

6 We in CB 1 as you know are park  
7 starved. Our population has doubled in the past  
8 decade from 30,000, and we are estimating by the  
9 time we see the 2010 census we will be close to  
10 60,000 residents of CB 1. We are severely  
11 underserved in many, many community resources, one  
12 of which is open space.

13 We see Governor's Island, not just a  
14 resource for the City as a whole, but for CB 1.  
15 And we would like to see future planning for use  
16 of the island incorporate something we've seen  
17 already, which are ball fields, space for the  
18 Little League on a regular basis. We'd like the  
19 island open as much to residents of CB 1, 24 hours  
20 a day, 7 days a week, whenever it is needed, to  
21 relieve the need for open space by the residents  
22 of our area. So we take great pride in our  
23 ability, so far, to have worked with GIPEC and  
24 with the Governor's Island Alliance to guarantee

2 that there will be active uses for the residents  
3 of CB 1.

4 We have some other concerns too in  
5 the development of the Master Plan. We want to  
6 make sure that as much of the island's natural  
7 resources as possible remain, and that landscaping  
8 include natural resources without too much of a  
9 reliance on artificial resources. We would like  
10 to see public walkways, bikeways and other forms  
11 of passive recreation engaged as much as possible  
12 on the island, again, a place for CB 1 residents  
13 to simply relax and go to when they feel the  
14 congestion of the local neighborhood overwhelming.  
15 We'd like to see this available 7 days a week, 24  
16 hours a day, all 4 seasons of the year, if  
17 possible.

18 That brings us to our final request  
19 which has come up a lot during today's hearing,  
20 and that is accessibility to the island. Funding  
21 is crucial to keep access to the island free to  
22 the public. We want to make sure that access to  
23 the island is available at all times, not only at  
24 maximum usage times, but that anyone can get out  
25 to Governor's Island, free of charge, to take

2 advantage of the simple ability to enjoy the open  
3 space.

4 One final thing, you have testimony  
5 from Tom Fox from New York Waterways about the  
6 proposed opening of an eating and drinking  
7 establishment with volleyball courts and music,  
8 music venues. CB 1 recently reviewed that  
9 proposal. We were very pleased to support that  
10 proposal. We'd like to see development occurring  
11 at the harbor and we look forward to being able to  
12 use whatever facilities are put in on Governor's  
13 Island and again, as much as possible, throughout  
14 the year.

15 So we thank you again for the  
16 opportunity to testify on behalf of the residents  
17 and the Board of CB 1.

18 MR. RICK BELL: Rick Bell from the  
19 American Institute of Architects, New York. As  
20 Rob mentioned, both Mike and I are here in part to  
21 support what the Governor's Island Alliance has  
22 been doing in terms of both analysis and further  
23 suggestions in regard to the GIPEC Master Plan for  
24 the park area of Governor's Island.

2 I think there are a couple of points  
3 that need, could benefit from reinforcing. I  
4 don't want to repeat things that have already been  
5 said. I might add one or two other things.

6 Without prepared testimony, in  
7 reaction to the wonderful presentation by Leslie  
8 Koch and others here on the panel, I think there  
9 are several issues that come through these  
10 presentations this morning and early this  
11 afternoon that talk to safety; that talk to  
12 interim use; as Mike just mentioned, that talk to  
13 what are the natures of uses that could happen  
14 with or without a firehouse, with or without an  
15 EMS station, in safety on the island. How do  
16 people get there? What do they see when they do  
17 get there?

18 We were privileged as Leslie Koch  
19 mentioned in passing, to see a presentation with  
20 Betty Chin [phonetic] for the Governor's Island  
21 Alliance the other day at our Center for  
22 Architecture, that was wonderful because it talked  
23 to the importance of bicycling, the importance of  
24 recreational uses, as the Department of Health and

2 other parts of our administration talk about  
3 fitness and the need for more active lifestyle.

4 This is a park that will redefine  
5 recreation in New York City. It's a park that as  
6 the economy has soured becomes all the more  
7 necessary to build now, at least in terms of its  
8 park function for the recreational needs that  
9 people have--when there is more leisure time  
10 whether that's voluntary or involuntary.

11 It also brings to bear the issues in  
12 the changed economy of where the resources are  
13 going to come to make all this possible. As Mike  
14 was mentioning, that this should be a 24/7  
15 facility, year-round, starting now, if that were  
16 at all possible. And we recognize that the  
17 benefit of the GIPEC plan, of the scheme proposed  
18 by West 8 is that it can be phased. What they're  
19 proposing is phasing and that should be supported.  
20 What parts comes first, how accessible they are,  
21 how available they are, well that relates to this  
22 curious balance of State and City Funding and  
23 hopefully some stimulus fund monies from the  
24 Federal government as well.

2 I want to commend the Council, the  
3 Committees here, for bringing attention to these  
4 issues here today. There's a lot happening. We  
5 would like to think behind the scenes. Governor  
6 Paterson yesterday at the breakfast meeting of the  
7 Association for a Better New York did not mention  
8 Governor's Island at all in his remarks but he  
9 talked a lot about the State's fiscal crisis and  
10 how there have been cutbacks left and right.

11 Afterward in a brief Q and A, he was  
12 asked whether there would be State support for  
13 Governor's Island and he said that there were  
14 negotiations going on with the City and that  
15 hopefully something was going to be announced that  
16 was positive very, very soon. I was the one who  
17 asked the question.

18 And I said well, there's the  
19 Governor in Governor's Island, your name is in the  
20 title, but many of us remember, Rob certainly  
21 does, that the title, the name of the island used  
22 to be Nutten Island, and that's too close to  
23 nothing for comfort. Maybe it could be Council  
24 Island or Mayoral Island or I hate to think that  
25 there's some major corporation out there that is

2 looking for naming rights. But I think the  
3 Governor's heart is in the right place. And he  
4 understands and he iterated, reiterated the need  
5 for those recreational and symbolic uses.

6 The GIPEC plan talks to the relation  
7 of the island to the Stature of Liberty for  
8 instance, once of the things in the first plan  
9 recognizes that many people are coming from all  
10 over the world because of the heritage, the  
11 history, the legacy and the symbolism of this  
12 island in relation to the Statue, and keeps though  
13 a continuous promenade all the way around the  
14 island.

15 One of the things in our discussion,  
16 brief discussion with members of GIPEC the day  
17 before yesterday, talked to the vantage point from  
18 the water. If Tom Fox and others were here from  
19 the Waterfront Alliance they might be talking  
20 about how the island looks not only from those  
21 arriving at the pier facing Manhattan, Soissons  
22 Pier, but also how it looks from Brooklyn, right  
23 across a very narrow stretch of waterway, or from  
24 the water.

2 And how the areas that are not yet  
3 slated for development because there's no RFP as  
4 Leslie Koch mentioned out there yet as the economy  
5 may call for re-questioning or reinvestigation of  
6 what the uses should be on the island.

7 The parts that are not yet  
8 determined are not part of the park being  
9 developed are mostly facing Brooklyn. Brooklyn  
10 may not be represented on this panel. But I was  
11 born in Brooklyn and I think there's a lot to be  
12 considered as we think of the island as a whole.

13 The integration as we heard with the  
14 National Park Service is going better than ever.  
15 I think we should be mindful that this is a  
16 combination of Federal, State and City efforts  
17 where, with this hearing and with the behind the  
18 scenes activity, it's apparent that the City is  
19 stepping up the plate. That the City will become  
20 more involved. And I think that's a good thing.

21 Rob mentioned the possibility of  
22 designating the Park Plan as entirely City Park.  
23 I think he said City or State Park but a City Park  
24 on this island is altogether appropriate. It's  
25 been the geographical confines of the City of New

2 York, the State has not been able to muster  
3 adequate financing maybe the City can.

4 The last thing that I would like to  
5 come it is, because so much time was spent in  
6 talking about safety, with kids on the island, and  
7 not only kids. I'm an architect with the historic  
8 resources that are on the island, with the  
9 tragedies that could occur if it takes a long time  
10 for response.

11 We've certainly heard in other  
12 neighborhoods at other times during other fiscal  
13 crises the sadness of lack of response time or  
14 diminished response time. I can't claim to be an  
15 expert. I don't purport to be. But it seems to  
16 me that as the use on the island intensifies,  
17 there's a greater need to make a commitment, not  
18 here and now today, but very, very soon to reopen  
19 facilities that are envisioned as closed or to  
20 substitute them with other possibilities that  
21 might not be the same as before but just as good  
22 or better.

23 I'll conclude there. Thank you for  
24 the chance to testify.

2 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Well thank you  
3 each. And, you know, certainly we on the Council  
4 and I'm confident we, throughout government and  
5 the civic community are going to continue to look  
6 for your guidance and input as this Governor's  
7 Island process unfolds.

8 We would be remiss if we concluded  
9 this hearing without noting the great support  
10 Governor's Island has received from Speaker  
11 Sheldon Silver, whose District, of course,  
12 includes Governor's Island, as well as the support  
13 we have received and I in particular have received  
14 from the Speaker of the Council Christine Quinn  
15 for the ongoing Governor's Island efforts. Note  
16 had been mentioned in earlier testimony of the  
17 role of Congress Member Nadler whose District also  
18 includes Governor's Island.

19 Let me just ask, each of you are  
20 planners. So let me ask you. You tell me. Does  
21 the timetable of the planning process outline make  
22 sense or does it need to be tweaked or improved?

23 Specifically we know, from what I  
24 heard, have a process which will involve the  
25 release of a draft Master Plan, receiving, you

2 know, input, and then wait. Wait for, you know,  
3 funding for the construction to be figured out.

4 Is that the right way to proceed or  
5 should we proceed more immediately to what was  
6 referred to as the schematic phase wherein  
7 following the period of public input we then  
8 proceed to incorporate the public input and  
9 develop, you know, any revisions and come up with  
10 a, you know, revised, hopefully final version,  
11 whether or not we have the funding in place to  
12 break ground on construction of the park? Any  
13 thoughts on...?

14 MR. PIRANI: Well let me start.  
15 Mike and Rick may also have something to say in  
16 addition. I think what's of concern, I mean I  
17 think the idea has been terrific and GIPEC has  
18 done a terrific job is sort of advancing the park  
19 plan and creating, again, a park and public space  
20 framework that then, you know, the development  
21 could respond to. And I think, you know, again we  
22 just want to applaud them for taking on that  
23 strategy and moving forward in the way they have.

24 And I think the plan that comes out  
25 in May will be terrific. Having said that I think

2 we're deeply--I mean, you know, we'll quibble  
3 about some of the details, but in broad strokes  
4 I'm confident they'll do a good job.

5           You know, I think what we're very  
6 concerned though is on two things. One is, you  
7 know, by--you can't simply plan the park, while  
8 we're happy that the park plan is going first, the  
9 park plan and the development zones have to  
10 respond to each other. And without constraining  
11 the development zones too much we believe that in  
12 fact the Park Master Plan could articulate some of  
13 the framework of what's going on within the  
14 development zones: circulation; intensity of use;  
15 gateways to the island; maybe some issues about  
16 program, in a way that doesn't constrain either  
17 the park or the development but simply lays out  
18 some scenarios that are very, very likely.

19           Secondly and I think this maybe is  
20 more to your question, you know, the park--we  
21 don't want to have a plan that gets, just gets  
22 published and then sits on a shelf. You know,  
23 it's, you know, the government has spent a fair  
24 amount of money moving the process to this place.  
25 There's no reason that I can think of why once

2 public comment has been received and digested that  
3 you couldn't move forward with schematic designs  
4 and with environmental review.

5 If there's aspects of the Master  
6 Plan that need to be a little more generalized  
7 where you don't want to sort of go to the Nth  
8 degree because of needed flexibility, you know, I  
9 think that's--every plan does that. You know, but  
10 some aspects of the plan, the, you know, and again  
11 going back to phasing, some aspects of the park  
12 could probably open sooner than later. And in  
13 fact you could be making more detailed design  
14 decisions about those areas and move forward.

15 And again, you know, the idea that  
16 you could also undertake the environmental review  
17 associated with that. We know that process takes  
18 a long time. You can always go back and do a  
19 supplemental environmental impact statement if you  
20 absolutely need to. But you can certainly do an  
21 environmental review that speaks to the broad  
22 impacts and discloses those broad concerns in  
23 order to keep the ball moving.

24 MR. LEVINE: Just one comment to  
25 support the comment that Rob is making which is

2 correct regarding the timetable. Of major concern  
3 to us is the continuing relationship with GIPEC  
4 and that is public participation in the decision-  
5 making process. Advancing the plan, the Master  
6 Plan, on a timetable they have described would  
7 allow for continued public participation.

8 We feel it is very important and  
9 they have do so far up to now to continually come  
10 back to the community, not just CB 1 but the  
11 government groups, the good government groups  
12 around the City, the civic watchdogs and other  
13 Community Boards. We feel that following the  
14 timetable that's established works. And we know  
15 that guaranteed in that process will be the  
16 adequate opportunity for public participation and  
17 for the Community Boards and the other groups to  
18 plan the island with them. Therefore we do  
19 support the timetable as we have seen them present  
20 it. It allows for maximum public participation.  
21 Rick.

22 MR. BELL: The timetable is about  
23 phasing. The timetable is about making parts of  
24 the island available as resources are available,  
25 recognizing the economy has changed and not

2 everything is there that you might want to be  
3 there now. I think all of us, not just at this  
4 table, but all of us in this room and in the City  
5 would like to see as much of the island opened to  
6 as many people as soon as possible, particularly  
7 for recreational uses and not just for one  
8 Community Board but for the City as a whole.

9 That said, there are a couple of  
10 metaphors you could look at that are physical.  
11 I'm not a planner, I'm an architect. But there's  
12 not much of a difference. As an architect I know  
13 that there are times to build and there are times  
14 that you can't build.

15 Look at Battery Park City as a  
16 metaphor. The sites that were not ready to build  
17 for a variety of reasons, economics, politics,  
18 need, were used very effectively as meadows. I'm  
19 not suggesting that for the sake of argument  
20 Battery Park City and its development zone is a  
21 meadow but what impedes it from happening in the  
22 way that Battery Park City did, gradually, with  
23 intent, with great, you know, increasing quality  
24 of design architecturally and environmentally.

2 Well there are buildings there that  
3 are in some cases unsafe and certainly residual  
4 and aren't going to be retained, particularly on  
5 the southeast side facing Brooklyn. Whether those  
6 are roped off, chain link fenced off, screened off  
7 with plantings, demolished, adaptively reused in  
8 the short run which is unlikely, I think it makes  
9 a big difference.

10 Not knowing what the RFP will hold  
11 in the future or even when it will be issued for  
12 that area, raises the question about what is the  
13 interim use for a part that's unusable? You know,  
14 is demo a priority? Well demolition has started  
15 for the buildings that are unsafe. How is the  
16 island made safe in its entirety? By isolating  
17 parts, by screening parts, by an enhanced  
18 demolition that might bring the natural qualities  
19 of the site, wildflowers being but the most  
20 obvious symbol to bear sooner.

21 Alternative uses that might relate  
22 to interim uses the way taxpayers, not  
23 constituents, the building's called taxpayers on  
24 42<sup>nd</sup> Street and 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue, for decades preceded the  
25 construction of the Bank of America tower now

2 there, now completed or almost completed in its  
3 construction. There might be alternative uses.  
4 The State Fair, that could take place on the  
5 island, if adequate funding were there in ways  
6 that don't dictate what will be there ultimately.

7 I think the one thing that has  
8 always been off the table since the signing of the  
9 transfer of the property to, you know, from the  
10 Federal government, was housing. No one's even  
11 going to mention the word casino in this room  
12 ever, I hope. But, you know, there's a hop, skip  
13 and a jump between academic uses, dormitories,  
14 college uses and housing.

15 I'm not suggesting nor is the AIA at  
16 this point that housing be back on the table.  
17 There's very little housing development taking  
18 place. It's certainly not what the AIA or  
19 Governor's Island Alliance has been saying. But  
20 in the short run with those buildings calling out  
21 for heating, calling out for occupancy, calling  
22 out for eyes on the island, maybe interim housing  
23 use is not the same as the housing development  
24 that changed the scale of Roosevelt Island or  
25 Battery Park City, creating private precincts

2 where more public accessibility was expected and  
3 called for.

4 Putting those as not necessarily  
5 radical thoughts on the table, but the timing is  
6 obviously about money, but it's also about  
7 political will. Political leaders starting here  
8 at the Council are stepping up to say that this is  
9 needed now. You know, what is this? What can it  
10 be? How can it change over time?

11 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: And finally,  
12 and if anyone else wants to comment on the issue  
13 of housing, I'd be interested. But in addition to  
14 that, the issue of governance, Rob testified that  
15 the alliance, I think was interested or inclined  
16 to, but did not take a position on the issue of  
17 full City governance.

18 Do you want to add to that or leave  
19 it as it is Rob? I'd be interested. And do  
20 either of you from Community Board 1 and the AIA,  
21 either individually or though--or with your  
22 organizations, do you have any thoughts or  
23 positions on the issue of full City control over  
24 Governor's Island.

2 MR. LEVINE: I'm glad that you've  
3 raised the issue of governance. Community Board 1  
4 has not yet considered it and prior to testimony I  
5 had already invited Rob Pirani for the Alliance  
6 and Leslie Koch to join us at a future meeting of  
7 the Community Board to discuss the options.

8 We know that the HRPT model is  
9 working for our purposes with Hudson River Park as  
10 a way of governance and as a way of guaranteeing  
11 community participation. But we know there are  
12 other models. There's the HRPT model. There is  
13 the model of City governance.

14 We'd like to have them join us at a  
15 Waterfront Committee meeting and then the full  
16 board, discuss the ramifications, talk out what  
17 might work best for them, and then come back to  
18 you at a future date with a recommendation on  
19 governance from CB 1. So thank you for asking the  
20 question.

21 MR. PIRANI: Yeah and let me just  
22 echo that. I mean I think, you know, the one  
23 thing we do know is that the governance right now  
24 doesn't really work that well. And that it hasn't  
25 worked, you know, even putting aside the, you

2 know, it's never worked well. Let's put it that  
3 way since GIPEC was created. And so having  
4 discussions at the Community Board, having  
5 discussions here at the Council, on what might be  
6 the right mechanism, you know, now's the time to  
7 be doing that.

8 I'm really glad that you brought up  
9 the leadership that Speaker Silver showed in the  
10 current budget. We're very cognizant of his deep  
11 interest in the island and want to be, you know,  
12 make sure that we also get a sense of where he's  
13 at and what his opinions are on how the island  
14 should be managed in the future. It's clear that,  
15 you know, whether it's under City control, under  
16 State control, all three levels of government  
17 should continue to have an interest in the island.

18 We just want to make sure that the  
19 decision-making process, that the responsibility  
20 is a little more clear-cut.

21 MR. BELL: The AIA does not have a  
22 position on governance. I'll speak as an  
23 individual. Semantically perhaps the word  
24 prejudices the conciliation, is that the word that  
25 might come from the City Council, reconciliation.

2                   It seems to me that Governor  
3 Paterson's remarks about the State budget are  
4 fearsome. Yesterday was no different. State  
5 budget cuts this year despite Speaker Silver's  
6 speaking up for the island, are noticeable. And  
7 the State budget scenario envisioned by Governor  
8 Paterson and in this... budget that is seeing its  
9 final touches being refined now, doesn't promise  
10 getting much better next year or the year after,  
11 or the year after that.

12                   To my mind as a citizen, you know,  
13 as an architect, as a, you know, someone who  
14 spends a lot of time in Lower Manhattan where, as  
15 Mike pointed out, there's a dearth of parkland,  
16 just calls out for the City being more involved.

17                   You know, we could all be polite and  
18 say it needs a lot more discussion but I'll be  
19 more blunt as an individual, not for my  
20 organization, and say that City control of the  
21 parks that are not controlled by the National Park  
22 Service, which are shepherded wonderfully, not  
23 that Congress has been all that generous and more  
24 pressure could come from the City to try to get  
25 more Federal funding for the parks, for the

2 historic parts that NPS controls, but I think the  
3 rest of it should be City controlled.

4 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: And finally,  
5 and by the way, I think you've outlined a good  
6 process. I think that's, you know, as always  
7 Community Board 1 is ahead of the curve and having  
8 that meeting sounds very appropriate and maybe  
9 following that the issue of governance would be a  
10 good topic for a follow-up hearing by the Council.

11 You know, the Assembly, you know,  
12 for now at least, has done its share of the  
13 budget. I think that the Senate is in session.  
14 We're fortunate that we have, you know, the  
15 Senator of Governor's Island, Senator Squadron up  
16 in Albany, as we speak, currently fighting for  
17 Governor's Island. So we hope that we'll see the  
18 positive outcome we anticipate.

19 Let me just ask you, with respect to  
20 both the, you know, the overall budget, City/State  
21 combined, of the lack of capital funding that  
22 appears to be in the works for the upcoming Fiscal  
23 Year. Is that troublesome? Should we, even the  
24 absence of State capital funding, should we try  
25 and push for a degree of City capital funding? Or

2 can we afford to wait a year without any, you  
3 know, and make do on previous capital allocations?

4 MR. PIRANI: Well obviously I think  
5 as Leslie mentioned, you know, the island's  
6 capital needs are large. And while certainly we  
7 are sympathetic to both the City and the State  
8 having a difficult time, this particular year, we  
9 had hoped that in fact the City and State would  
10 each contribute \$7 million of new capital money  
11 towards the island.

12 Certainly the need is there.  
13 Certainly we don't want to see while GIPEC is  
14 still spending some appropriations made  
15 previously, given political will, you know, that  
16 money could be spent very quickly.

17 So we would certainly welcome that.  
18 I guess I would point out that there are ways, you  
19 know, obviously GIPEC is constrained in terms of  
20 its budget because it's a City/State match and  
21 OMB, obviously as you know, is--may not be open to  
22 the idea of spending City capital money without  
23 the State funds being there.

24 But I'm sure with your great staff  
25 you could be creative in trying to figure out ways

2 of working around that. There's a number of  
3 private parties interested in the island in sort  
4 of making capital improvements and in particular  
5 the New York Harbor School, as you may know, has  
6 an option to lease a building, the Marine Science  
7 Technology Center. And that they're currently  
8 looking for capital money to improve that building  
9 which will serve both a New York City public  
10 education purpose as well as a public purpose in  
11 sort of helping interpret the harbor for visitors  
12 to the island.

13 And that's something that certainly  
14 would be a place that if the Council found itself  
15 with an opportunity for new capital money, that  
16 would be a place where you could do it, you know,  
17 free of the strictures of City/State match.

18 CHAIRPERSON GERSON: Thank you all  
19 very much. We'll certainly follow up. Something  
20 I'm getting some good food smells here, so it's  
21 probably time for lunch. But thank you each and  
22 we look forward to working with you to ensure  
23 progress on this very important island. With that  
24 this hearing is adjourned.

25 MR. PIRANI: Thank you.

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2 [Gavel banging]

3 [END TAPE 1002]

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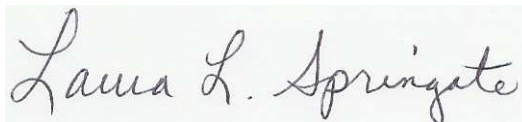
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## C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Laura L. Springate certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. I further certify that I am not related to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of this matter.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Laura L. Springate". The signature is written in black ink on a light-colored background.

Signature     Laura L. Springate    

Date     April 20, 2009