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1 COMMISSIONER SAKONG: Here.
 2 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Gordon?
 3 COMMISSIONER GORDON: Present.
 4 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Gunther?
 5 COMMISSIONER GUNTHER: Here.
 6 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Garriga?
 7 COMMISSIONER GARRIGA: Here.
 8 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Cronin?
 9 COMMISSIONER CRONIN: Here.
 10 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Amatuzzo is
 11 absent. Commissioner Stango is absent.
 12 Vice Chairman Sandkamp?
 13 VICE CHAIRMAN SANDKAMP: Here.
 14 MS. O'NEILL: And Chairman Blazak?
 15 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Here.
 16 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. There are nine
 17 members of the Commission in attendance tonight.
 18 Five affirmative votes are needed for a certificate
 19 of appropriateness.
 20 Okay. Moving down the agenda, next item
 21 is approval of minutes. You have two sets of
 22 minutes on the meeting tonight. The first is from
 23 the December meeting.
 24 Does anyone have any changes, corrections,
 25 anything like that, to the minutes? Okay. Hearing

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1 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Amatuzzo is
 2 absent. Commissioner Stango is absent?
 3 Vice Chairman Sandkamp?
 4 VICE CHAIRMAN SANDKAMP: Aye.
 5 MS. O'NEILL: And Chairman Blazak?
 6 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Aye.
 7 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. There are six votes
 8 in favor, no nays, three abstentions. The minutes
 9 from December are approved.
 10 All right. Moving on to January, does
 11 anyone have any questions, concerns, changes to the
 12 minutes for January?
 13 Okay. Hearing none, staff recommends a
 14 motion to approve the minutes for January.
 15 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: Motion.
 16 COMMISSIONER CRONIN: Second.
 17 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. Similar roll call.
 18 Commissioner Gucciardo?
 19 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: Aye.
 20 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Gordon?
 21 COMMISSIONER GORDON: Aye.
 22 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Cronin?
 23 COMMISSIONER CRONIN: Aye.
 24 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Gunther?
 25 COMMISSIONER GUNTHER: Aye.

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1 none, staff recommends a motion to approve the
 2 December minutes.
 3 VICE CHAIRMAN SANDKAMP: Motion, Sandkamp.
 4 MS. O'NEILL: Second?
 5 COMMISSIONER CRONIN: I'll second.
 6 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. We'll do a roll call
 7 for that.
 8 Commissioner Garriga?
 9 COMMISSIONER GARRIGA: Abstain.
 10 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. Commissioner
 11 Gucciardo?
 12 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: Aye.
 13 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Gordon?
 14 COMMISSIONER GORDON: This was the
 15 December meeting?
 16 MS. O'NEILL: Yes.
 17 COMMISSIONER GORDON: Abstain.
 18 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. Commissioner Cronin?
 19 COMMISSIONER CRONIN: Aye.
 20 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Lewis?
 21 COMMISSIONER LEWIS: Aye.
 22 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Gunther?
 23 COMMISSIONER GUNTHER: Aye.
 24 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Sakong?
 25 COMMISSIONER SAKONG: Abstain.

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1 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Lewis?
 2 COMMISSIONER LEWIS: Aye.
 3 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Sakong?
 4 COMMISSIONER SAKONG: Aye.
 5 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. Commissioner Amatuzzo
 6 is absent and Commissioner Stango is absent.
 7 Vice-Chairman Sandkamp?
 8 VICE CHAIRMAN SANDKAMP: Aye.
 9 MS. O'NEILL: And Chairman Blazak?
 10 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Aye.
 11 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. Nine votes in favor.
 12 Minutes pass.
 13 All right. Moving on. Correspondence.
 14 All copies of correspondence and application
 15 materials are linked on tonight's agenda through the
 16 highlighted link with the case number. HPC staff
 17 has no announcements, so we can move to open public
 18 comment.
 19 If there are any members of the public in
 20 attendance tonight who would like to speak regarding
 21 matters not on tonight's agenda, so these are things
 22 that are not listed on tonight's agenda, you can use
 23 the "raise hand" function at the bottom of the
 24 screen to address the Commission. If you're on the
 25 phone, you can press *9. And, again, these are for

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1 items not on tonight's agenda.
 2 Okay. Staff sees no hands raised and
 3 recommends a motion to open and close public
 4 comment.
 5 VICE CHAIRMAN SANDKAMP: Motion, Sandkamp.
 6 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: Second.
 7 MS. O'NEILL: All right. We have
 8 Commissioner Sandkamp making a motion, Commissioner
 9 Gucciardo seconding it.
 10 All in favor?
 11 (Whereupon, a voice vote was taken; chorus
 12 of "ayes" heard.)
 13 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. And that brings us
 14 right into old business.
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1 promoting? All right. Don Pepe?
 2 MS. MALELLARI: Yes, Don Pepe.
 3 MS. O'NEILL: Anyone else? You can use
 4 the "raise hand" function.
 5 MS. MALELLARI: You should have Jorge
 6 D'Armas, Shaun Vakil and Fernanda Vakil.
 7 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: Maggie, this is
 8 Stephen. I don't recall hearing this in January, so
 9 there's a chance I was not at that meeting.
 10 MS. O'NEILL: We did not hear it in
 11 January.
 12 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: Oh, we did not
 13 hear it. Okay.
 14 MS. O'NEILL: Yes. It was scheduled, but
 15 it did not get that far.
 16 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: Got it. Thank
 17 you.
 18 MS. O'NEILL: All right. So prior to any
 19 testimony, Don, if it's okay with you, we'll swear
 20 Enkela in.
 21 Shaun, if you'll be providing testimony,
 22 we can swear you in as well.
 23 MR. PEPE: Thank you. That's fine,
 24 Maggie. Thank you.
 25 ENKELA MALELLARI, having

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1 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: All right. This is Item
 2 8.A, Case H22-429. This is Enkela Malellari, AIA,
 3 on behalf of Shaun Vakil and Fernanda Zapata,
 4 owners. This is 218 Fifth Street, Block 11304, Lot
 5 14, for a certificate of appropriateness for the
 6 rehabilitation and alteration of an altered, circa
 7 1865, wood-frame three-bay, Greek Revival vernacular
 8 variant townhouse in the Harsimus Cove Historic
 9 District with the construction of a new rear
 10 addition and new full-depth rooftop addition over
 11 the existing two-and-a-half-story building to
 12 accommodate the conversion of the present one-family
 13 to a two-family residence.
 14 The front facade stone face and damaged
 15 brick will be removed and either repaired or
 16 replaced with a new brick facade with cast
 17 brownstone water table, lintels and sills, a new
 18 cornice, and a new masonry bluestone stoop will be
 19 constructed. New ironwork and new wood siding at
 20 the western and northern facades are proposed.
 21 This is carried from the January 8th,
 22 2023, regular HPC meeting.
 23 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. Enkela, I did promote
 24 you. You should be able to unmute yourself and turn
 25 on your camera. Who else from your team should I be

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1 been duly sworn, was examined and testified as
 2 follows:
 3 THE REPORTER: Thank you.
 4 MS. O'NEILL: Enkela, have you presented
 5 to this Board before?
 6 THE WITNESS: I have not presented to this
 7 Board before, but I have presented --
 8 THE REPORTER: Sorry, could you hold on
 9 one second?
 10 THE WITNESS: Yes.
 11 THE REPORTER: My finger is just doing
 12 something here.
 13 MS. O'NEILL: Sorry, Bridget.
 14 THE REPORTER: No, no, no.
 15 Okay. Sorry about that. Go ahead,
 16 Maggie.
 17 THE WITNESS: No worries. I can give you
 18 my credentials. I have not presented in front of
 19 this Board directly. I have worked with HPC before.
 20 I am a licensed professional architect in the State
 21 of New Jersey. My license is current. I have
 22 presented in other similar boards before. I also
 23 have a master's and bachelor of architecture's
 24 degree from New Jersey Institute of Technology.
 25 MS. O'NEILL: Staff recommends that the

1 Chairman accept Enkela's qualifications as an expert
 2 in the field of architecture.
 3 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Okay. Accepted.
 4 MS. O'NEILL: Great.
 5 And then, Shaun, we can go ahead and swear
 6 you in as well.
 7 S H A U N V A K I L, having been duly
 8 sworn, was examined and testified as follows:
 9 THE REPORTER: Could you state and spell
 10 your full name for the record?
 11 THE WITNESS: My name is Shaun Vakil.
 12 S-H-A-U-N, V-A-K-I-L.
 13 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. Will you be providing
 14 testimony as well? I'm sorry, both of you?
 15 MS. ZAPATA: Yes.
 16 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. So we need to swear
 17 you in as well.
 18 F E R N A N D A Z A P A T A, having
 19 been duly sworn, was examined and testified as
 20 follows:
 21 THE REPORTER: And just state and spell
 22 your full name for the record.
 23 THE WITNESS: Fernanda Zapata.
 24 F-E-R-N-A-N-D-A, Z-A-P-A-T-A.
 25 THE REPORTER: Thank you.

1 Can you look on her end? I know you're muted and
 2 the camera's off, but...
 3 If not, I can download the plans and show
 4 them on mine as well.
 5 THE WITNESS: Oh, no.
 6 MS. O'NEILL: No, it's okay. We got it.
 7 (Technical difficulties)
 8 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. You should be good to
 9 go now.
 10 THE WITNESS: Yes, I am.
 11 Okay. Can everyone see what I'm sharing
 12 just to confirm?
 13 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Yes.
 14 THE WITNESS: Wonderful. Thank you.
 15 So as the Chairman presented today, we are
 16 in front of this Board today as our client is
 17 looking to do a one-story addition on their existing
 18 two-and-a-half-story structure, a rear addition and
 19 exterior improvement.
 20 I want to walk you through step by step
 21 through the drawings that we have at hand just to
 22 show you a little bit of the existing conditions,
 23 the existing survey.
 24 This is a pretty small house. The lot is
 25 only 21 feet wide. It's 100 feet deep but the

1 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. Should be good to go,
 2 guys.
 3 Don, you're welcome to start whenever.
 4 And, Enkela, you should be able to share
 5 your screen.
 6 MR. PEPE: Good evening, Commissioners,
 7 Chairman. My name is Don Pepe with the law firm of
 8 Scarinci & Hollenbeck on behalf of the applicant and
 9 the owners.
 10 Mr. Chairman, I thank you for the
 11 introduction. You kind of took all of the steam out
 12 of what I would have to say and it was very
 13 thorough. I appreciate it.
 14 In the interest of saving as much time as
 15 possible, I know you have a full agenda, I think we
 16 should go right to Enkela to take us through what's
 17 proposed here if that's acceptable.
 18 E N K E L A M A L E L L A R I, having
 19 been previously duly sworn, remained under oath and
 20 testified as follows:
 21 THE WITNESS: Okay. Great. I'm going to
 22 take over and I'm going to try to share the screen.
 23 Maggie, the host is disabled.
 24 MS. O'NEILL: Tanya, can you go in -- I'm
 25 not seeing the option to let her share her screen.

1 actual structure itself, it's only about 37 feet
 2 long, which means it's about, plus or minus, 800
 3 square feet of a house.
 4 What we're proposing to the Commission and
 5 Board today is to add an additional story over the
 6 existing footprint as well as making a, plus or
 7 minus, 15-foot addition to the back of the house
 8 with a little bit of steps going to their backyard.
 9 And I'll walk you through what that looks like in
 10 the plans.
 11 We are proposing front additions to the
 12 house as well as improvements to the existing
 13 building, which has been modified significantly
 14 from its survey that was done in 1937, as you can
 15 see in this picture, which has the front stoop with
 16 masonry walls, a wood front entry, three bay windows
 17 with a stone sill header and some kind of cornice
 18 detail. That's a little bit hard to tell from the
 19 picture.
 20 But the idea of what we're proposing today
 21 is to add a story above this structure. There is a
 22 chimney here that you see in this picture. There's
 23 also another house that you see in this picture, but
 24 none of that is existing in the current conditions
 25 of the house.

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1 And I just want to note that all of the
 2 conditions that we are proposing in front of this
 3 Board today, we are not triggering any variances in
 4 accordance to the zoning laws of Jersey City.
 5 I want to show you some pictures of what
 6 the house looks like now. There is significant
 7 modifications to the house compared to what it was
 8 before. There is the addition of this stamped
 9 concrete PermaStone on top. The sills look like
 10 they have been modified. The front door has been
 11 modified. The front stoop.
 12 It also has the addition of a driveway.
 13 You are able to fit one car in this current
 14 condition.
 15 And as I mentioned before, there used to
 16 be another structure to the left of this house which
 17 has been demolished at some point and is no longer
 18 there, and that property has actually been given to
 19 Jersey City Housing which they use as their driveway
 20 to move in and out.
 21 And to the right of this photo, this is
 22 what the block looks like further down. So you'll
 23 see there's a significant elevation change and
 24 there's an additional story that the other
 25 structures have as you go further down all the way

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1 current standards as well as be sensitive to the
 2 historic fabric of the neighborhood.
 3 With that in mind, we are keeping the
 4 existing sidewalk, but we are considering in this
 5 proposal to bring down the masonry walls of the
 6 stairs and propose more of a railing. We're going
 7 to rebuild the stairs in place, rework the stairs
 8 down to the basement. We're proposing a new door,
 9 removing that great-looking metal awning over the
 10 basement door, as well as reworking the front
 11 driveway area.
 12 So with that in mind, I want to start you
 13 all on the first floor. And I think it would be
 14 best, while I have your attention on that, we are
 15 considering to put a new concrete driveway as well
 16 as reworking the stairs down to the basement, which
 17 that garden level -- I think is the appropriate
 18 word -- would actually be the second unit that the
 19 homeowner is looking to add to this property.
 20 So from a one story -- I'm sorry,
 21 one-family structure, our proposal is to go to a
 22 two-family structure as well as adding planters on
 23 the side of the property which is currently
 24 nonexistent as the whole entire front yard is
 25 paved.

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1 to the intersection, which is down here where my
 2 mouse is.
 3 I also wanted to present a couple of
 4 existing conditions when it comes to all of the
 5 modifications that have been done to the house
 6 compared to the 1937 photo, the additions of
 7 railings or this stone flooring as well as all
 8 these -- the canopy to the front door that goes to
 9 the basement. So all these modifications are
 10 significantly not in line with the historic photo of
 11 the building that was taken in 1937 in the
 12 assessment of that year.
 13 I'm going to move on to the next page.
 14 I'm sorry. I got a little bit of feedback.
 15 MS. O'NEILL: You should be good now.
 16 THE WITNESS: Thank you.
 17 I want to move on to the next page and I'm
 18 going to walk you through the plans that show you
 19 the photos of the house as it is in the current
 20 condition.
 21 So as I mentioned before, we are making
 22 modifications to the front of the house and we
 23 thought it was appropriate, given the existing
 24 conditions as well as what we propose for the
 25 property, that we needed to bring this house to the

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1 So we're looking to add shrubs to the
 2 side, provide enough area per the local codes for a
 3 car, as well as new railing, new stairs, and new
 4 handrails going up through that stair.
 5 As you enter in through the first floor,
 6 we're going to maintain a vestibule. And once you
 7 enter, you enter into the living room for the
 8 owner's unit, followed by the dining room. We're
 9 going to add a powder room. And the kitchen will be
 10 located in the back which leads to a small landing
 11 with stairs with access to the backyard.
 12 If we go to the other unit and we take the
 13 stairs now to head to the garden unit, the garden
 14 unit still has a vestibule, a little bit larger.
 15 Utilities will be in this area. They will be
 16 serviced by their own utility area. You enter into
 17 the space where it's the kitchen and the living, so
 18 this is a shared space, whereas the back of the
 19 property will be separated into two bedrooms. This
 20 unit will have two and a half baths -- one full
 21 bath, one powder room -- with, also, full access to
 22 the backyard.
 23 So this drawing also shows you clearly the
 24 existing footprint of the house, which is the front
 25 area, and that 15-foot proposed addition in the back

1 of the property.
 2 We did some minor demolition to the
 3 interior of the house. We wanted to take a look at
 4 what was going on. Other than the house itself, it
 5 has not been maintained, for lack of a better word,
 6 for a very long time. This is an image of the
 7 existing rear of the house. That was covered. This
 8 must have been a porch at some point. There is
 9 carpet and a fireplace; however, the chimney was
 10 removed, so the fireplaces are all decorative, and a
 11 very unstable stair on the interior. This is your
 12 first floor stair and the first floor door.

13 So this pretty much covers the garden unit
 14 and the entrance to the owner's unit.

15 Let me take you through to the next level.
 16 And on this level -- so this is the second floor. I
 17 wanted to show you guys how small this property
 18 really is. So if you bear with me, these dashed
 19 lines that you see on this plan is actually how the
 20 existing second floor is laid out. It's only two
 21 bedrooms. The existing house is only two bedrooms
 22 on the first floor, and actually their kitchen is
 23 located in the garden level when it was used as a
 24 single-family.

25 And that is not going to work out for this

1 property. Again, our intention is to remove this
 2 PermaStone. We would remove all the windows. The
 3 idea is to remove the door and relocate the electric
 4 meter weatherhead that's smack middle in the
 5 property, and propose this structure here in this
 6 drawing.

7 And when we remove all this existing
 8 additions and modifications that have been made to
 9 this house, my client's intention is to restore as
 10 much of the fabric of the property as possible.
 11 Unfortunately, we won't know more in detail of that
 12 until we actually remove that PermaStone and we do
 13 further demolition of that front facade.

14 So the proposal here, this is that garden
 15 unit with new steps and railing in the front facade.
 16 We would like to propose a new front door that's
 17 more in line with the historic fabric of this
 18 particular property that we have from the 1937
 19 photos.

20 Also proposing relocating the weatherhead
 21 to the side of the property, a new front light
 22 fixture, new wood windows going throughout the
 23 entire facade, but still keeping that rhythm of
 24 three windows that the house currently has.

25 And we also included a colored

1 homeowner, especially with the current conditions
 2 and COVID and the need for space and working from
 3 home. And this is a young couple that's looking to
 4 build their family.

5 So what we're proposing on the second
 6 floor is actually two bedrooms with an office in the
 7 center, as well as a laundry area in the middle and
 8 a bath that could be shared from the main hallway,
 9 as well as a master in the back.

10 The proposed additional level, which is a
 11 third level, would add two additional bedrooms that
 12 are very necessary for this homeowner, as well as
 13 another gym or play area for the future kids to use,
 14 which is not possible or available to provide in the
 15 current layout of this property.

16 Again, these layouts that we're showing
 17 you include that 15-foot addition from ground floor
 18 all the way up to this third story.

19 And we have provided some images of what
 20 this level looks like. We did experience some
 21 unevenness on the floors, so there's definitely some
 22 structural considerations that need to be taken when
 23 we are moving forward with this proposal.

24 My next step is to take you through the
 25 elevations. This is the front elevation of the

1 rendering of that proposed front house for your
 2 consideration.

3 On the back of the house, the garden and
 4 the first floor, this is that portion where I showed
 5 you that picture of that covered area. This must
 6 have been a patio at some point that was covered.
 7 And then that second floor which only has the two
 8 bedrooms is up here.

9 In our proposal where we square out the
 10 building in the back and that addition, the
 11 homeowners are looking for more daylight. It's
 12 necessary to have more daylight for this property,
 13 so we're looking to propose as much glazing as
 14 possible, but at the same time we are consistent and
 15 considerate and want to propose wood siding that's
 16 conforming with what was existing in the property as
 17 much as possible to be able to wrap around in the
 18 back, but also on the west facade. The west facade
 19 is visible from the right-of-way.

20 And I'm on the last page, but I'm going to
 21 take you back to the front for one moment. Because,
 22 as I mentioned, this is a driveway so the west
 23 facade is visible from the right-of-way. So if
 24 you're standing where my mouse is, you'd basically
 25 see the side of this property.

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1 So with that intention in mind, our goal
2 is to provide a wood siding, a painted wood siding
3 for the entire west facade as well as the back, and
4 keep that continuity through and through, as well
5 as all the new railings that I mentioned before for
6 the stairwell as well as going down to the garden
7 level.
8 We want to propose a new door and we
9 designed this door in mind with the historic fabric
10 of this property based on the data that was provided
11 from the photograph. And we designed this railing,
12 again, keeping in mind with the fabric of the
13 neighborhood and the property to be consistent with
14 the neighborhood.
15 We are proposing a new cornice. Now, be
16 mindful that the cornice in the current photograph,
17 it's hard to tell really what that detail is
18 exactly. And, additionally, that cornice was either
19 removed or covered. From my professional opinion,
20 it was removed since this cover was flush going all
21 the way up.
22 So our intention in this proposal is
23 really to provide a new cornice and a new
24 architectural detail where we propose a soldier
25 course just right under the cornice. We pulled it

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1 Q. Okay. And then just with respect to
2 you very aptly pointed out that the rear addition
3 will be visible from the right-of-way.
4 If the property to the left of us were in
5 its condition as it was when the historic photo was
6 taken, that would not be the case, correct?
7 A. That's correct.
8 Q. Thank you.
9 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: Would you mind
10 displaying the 1937 photograph as large as you can,
11 please?
12 THE WITNESS: Sure.
13 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: Thank you.
14 THE WITNESS: Is this acceptable?
15 Commissioner, is that acceptable?
16 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: Yes, that's
17 great. Thank you.
18 THE WITNESS: You can clearly see in this
19 photo there's also some infill done to the windows,
20 which I know the HPC staff -- thank you, Dan. He
21 also pointed out there have been modifications to
22 this property even in this photo.
23 COMMISSIONER SAKONG: If the applicant has
24 additional materials to present including material
25 boards, finishes and colors, I'd like to request

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1 back from the facade, something that's more
2 appropriate for a building at this location and of
3 this size.
4 So that concludes my testimony with
5 respect to the architectural drawings. If you'd
6 like for me to walk you through the material boards
7 that were included in the submission, Maggie, I'll
8 let you direct me on that if that's necessary at
9 this point for the Commissioners to review the
10 material selections.
11 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Maybe before that, are
12 there any questions at this point? Maybe if there's
13 no questions, you can walk us through the proposed
14 materials.
15 MR. PEPE: Enkela, just two things before
16 we go on to that.
17 Apologies. Don Pepe.
18 DIRECT-EXAMINATION
19 BY MR. PEPE:
20 Q. You had said we're uncertain as to
21 what's behind the current facade, but we have done
22 some exploration. We are fairly confident that the
23 original brick facade is under there.
24 A. There's definitely brick facade under
25 there in the front. There is no doubt.

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1 that you simply take us through the rest of the
2 materials before so that we can comment more
3 comprehensively.
4 THE WITNESS: Yeah, absolutely. Okay. I
5 am going to forward the material board that was part
6 of this application.
7 So this is the front door and, as I
8 mentioned before, our intention and my client's
9 intention for the door is to mimic and match the
10 door that is presented in the 1937 photo and that's
11 what we are trying to present here. And they're
12 looking for an Ashley Gray Historic Color 87, which
13 is this color that you see here on the side.
14 We are also looking to propose all wood
15 windows on the front facade where we are planning to
16 use the Pella Architectural Series and our intention
17 is to have these windows painted black. All of the
18 wood trim for the property will also be wood trim
19 painted.
20 As for the cornice, we're looking to
21 propose an exterior Royal Corinthian style cornice
22 and have that painted. And this is a little bit of
23 a detail of that cornice as well.
24 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: And that would be
25 metal?

1 THE WITNESS: This is more of a composite,
 2 but if the Commission would prefer metal --
 3 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: I'm not
 4 suggesting a preference of metal, just asking what
 5 it was.
 6 THE WITNESS: Understood.
 7 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: And by "composite," what
 8 kind of material exactly do you mean?
 9 THE WITNESS: So there is a polyurethane,
 10 a polysteryn (sic) product that can mimic and match
 11 the profile of this material. Those are the
 12 materials that we'd be looking for.
 13 So the siding, the wood clapboard siding,
 14 would be painted a little bit of a darker color.
 15 Just to show some of the color selections, the base
 16 would be an Amherst gray. And as I mentioned, all
 17 these here, facia and soffits and the details, would
 18 also stay within the historic standards where we'd
 19 be using wood materials.
 20 The next page shows a little bit about the
 21 hardware and the details for the stair. And this is
 22 the garden unit doors, this is the hardware that
 23 we're proposing. This is a front -- that one front
 24 light by the entry door.
 25 We wanted to present the exterior window

1 Q. Thank you.
 2 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. If any Commissioners
 3 have any questions regarding the testimony, feel
 4 free to ask.
 5 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: I'm going to hold
 6 my questions until I hear staff comments.
 7 COMMISSIONER LEWIS: Can you please pull
 8 up the image of the rendering again? Thank you.
 9 THE WITNESS: Of course.
 10 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: I do have one
 11 question that I'd ask now. This is Commissioner
 12 Gucciardo.
 13 What is the justification for adding an
 14 additional floor at the front facade of the historic
 15 structure?
 16 THE WITNESS: Commissioner, as I mentioned
 17 at the beginning of my testimony, this is a very,
 18 very small building. It's only 21 feet wide by 37
 19 feet long.
 20 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: Okay. I could
 21 just tell you, if you don't mind, 21 by 37 by
 22 downtown Jersey City historic building standards is
 23 not a small building. It's almost 800 square feet
 24 per floor and that gives you approximately a
 25 2,300-square-foot home as it stands at the

1 sill as well as the window lintels, but our
 2 intention is once that PermaStone is removed, we
 3 definitely want to work with the historic
 4 preservation department to make sure that any
 5 additional components that are added to the window
 6 openings are in line with what we expose and what we
 7 find once we remove some of these facade elements
 8 that are covering all these details.
 9 And then the next page shows a little bit
 10 more about the back of the house, the patio, the
 11 metal deck for that, the small platform coming out
 12 of the kitchen area, the metal railing for the back,
 13 and as well as the planter proposed for the front
 14 yard.
 15 That really concludes my testimony when it
 16 comes to architectural details and materials.
 17 BY MR. PEPE:
 18 Q. And, Enkela, we did receive a review
 19 letter from Mr. Wreiden dated February 3rd. If we
 20 were fortunate enough to get a certificate of
 21 appropriateness here, Dan recommended several
 22 conditions.
 23 We would find those conditions
 24 acceptable?
 25 A. We would find the conditions acceptable.

1 moment.
 2 THE WITNESS: I understand that,
 3 Commissioner.
 4 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: So I don't
 5 consider it a small house as a justification for
 6 adding a story and changing the -- basically, you
 7 know, significantly changing the facade of the
 8 building.
 9 THE WITNESS: Understood. But I also
 10 would like to make a recommendation that although
 11 this building might not be small by Jersey City
 12 standards, please understand that this is a young
 13 family that's looking to grow and it is their need
 14 to also have this additional unit on the garden
 15 level.
 16 And we feel that the addition of this
 17 third level is not hindering the historic fabric of
 18 the block that this is located in, especially since
 19 the building next to it was demolished. To our
 20 knowledge, we don't really have any data or proof or
 21 any notes on how that was considered to even be
 22 demolished other than given to the Jersey City
 23 Housing Authority.
 24 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: Okay. Thank you.
 25 MR. PEPE: Commissioner, had we not been

1 in a situation where there was no way to avoid
2 having a rear addition visible from the
3 right-of-way, we could have come before you with a
4 stepped-back third floor that would not be visible
5 and we would have had a clean application, but we
6 would not have proposed the facade renovations that
7 we're proposing now at that time because of the
8 extensive cost involved in this work.

9 So that's really what the thrust of it is
10 here. We went the extra yard. The owners went the
11 extra yard to propose, to the greatest extent
12 possible, the historic renovation of the facade
13 knowing that we could not comply with the
14 requirement that no additions be visible from the
15 right-of-way.

16 Had the alternative been possible that we
17 could have done a stepped-back third floor addition,
18 we would have done so, I believe, without doing the
19 front facade work and we would have had a conforming
20 application.

21 MR. WRIEDEN: If I may.

22 THE WITNESS: I'm so sorry, Dan.

23 MR. WRIEDEN: May I?

24 THE WITNESS: Yes. I think you know what
25 I'm going to say, so go ahead.

1 words, you don't have a joint. You don't have an
2 articulated seam. You're drawing it as if it's one
3 continuous field.

4 And, you know, let me just say I applaud
5 the cost involved. I applaud the applicant for, you
6 know, committing to the cost involved, to the work
7 involved of taking down that fake stone and
8 making -- I think, you know -- I don't think anyone
9 will dispute that what you've drawn is a more
10 beautiful building than the stuff that's stuck on
11 that poor building now.

12 My concern, though, is that I don't --
13 I've tried to match new bricks to old and the older
14 the brick and, you know, the more it's been hidden
15 away, the harder it is really to get that blend
16 seamless.

17 But even if you were able to achieve
18 that seamlessness, the other concern that I have
19 is, you know, I -- we take great pains to preserve
20 the integrity of any existing historic fabric, but
21 part of that -- part of the integrity of existing
22 fabric is to be truthful and authentic about its
23 extense, right, in its original form. In other
24 words, it's not just about the brick, but it's about
25 the composition of the brick and the original

1 MR. WRIEDEN: Or you could address that as
2 well. Enkela, you're more than welcome to address
3 it. If I have anything to add, I'd be more than
4 happy to.

5 THE WITNESS: I think what I wanted you
6 to note here is because we don't have the building
7 on the west side of the structure, I want to be
8 mindful to the Commission that we would be in front
9 of this Board regardless, even if we did the
10 stepped-back addition, because the way the
11 ordinance is written is visible from a right-of-way,
12 right?

13 It's not in the front of the building,
14 it's just visible from any right-of-way. So we
15 would be visible from any right-of-way since we are
16 exposed from the property that was taken by the
17 Jersey City Housing Authority.

18 COMMISSIONER SAKONG: I want to probe this
19 a little bit further because the design, and
20 particularly this rendering, the way that it's
21 designed presupposes that you're going to find
22 enough brick behind that awful fake stone stuff and
23 you're going to be able to rehabilitate it, you're
24 going to be able to restore it, and blend it
25 seamlessly into a full floor of new brick. In other

1 building.

2 And there is an inauthenticity to the
3 composition that you're showing in that you're
4 blurring the line between old existing fabric and
5 new addition. And in a way I fear that you're
6 actually -- you're weighing down -- you're pulling
7 down the integrity of the existing fabric in doing
8 so with a new brick that is sort of pretending to
9 be existing, right? It's in the guise of
10 existing.

11 And so I don't know what the solution is
12 and I don't know that it necessarily involves
13 setbacks or a seam or whatever, but I'm just
14 stating -- I'm reacting to the drawing that makes no
15 distinction between the old and the new and that
16 does not respect the extense and form of the
17 original historic fabric.

18 COMMISSIONER GORDON: This is Commissioner
19 Gordon. I strongly agree with Commissioner Sakong's
20 comments. You referred to historic renovation of
21 the facade and it does appear to be an attempt to
22 restore the facade to something approximating its
23 original appearance.

24 So did the applicant give any
25 consideration to giving the additional floor a

1 distinct design that's compatible but clearly
2 distinct from the original design in order to make
3 it clear that it's a product of its own time?
4 Because generally trying to artificially mimic an
5 earlier appearance for the new construction would
6 be discouraged. And often we see applicants take
7 pains to come up with something that clearly
8 distinguishes that new addition that's
9 compatible.

10 THE WITNESS: So I just wanted to provide
11 a little bit of feedback to the Commissioners'
12 concerns and very valid concerns and questions.

13 We have done projects before in the city
14 where we removed the entire facade and we had to
15 work closely with the contractor to provide a brick
16 composition that was as close to the existing brick
17 as possible.

18 And these are not uniform bricks. This
19 becomes a bit of a combination of differing ones
20 that matches and typically brick manufacturers will
21 provide a mix that gets as close as possible to that
22 brick.

23 Would we be able to match the mortar?
24 That's probably actually the hardest one since the
25 mortar is a weathered material as well, and there

1 will be a bit of difference that you are going to
2 notice.

3 However, I'm going to speak, one, as an
4 architect, that if we were to add another material
5 to this additional story, I actually think that's
6 going to distract significantly from the fabric of
7 this building compared to the adjacent.

8 And I'm showing this picture to see what
9 the adjacent building looks like, which I would make
10 a fair assumption that this did not come in front of
11 this Board to get approved for this combination of
12 this brick.

13 And, additionally, if I didn't mention in
14 the beginning, I want to mention it now. We worked
15 really closely with your department when we were
16 presenting these options and thinking about what is
17 the appropriate historic preservation and
18 restoration of the facade. And we strongly
19 suggest and think that trying to maintain that
20 brick continuity as much as possible would be
21 really to the benefit of the fabric of this
22 neighborhood.

23 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: This is
24 Commissioner Gucciardo again. I believe I've been
25 on this Commission for over 20 years and unless

1 someone could tell me when, I don't recall ever
2 having this Commission approve an additional floor
3 at the facade of a historic structure. So I have no
4 way to consider this as appropriate.

5 And without getting into -- there's a lot
6 of other details. I mean, you present a 1937
7 photograph that shows a particular design railing,
8 which I know is still available. You're not using
9 that.

10 You're proposing a cornice that doesn't
11 reflect the existing cornice in the '37 photograph.

12 Your stair/step style of bluestone treads
13 does not come close to what would have existed on
14 this building, you know, in its original state.

15 Colors of stucco being gray, I've never
16 approved gray stucco on the facade of a building.

17 You know, there's a lot of issues. You
18 mentioned earlier that you're doing an excellent
19 kind of restoration of the facade, but from the
20 products and materials and configurations you've
21 shown, I don't see that actually happening either
22 with what's been presented.

23 THE WITNESS: Commissioner, if I may, we
24 presented the railing that we did because we were
25 being mindful, also, of the neighbor railing --

1 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: Yeah, but you
2 can't use the neighboring property as the design for
3 your building. You're presenting a '37 photograph
4 that shows what the material should be.

5 THE WITNESS: And that's a fair comment
6 and question. However, I think these are things
7 that Don and myself, I'm sure we can take back to
8 ownership and take their feedback on it. But if
9 this Board feels that those are things that we can
10 improve upon, I think we could definitely take that
11 into consideration.

12 But I think the part that was a little bit
13 jarring at the beginning is that there hasn't been
14 an addition approved before, and I understand that.
15 But this is a unique application, I guess in a
16 sense, and I think we've presented a very thorough
17 and reasonable application why a third story is
18 reasonable at this particular property.

19 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: I don't think you've
20 presented that at all. We have to make our decision
21 on what's appropriate in the context of the block
22 and I'm hearing arguments that it's because your
23 clients have a growing family and need extra square
24 footage, which if we agreed to every time someone
25 wanted extra square footage because their family is

1 growing, we'd have a lot of taller buildings
 2 downtown on every block.
 3 So I think your argument -- there could be
 4 an argument here because this building is -- I
 5 believe if I read the staff report correctly -- this
 6 is a noncontributing building.
 7 THE WITNESS: Correct.
 8 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: But I think what needs
 9 to happen is that there needs to be an argument
 10 based on the appropriateness of an additional third
 11 floor and comparisons with the other buildings on
 12 the block. There's some photographs, but I haven't
 13 seen, like, a full block elevation, you know, which
 14 shows the height and the rest of the buildings on
 15 this block and how it's really going to fit into the
 16 block. And I think, you know, more restorative in
 17 terms of -- like Commissioner Gucciardo just
 18 mentioned, in terms of some of the details maybe
 19 taking more of their cues from the 1937 tax
 20 photograph.
 21 I think there is perhaps an argument here,
 22 but also, as Commissioner Gucciardo said, I don't
 23 know that we have approved an addition in the same
 24 plane as the front facade, but usually we're dealing
 25 with contributing buildings.

1 brought more into conformance with the original
 2 historic photo presented, we would certainly
 3 investigate and, if available, use the railing that
 4 was time appropriate and try and more closely match
 5 the rooftop feature.
 6 I do think, though, that this is unique
 7 because of the condition that the adjoining building
 8 was removed, creating a view corridor that makes any
 9 addition visible from the right-of-way. So we are
 10 in a situation where we could have gone further back
 11 and perhaps put a little bit of a stepback on the
 12 third floor, but we still would have been in the
 13 same situation.
 14 And I'm sure we would have -- you know, if
 15 it is a condition of an approval that we work with
 16 staff to do so, to better differentiate between the
 17 existing and proposed new addition, we would be
 18 willing to explore that as well.
 19 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Yeah. I think, you
 20 know, one that I know that might be kind of similar
 21 is -- I think it's 87 Bright Street, which is like a
 22 two-story building and we approved a rooftop
 23 addition, but the top floor was angled back so it's
 24 not quite in line with the front facade. And that
 25 was one where there was an adjoining lot where a

1 Perhaps staff could maybe shed some more
 2 light on that and, you know, if we've approved
 3 more -- larger changes to noncontributing buildings.
 4 I do know that, you know, we've had buildings with
 5 this type of formstone, a brick face on it has been
 6 taken off and been restored based on, you know, the
 7 material that's found underneath. And sometimes
 8 it's hard to judge something without maybe having
 9 some probes or some larger areas of the stone taken
 10 off so we can get a good idea of what the existing
 11 fabric is like underneath. You know, that helps us
 12 kind of get a better idea of what the material is
 13 and what kind of shape it's in.
 14 But I think there needs to be -- if this
 15 were new construction presented on this lot, I think
 16 it would fit very well with the block, but I think
 17 there needs to be more context in the presentation
 18 how it fits in with the block.
 19 And I think we also need to hear from
 20 staff about how we should treat this as a
 21 noncontributing building.
 22 MR. PEPE: Mr. Chairman, thank you for
 23 those comments and they are very appropriate.
 24 With respect to some of the elements that
 25 Commissioner Gucciardo pointed out that could be

1 building was demolished and kind of no matter what,
 2 you're going to see it along that side.
 3 I think we all realize that there's an
 4 empty -- is that lot part of the Housing Authority
 5 or is that a --
 6 MR. PEPE: It is.
 7 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: It is. So it's
 8 probably -- well, never say never. It might not be
 9 one that's going to be easily developed on. So I
 10 think we all acknowledge that there's definitely
 11 going to be some visibility here.
 12 And I don't think anyone's commented on
 13 the rear addition. I think it's pretty much in
 14 line with what we usually see and approve here as
 15 well.
 16 But I think just because it's something
 17 that's going to be visible doesn't necessarily mean
 18 it should be brought all the way out to the front
 19 facade either. But, again, I'd like to hear from
 20 staff as well.
 21 MR. PEPE: Thank you. Thank you.
 22 VICE CHAIRMAN SANDKAMP: Can I chime in as
 23 well? I'm just going to agree with most of the
 24 comments by Commissioners so far. I've been on the
 25 Commission for close to 20 years and we have

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1 never -- and I can concur with that -- we've never
2 approved a rooftop addition that was on the same
3 plane as the primary facade.
4 We give leeway for a side view corridor,
5 but on the primary facade, we've always asked the
6 applicants to step back so that that addition, that
7 rooftop addition, was not visible from the public
8 right-of-way at 6 feet across the street.
9 And that 87 Bright Street is two doors
10 away from me and I can look out my window right now
11 and I can see the side of that building. And we
12 allow that and we generally ask that the applicant
13 doesn't try to blend the two; tries to show the
14 original envelope and allow the new envelope to be
15 contrasting or have some kind of delineating factor
16 to show that it's an addition so someone viewing
17 from the public right-of-way can see what the
18 original structure was.
19 And if you were to step that top floor
20 back, I wouldn't have issue with the rear yard
21 addition or the oversize of this building. I would
22 be okay with it. I just needed that primary facade
23 to be stepped back.
24 COMMISSIONER GUNTHER: I have some
25 questions and comments. The first is sort of -- I

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1 And then, also, do we have confirmation
2 that the -- what's the legal status of the curb cut?
3 Is that something we need to take into consideration
4 as we're talking about pavement?
5 THE WITNESS: It's existing. It's part of
6 the survey so it was already adopted.
7 COMMISSIONER GUNTHER: It may be existing,
8 but is it legal?
9 THE WITNESS: To my understanding, yes, it
10 is legal.
11 COMMISSIONER GUNTHER: Okay. And then I
12 think, you know, just generally I agree with a lot
13 of the statements that the other Commissioners have
14 made about the additional story. I'm also noticing
15 that the proposed depth of the rear addition doesn't
16 necessarily seem to align on the block plan with the
17 other buildings despite the sort of argument that
18 because all of the other buildings have four floors,
19 that perhaps it's appropriate for this building to
20 have another floor.
21 And, generally, I think that -- I do agree
22 with the comment that the cornice should not be
23 composite. Maybe constructing it in wood may be
24 more suitable and the tax photo provides a pretty
25 good guide for a fairly straightforward cornice. I

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1 may have missed it, but the explanation for why the
2 proposal is to convert it to a two-family. Can
3 anybody remind me why the proposal includes
4 conversion to a two-family?
5 MR. PEPE: I can ask the owners who have
6 been elevated to be part of the panel. I was trying
7 to avoid putting them on, but I understand it's
8 purely a cost issue.
9 COMMISSIONER GUNTHER: Okay. Thank you.
10 That's probably what I needed to hear.
11 I have other questions about not the
12 building itself, but there's sort of a front
13 areaway. The front yard is part of the proposal.
14 Maybe we can bring that drawing up.
15 But at the outset it was stated that
16 there are no variances being applied for; that
17 everything conforms. I just wanted to double-check
18 since this is part of the proposal that we see -- we
19 can confirm that the sort of lot coverage with the
20 sort of paved areaway and addition and then whatever
21 landscaping may be going on in the back does, in
22 fact, conform.
23 THE WITNESS: It does. We did the
24 calculations of the building and the various --
25 COMMISSIONER GUNTHER: Okay. Great.

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1 don't think it needs to be much more elaborate than
2 that example.
3 MR. PEPE: And, Commissioner, we would
4 absolutely accept that as a condition of approval if
5 appropriate.
6 COMMISSIONER GUNTHER: Okay.
7 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Are there any more
8 questions from Commissioners at this time?
9 Should we open it up to public comment
10 first and then go to staff?
11 MS. O'NEILL: I think that makes sense.
12 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Okay.
13 MS. O'NEILL: All right. If there are any
14 members of the public in attendance tonight who
15 would like to speak regarding this application,
16 please use the "raise hand" function at the bottom
17 of the screen. If you're on the phone, you can
18 press *9 to raise your hand.
19 Staff sees no hands raised and recommends
20 a motion to open and close public comment.
21 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: Motion.
22 COMMISSIONER LEWIS: Second.
23 MS. O'NEILL: All in favor?
24 (Whereupon, a voice vote was taken; chorus
25 of "ayes" heard.)

1 MS. O'NEILL: All right. Dan, you're all
 2 up for staff comments.
 3 MR. WRIEDEN: Thank you.
 4 This is a slightly complicated project as
 5 you can tell. Again, in my over 20 years of
 6 experience with the Commission as staff and several
 7 years before that as a member of the public, I do
 8 not remember an addition coming to the front
 9 facade and meeting the same plane as the original
 10 building. However, again, this is a noncontributing
 11 building.
 12 When looking at this, there are perhaps a
 13 few different scenarios to keep in mind. The first
 14 scenario, I think, or the first step to solving many
 15 of the Commission's questions would be to do
 16 investigatory demolition at this point. Remove the
 17 formstone, see what pink ghosts we have underneath.
 18 We might have brick that is in very good condition.
 19 We may have brick that is in very bad condition. I
 20 think that that will inform the Commission and staff
 21 quite a bit.
 22 My strongest recommendation at this point
 23 is to do the investigatory demolition. I did some
 24 investigatory demolition of my own volition with the
 25 owners' acquiescence. I kicked the building and

1 on the building now could be easily removed. We
 2 could examine the brick face, the actual historic
 3 original, rather, brick and brownstone trim from
 4 circa 1860 and this building could be returned to
 5 contributing status.
 6 I think many members of the public would
 7 be hard-pressed to walk through Jersey City and to
 8 be able to tell which buildings were once covered in
 9 formstone or inappropriate paint colors or covered
 10 with inappropriate accretions.
 11 I'm proud to say we've done some pretty
 12 good work in restoration here and very careful
 13 work.
 14 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Dan, is there any way to
 15 know or is there any way to get a list or is there a
 16 list of buildings that were considered
 17 noncontributing both in this, the Harsimus Cove
 18 Historic District, and maybe adjacent ones? Is that
 19 readily available somewhere?
 20 MR. WRIEDEN: No, that is not readily
 21 available. It would take some time for me to walk
 22 down memory lane and walk up and down the streets
 23 and to be able to say we removed it from this one;
 24 we removed that from this.
 25 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: But the noncontributing

1 pulled off a couple of large sections of the
 2 formstone. It does not seem to be well-adhered.
 3 While there are some issues with the
 4 brick, if we look at the 1938 tax photograph, you
 5 will see that it appears that there is a stucco
 6 base, a brownstone stucco base. There were some
 7 issues with the brick at the basement floor.
 8 They're brownstoned over. I do not know what the
 9 issues could potentially be on the floors above
 10 that.
 11 So before we discuss restoration of
 12 existing fabric, I think that we have to do a little
 13 bit more research.
 14 In the 20 years that I've been here and
 15 the 30 years that I've lived in Jersey City, I have
 16 overseen a number of buildings and the Commissioners
 17 also have overseen a number of buildings that have
 18 had their substitute sidings and their formstone or
 19 brick face fronts removed and the original brick
 20 restored. These buildings have been returned to
 21 what I would consider a contributing status. At one
 22 point there was a belief among preservationists that
 23 a building could be potentially contributing if
 24 later accretions were removed.
 25 And I do think that the stone face that is

1 status is in the Harsimus Cove designation report,
 2 correct?
 3 MR. WRIEDEN: That it is, yes.
 4 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Maybe even just getting
 5 a list in that district and seeing which other
 6 ones --
 7 MR. WRIEDEN: I can tell you right offhand
 8 the funeral home on the corner of -- on the
 9 southwest corner of Fourth and Jersey was covered in
 10 a white brick face with a -- if I'm correct, a gray
 11 color formstone at the base. That was removed. The
 12 building was repointed.
 13 The belvedere was essentially
 14 reconstructed and the railings were reproduced. The
 15 windows were replaced based on one window which was
 16 found in a closed-up area in the back of the former
 17 funeral home. I doubt that people would say that
 18 today that is a noncontributing building.
 19 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Exactly.
 20 MR. WRIEDEN: I do think that it would be
 21 prudent for both the applicant and for the
 22 Commission to be able to examine what is behind the
 23 brick face, especially since when I sounded out a
 24 few areas, it did sound like there was some hollow
 25 behind it. I don't know if that's just the

1 formstone not having adhered properly or if it is
2 indicative of some further problem with the brick
3 that might have to be taken care of.

4 As to the visibility of additions, staff
5 fully acknowledges that we are going to see an
6 addition obliquely from the side. There is no
7 building there and we are not going to be able to
8 hide it. And generally on secondary facades the
9 Commission takes into account the possibility of
10 visibility, but how does it affect the front
11 facade?

12 Assuming that the front facade can and
13 should be restored, staff has no problems with
14 seeing a rear yard addition obliquely. Staff does
15 consider it problematic to see an addition that
16 rises above the level of the roofline.

17 Now, as I understood it -- and this is in
18 my report and these are from my notes that I took
19 during my site visit -- that building a rooftop
20 addition that is not visible when you are standing
21 directly across the street is not practical for the
22 homeowners. It will not give them enough room for
23 their intended program for the building, which is
24 one reason to argue for moving the addition to the
25 front. At least it will be perhaps less

1 seem to me as staff for the Commission to make sense
2 to put the facade back into order, to restore it
3 according to the site and the photographic evidence,
4 especially the site evidence that we glean during
5 demolition, exploratory demolition, which would not
6 just be probes but would be from top all the way
7 down.

8 Regarding setbacks. I think I've already
9 addressed a setback of a straight wall. It could
10 really interrupt and call attention to it itself,
11 interrupt the building and call attention to itself.
12 But Commissioner Sandkamp's and Commissioner --
13 Chairman Blazak's ideas regarding the tilted or
14 slanted, if you would, addition at the front
15 facade of 87 Bright Street is less visible than a
16 full front facade on the same plane -- or a full
17 front addition at the same plane as the historic
18 facade.

19 It's also readily distinguishable as new
20 construction. And, depending on the angle, it can
21 be much less visible than a box-form addition that
22 is put on top of the building. That is something
23 that I could recommend the applicant take a look at.
24 It might be able to appropriately mitigate the
25 intrusion of a third floor by calling to attention

1 distracting.

2 Staff does -- did recommend that we have
3 an addition at the rooftop that is not visible, at
4 least when standing directly across the street,
5 because this way we can understand that there are
6 different heights in the historic district. And
7 that while there were monumental rows that were the
8 same size, depth, width, there were also one-off
9 houses that were much smaller. That kind of helps
10 to tell a little bit more of the history of the
11 district. Not everybody had the same money. Not
12 everything was developed at the same time.

13 The idea of a full, plainer addition was
14 borne of two possibilities or a couple of different
15 thoughts: One was that the brick may not be
16 salvageable at the front. If the brick is not
17 salvageable -- and this is not to encourage a
18 reckless removal of the existing formstone, but if
19 the brick at the front facade is not able to be
20 repaired or restored and the building is currently
21 not contributing, could this be treated almost as if
22 it was new construction, doing homage to the
23 building that was there and taking design cues from
24 the rest of the block?

25 If the brick is in good shape, it does

1 the fact that it is new fabric while also making it
2 not so obvious.

3 Quite often slanted additions tend to not
4 be noticed quite as readily as a brick or a metal or
5 glass planer addition.

6 If the bricks are to be restored, cleaned
7 and repointed -- and these are the original
8 bricks -- I think that we are going to have a rather
9 clear delineation between new and old construction
10 just because of the qualities of the brick. The
11 original brick will be probably more flat. There
12 will probably be some pollution. There will
13 probably be thinner joints. The new brick might be
14 shinier, might be a different tone, will be probably
15 a different size and maybe a slightly different
16 mortar joint width.

17 It may be a very, very subtle difference
18 that people won't notice immediately. But I don't
19 know if the differences -- and this is a
20 philosophical matter, but I don't know that the
21 differences necessarily have to be immediately
22 apparent to the passer-by. Perhaps if you stop and
23 you take a look at the building, say, oh, something
24 did happen here; this is newer than that.

25 We have many buildings throughout the

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1 historic districts that were two stories and within
2 their period of significance were given a new story.
3 Sometimes the brick pattern changed slightly or the
4 bricks changed slightly, but we are able to tell
5 that this is a newer construction. There are ways
6 to subtly call that out.
7 The railing that is shown in the 1938 tax
8 photograph --
9 COMMISSIONER GORDON: Dan, before we move
10 on, that was a lot of information. Can I just
11 clarify my understanding of it?
12 MR. WRIEDEN: Not a problem.
13 COMMISSIONER GORDON: My understanding,
14 trying to read the room a bit, is that the
15 Commissioners who have spoken up generally seem to
16 be cautious, to put it mildly, about the addition in
17 no small part because it's unprecedented by the HPC,
18 but I think Chairman Blazak left the door open a
19 crack by noting that this is a noncontributing
20 property and that might be enough to distinguish
21 from the past precedent that we've set.
22 And I just want to make sure I understand
23 that what you're suggesting right now is that if the
24 brick -- if the exploratory demo reveals that the
25 brick is in good shape, you would support the

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1 evaluate whether or not the building is repairable.
2 If the building is repairable and restorable, it, in
3 my mind, would be contributing. We would have
4 integrity of workmanship and we would have
5 integrity of materials. At that point, I think
6 that an addition should be as unobtrusive as is
7 possible.
8 I think that the appropriate -- if you're
9 asking me what would be most appropriate, given past
10 precedent, would be to acknowledge that the building
11 is two and a half stories, that it was a Greek
12 Revival. It had a modest cornice and it was smaller
13 than other buildings on the block. If an addition
14 is required, to have an addition that is not visible
15 from the public right-of-way. Okay?
16 Restoring the front facade has been
17 something that this Commission has done
18 consistently, or asking that the front facade be
19 restored is something this Commission has done
20 consistently throughout the 20 years that I have
21 been here. Then trying to ensure that the addition,
22 if there is a rooftop addition, is not visible from
23 the public right-of-way when viewed directly from
24 across the street. There may be ways that an
25 addition can be finessed where it is less

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1 addition, but you would want to see it stepped back.
2 And then if the brick is irreparable, then it would
3 be okay to have the full -- the full width and the
4 addition that is even with the current existing
5 plane of the primary facade.
6 And then my question, if that's what
7 you're recommending, is do we have any concern that
8 we can't -- we can no longer see the original
9 envelope of the building, as Vice Chair Sandkamp
10 mentioned? Even if that brick is not going to the
11 original, do we still want to be able to have
12 members of the public see from the visual cues what
13 that building originally looked like before the
14 addition?
15 MR. WRIEDEN: I think at this point it's
16 important to verify the condition of the brick
17 underneath the formstone. I say in my report that I
18 don't necessarily agree with the determination that
19 the building is noncontributing because it does
20 still have certain integrity. It has integrity of
21 location. It has some integrity of design.
22 And when the formstone is removed, which I
23 believe is probably going to be necessary given my
24 tap tests and my ability to remove pieces with my
25 hands, I think that would be the best time to

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1 noticeable.
2 But the draft that has come to us now, the
3 proposal that has come to us now is for a
4 third-floor addition -- actually third or fourth,
5 depending on how you're counting floors -- addition
6 that is fully visible and moves up to the front.
7 Staff would be more than willing to take a
8 look at a couple of different options with the
9 applicant and, you know, they can be presented to
10 the Commission. I think that in order to satisfy
11 the intended program for the house, the owners are
12 going to request a visible addition. And I guess
13 staff is looking for an addition that will be the
14 least obtrusive, the least attention-getting, if you
15 would, within the neighborhood, will not distract
16 from other buildings of historic value in the
17 streetscape.
18 And there may be some ways that that could
19 be done that the Commission would feel more
20 comfortable with, but I do think that an exploratory
21 demo is -- you know, it should be the first thing
22 that we do to further guide the Commission's
23 deliberations.
24 Staff did not mention the rear yard
25 addition. Staff does not have any real issues with

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1 the rear yard addition, the length of it. You know,
2 we do maintain the 30-foot rear yard and down the
3 street there are a couple of larger additions. This
4 addition will also not be as tall as some of the
5 additions closer to the east side. So staff feels
6 comfortable with the mass of the rear addition which
7 is going to be 15 feet.

8 MR. PEPE: Okay. Mr. Chairman,
9 Commissioners, I understand you have a very full
10 agenda. And I'm very, very grateful for all of
11 the time and the suggestions that you've shared with
12 us.

13 I think it's in my client's best interests
14 to go forward and table this application for the
15 time being, do the investigation, try and bring some
16 more of the original detail from the 1938 photo back
17 into the program and make a considered decision as
18 to the addition once we know what the condition of
19 the brick is, if that's acceptable.

20 MR. WRIEDEN: And staff would be more than
21 happy to work with the applicants based on the
22 Commission's questions tonight.

23 But I would like to put on the record,
24 if I may, because I did overlook one rather
25 important element of the proposal and I'm highly

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1 are generally, you know, gentlest means possible, no
2 sandblasting, no grinding.

3 MR. PEPE: No dynamite, Dan?

4 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: No dynamite.

5 MR. WRIEDEN: And generally staff will
6 meet with the contractor beforehand and, you know,
7 we test out different methods.

8 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: Thank you. Much
9 appreciated.

10 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Okay. So we have --
11 MR. WRIEDEN: -- a request for table and
12 --

13 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Yes.

14 MR. WRIEDEN: -- a remand to staff --

15 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: With an unspecified
16 meeting date?

17 MR. WRIEDEN: Yes.

18 MS. O'NEILL: Yes, I think that's best.

19 MR. WRIEDEN: An unspecified meeting date
20 and a remand to staff for further exploratory
21 demolition and documentation.

22 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Okay. I'll make a
23 motion to table this to an unspecified meeting
24 date.

25 COMMISSIONER GUNTHER: Second.

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1 embarrassed because I overlooked it. The electrical
2 service is coming in at the west side of the
3 building and both meters are visible. And I have an
4 absolute abhorrence of gas and electric meters on
5 the front facades of historical buildings and I
6 would ask that that be re-examined and put into the
7 building.

8 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: If I may add,
9 Dan --

10 MR. WRIEDEN: I'm sorry I missed that one.
11 Yes.

12 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: If I may add,
13 before you table, that if during the tabled period
14 if the applicant is going to do more exploratory
15 demolition, that it be done in the most gentlest
16 means possible as to not encourage further damage to
17 the bricks that are probably existing. I believe
18 the architect also said that she thought they were
19 existing and possibly intact underneath. So
20 anything that could be done to monitor the removal
21 would be appreciated.

22 MR. WRIEDEN: Well, staff will issue a
23 certificate of no effect for exploratory demolition
24 of all intrusive materials at the front facade and
25 even the side facade. And what the conditions are,

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1 MS. O'NEILL: All in favor?
2 (Whereupon, a voice vote was taken; chorus
3 of "ayes" heard.)

4 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. Motion passes.

5 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Thank you.

6 MS. MALELLARI: Thank you.

7 MR. PEPE: Thank you. Have a great
8 evening, everyone. Thank you again for your time.
9 Be well.

10 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Thank you, Don.

11 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Do we want to go right
12 to new business or should we take a five-minute
13 break now or after the next item?

14 MS. O'NEILL: Bridget, do you want a break
15 now?

16 THE REPORTER: The next item doesn't look
17 like it will be too bad, right?

18 MS. O'NEILL: I don't think it will be too
19 long.

20 THE REPORTER: Yeah, why don't we do the
21 next item.

22 MR. WRIEDEN: I'm going to take my leave
23 now so everyone have a good night. Nice seeing you
24 again.

25 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Thanks, Dan. Take care.

1 Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: So we'll go to new

3 business, Number 9.A. This is H22-239. Gerard

4 Pizzillo, Esquire, on behalf of Warren at Bay, LLC,

5 owner. This is 130 Bay Street, Block 12807, Lot 21.

6 This is the Powerhouse Arts Redevelopment Plan and

7 municipal landmark.

8 So this is for a certificate of

9 appropriateness to amend a previously approved COA,

10 H19-398, amended by H19-595, for the construction of

11 an interior mezzanine, the addition of two

12 storefront doors fronting Bay Street, internal

13 circulation updates, and the addition of new

14 commercial tenant signage at 130 Bay Street, a/k/a

15 the A & P warehouse auxiliary building and bakery

16 complex, an altered, early 20th century commercial

17 building complex with classical elements,

18 constructed in 1914 to 1915.

19 And this is a recommendation to the Jersey

20 City Planning Board.

21 Gerard.

22 MR. PIZZILLO: Yes, hi. Good to see you,

23 Chairman. Thank you. Good evening, Commissioners.

24 My name is Gerard Pizzillo. I'm a partner with the

25 law firm of Genova Burns here in Jersey City. I'm

1 around the Bay Street and First Street frontages and

2 then offices going up. This Board did grant the

3 certificate of appropriateness with conditions under

4 application or File Number H19-398.

5 We then appeared before you in January of

6 2020, and there were some minor revisions to that

7 COA just with regards to the loading dock area on

8 the First Street side of the proposed structure and

9 as well as the addition of a transformer room that

10 PSE&G required us to elevate a little bit because

11 the area is prone to flooding.

12 We did appear before the Planning Board

13 subsequent to that January 2020 appearance before

14 you and the Planning Board did grant preliminary and

15 final major site plan with deviations and

16 conditions. One of those conditions being the

17 conditions from this Board remain in effect.

18 Fast-forward, the project is under

19 construction. There are several revisions to

20 three areas -- the ground floor, the fifth floor,

21 and the sixth floor -- that we're appearing before

22 you this evening on. These changes are not

23 completed. They're proposed.

24 So while the building is under

25 construction, these items haven't been done yet. So

1 here this evening on behalf of the applicant, 130

2 Bay LLC.

3 As the Chairman pointed out, this is a

4 property that is located within the Powerhouse Arts

5 District redevelopment area and governed by the

6 provisions of that redevelopment plan as well as the

7 historic design standards of the Land Development

8 Ordinance, Section 335, Subchapter 71. And as,

9 also, the Chairman pointed out, this is a locally

10 designated landmark.

11 We did appear before you -- and I should

12 note, also, as the Chairman pointed out, this is the

13 site of the former A & P auxiliary bakery and

14 warehouse building, a locally designated landmark by

15 municipal ordinance.

16 We did appear before you two times. First

17 time was in October of 2019 and we received a

18 certificate of appropriateness essentially to add a

19 two-story addition to the existing structure. The

20 structure was varying stories between four and six,

21 so the addition -- or appearance before you at that

22 time was really to, crudely say, box the building

23 while keeping and maintaining the existing facades,

24 windows, fenestrations in order to construct an

25 office-retail building. Ground-floor retail all

1 we obviously have to appear before you. Hopefully

2 we'll get a favorable recommendation from this body

3 and then hopefully in March we'll be before the

4 Planning Board to get their approval.

5 Before I turn it over to Nicole Robertson

6 from GRO Architects, our architect of record, who

7 will run you through the revisions we're seeking, I

8 just wanted to point out for the Board's information

9 none of these items that we're requesting before

10 you -- and subsequently the Planning Board --

11 trigger any deviations. They are all compliant with

12 the redevelopment plan and they don't increase or

13 worsen any of the deviations that we received as

14 part of our initial preliminary and final major site

15 plan approved by the Planning Board.

16 So with that said, I'll turn it over to

17 Nicole Robertson and she can share her screen and

18 show the Board what we're proposing this evening.

19 MS. O'NEILL: We do just need to swear

20 Nicole in prior to testimony.

21 MR. PIZZILLO: Sure, of course.

22 NICOLE ROBERTSON, having

23 been duly sworn, was examined and testified as

24 follows:

25 THE REPORTER: Thank you. And state and

1 spell your full name for the record.
 2 THE WITNESS: Nicole, N-I-C-O-L-E,
 3 Robertson, R-O-B-E-R-T-S-O-N.
 4 THE REPORTER: Thank you.
 5 MS. O'NEILL: Staff notes that Nicole has
 6 previously been qualified in front of this Board as
 7 an expert in the field of architecture.
 8 MR. PIZZILLO: Great. Thank you, Maggie.
 9 Nicole, if you could just share your
 10 screen and get right into it and show the Board what
 11 we're proposing here, please.
 12 THE WITNESS: Okay. Thanks so much,
 13 Gerard, for the excellent introduction. Great
 14 summary. So I'm just going to get right to the
 15 content.
 16 Tonight I'm presenting -- at Mallory's
 17 request, actually, and Maggie's request -- that we
 18 present it as what was previously approved and
 19 then our proposed changes from the approved
 20 design. So I'm just going to present the comparison
 21 sheets.
 22 This is the first sheet of the approved
 23 drawings. And the change that we made on this sheet
 24 is really to the square footage of the building,
 25 which I just want to emphasize we are not changing

1 more than one means of egress. You know, there's
 2 just a need for some flexibility with tenancy in the
 3 building.
 4 So we've introduced two additional doors
 5 which are totally symmetrical and very much in
 6 keeping with the design of the sort of organization
 7 of the windows and facade above.
 8 And then the other change on the first
 9 floor is the removal of a small retail space that we
 10 had shown previously. So if I go back to the
 11 original plans, previously we had just one central
 12 door. Now we have two additional doors on either
 13 side. And then at the lower right-hand corner, at
 14 the corner of First and Warren, we had a very small
 15 retail space proposed and the owners have since
 16 decided to eliminate that demising wall and make it
 17 one larger retail space based on sort of the
 18 interest of tenants looking at the building.
 19 On the fifth floor, this is our approved
 20 fifth floor plan which shows the office addition.
 21 This is the addition that Gerard was speaking of,
 22 which is a two-story addition. And at the time of
 23 approval, it's a double-height space.
 24 What we're proposing tonight is that we
 25 extend the sixth floor into this volume. And so

1 in any way the exterior massing of the building, of
 2 what was approved, but there is an enlargement to
 3 the sixth floor which is occurring inside the
 4 already approved volume.
 5 I'll show how that works in the plan of
 6 the sixth floor, but we did change the gross
 7 building area calculation and increased the proposed
 8 building area by 2,563 square feet. So that was
 9 updated on this table and that's why this is a
 10 revised sheet.
 11 So I'm just going in order. So I'll come
 12 back to that topic after I go through the first
 13 floor plan.
 14 Our proposed changes here are, as Gerard
 15 mentioned, on First Street. This is what was
 16 approved by the Board which shows our retail. We
 17 have a retail space that fronts on Bay Street and
 18 then we have retail space on Warren and then on
 19 First Street.
 20 Our proposed -- what we're proposing now
 21 as a change I've bubbled in red here. So you can
 22 easily see that we're adding two additional doors to
 23 this retail space that fronts on Bay Street. And
 24 this really is driven by just tenants as they've
 25 been looking at the space. Many tenants require

1 that requires us to propose additional structural
 2 columns at the interior of the building. So that's
 3 what you're seeing here that are labeled as C-3.1.
 4 These are a series of steel columns that support the
 5 enlarged sixth floor above.
 6 And then we have also bubbled on the east
 7 facade of the addition, we have these areas here
 8 where we're proposing accordion doors instead of
 9 just windows because the owners have found that many
 10 of the tenants are requesting more access to natural
 11 ventilation after, you know, our experience all
 12 with, you know, the pandemic experience. That's
 13 been a common request to increase natural
 14 ventilation for workspaces.
 15 And same here. This bubble here is also
 16 showing that we're proposing a large garage door
 17 that will open and connect the interior of the fifth
 18 floor office space directly to the roof terrace just
 19 to allow for a more seamless relationship between
 20 inside and outside and increased ventilation.
 21 DIRECT EXAMINATION
 22 BY MR. PIZZILLO:
 23 Q. Nicole, if I may just stop you there,
 24 please.
 25 A. Sure. Yes.

1 Q. Are any of those doors, either
2 accordion or the garage-style door, visible from the
3 right-of-way?

4 A. No. And, actually, I'm going to show --
5 I've got sightline drawings that demonstrate how
6 they're not visible from the public right-of-way.

7 Q. Okay. Thank you.

8 A. Thank you. Yeah, that's a great point.

9 So going to the sixth floor, this is our
10 approved sixth-floor addition. So you can see that
11 there's an existing sixth floor in the building,
12 just the sort of -- we call it the red and gray
13 building to the west. And then our proposed
14 addition includes -- you know, its volume encloses
15 up at that same level. We just had it marked out as
16 open to below. I think at the time there was a gym
17 tenant that was considering the space so the owners
18 were trying to accommodate their needs.

19 And what we're proposing tonight is an
20 extension of that sixth floor into that already
21 approved volume. It's an extension of about 2,500
22 square feet that is on the same level as the
23 existing sixth floor in the red and gray building.

24 And this is our approved south elevation,
25 which shows the existing red and gray building to

1 the left, to the west side, and the kind of yellow
2 building we call it. It's just so iconic. And then
3 our proposed addition which is a kind of
4 centralization of the vertical circulation core and
5 our two-story addition.

6 And you can see in the proposed elevation
7 that there's no change to the proposed volume that's
8 caused by this increase in floor area at the sixth
9 floor. So the volume is remaining the same. Our
10 only proposed change on the south elevation here is
11 the addition of the two additional double doors at
12 the center of these bays in the aluminum storefront
13 construction. And the same type of retail signage
14 above with the rod installation.

15 And we did notice, actually, this is
16 something that was bubbled, that we're just
17 keeping -- these windows, we had noticed that there
18 was a little difference of how they were detailed in
19 what was previously approved, but we are just
20 showing them as consistent with what was originally
21 there and what we're proposing for all of the
22 windows. So you can just see what those were
23 looking like.

24 We realized that that was not quite
25 right and that we wanted to keep the applicable

1 window central as we're doing it on all of the
2 other windows. I wasn't too sure what happened with
3 that one, but we're picking up that little
4 adjustment.

5 This is the approved east elevation and
6 this is our proposed east elevation where we've
7 bubbled in red the proposed accordion doors which
8 just allow tenants to fully open the door and bring
9 in lots of natural ventilation.

10 And then the approved north elevation.
11 And really what we're looking at here, you see
12 there's no change to this elevation at all except
13 for really this facade at the rear of the red and
14 gray building is set back quite far, actually, from
15 First Street. It's not visible at all from the
16 public right-of-way and actually in this elevation
17 it's shown kind of grayed out to show how far back
18 it is, but we are highlighting it because this is
19 the location of where this proposed garage door is
20 located which will open to the fifth floor deck.

21 And this is a detail of that proposed
22 garage door, which is on a kind of hydraulic system
23 to open and actually it's really cool. It will be a
24 great feature. It will improve the use of the
25 building.

1 This is a -- we did not have any section
2 drawings, I think, in our original application for,
3 you know, historic and planning applications, or at
4 least we didn't have this particular section. So
5 this is a new sheet that we're adding to this
6 application. And it just shows the original volume
7 that was approved and we're just showing how we're
8 adding an extension to the sixth floor with the
9 steel posts that we mentioned that are at the
10 interior of that volume.

11 And that's another view of it looking
12 west. I just wanted to fully describe what that
13 was.

14 This is a detail of the retail signage
15 which is consistent with what was previously
16 approved. We just had to add another sheet because
17 we ran out of space.

18 And then we have -- so this is a sheet of
19 the approved sight visibility diagrams which show
20 how a person standing here across the street
21 basically sees -- their line of view hits the
22 cornice of the yellow building and they only see the
23 top of the addition, which is going to be cladded.
24 It's kind of that glowing box that we're so excited
25 about. But you only see the top of it. You're

1 actually not going to see the windows.
 2 And same from this elevation. The
 3 sightline demonstrates that the addition is set back
 4 enough that you're actually not going to see these
 5 accordion doors at all.
 6 And same for this -- yeah, and this
 7 drawing shows this as well, because the accordion
 8 doors are located on this side here, so you won't
 9 see those. You'll only see the top of the
 10 addition.
 11 And this drawing, same thing. So the
 12 visibility hasn't changed at all. We're just kind
 13 of reinforcing the fact that any of these changes to
 14 those openings in particular are just not visible at
 15 all from the public right-of-way.
 16 And that's really the extent of the
 17 adjustments we're making. It's been just really
 18 important to us to, you know, keep Maggie
 19 apprised of any deviations or any kind of
 20 adjustments that we're making during the process of
 21 construction.
 22 And as Gerard said, none of this has been
 23 done yet. We just want to be, you know, as
 24 respectful as we can to the Board. I mean, this is
 25 an amazing building so it's super important to us

1 great question. As part of the original structural
 2 design for the addition, what we're doing in light
 3 gray, you can see shaded in in this section the
 4 original roof, which we're not touching. And we
 5 actually have new structural steel beams that are a
 6 couple of feet above the existing roof structures.
 7 So there's really a void space between the floor of
 8 the addition and the roof of the existing yellow
 9 building. So you're right. Exactly. The new posts
 10 are bearing on the new steel structure, yeah.
 11 Exactly.
 12 COMMISSIONER SAKONG: Thank you.
 13 MS. O'NEILL: Any additional questions
 14 from Commissioners?
 15 All right. Hearing none, Gerard, does
 16 that conclude your testimony?
 17 MR. PIZZILLO: Yes, it does, Maggie.
 18 Thank you.
 19 MS. O'NEILL: Great. So we'll pop over to
 20 open public comments. If there are any members of
 21 the public in attendance tonight who would like to
 22 speak regarding this application, please use the
 23 "raise hand" function at the bottom of the screen.
 24 If you're on the phone, you can press *9.
 25 Staff sees no hands raised and recommends

1 that we have your approval for any of these
 2 adjustments. And that's it.
 3 MR. PIZZILLO: Thank you, Nicole.
 4 That will conclude our presentation.
 5 Happy to answer any questions the Commissioners may
 6 have.
 7 I just want to point out -- I should have
 8 pointed it out in my opening. I did reach out to
 9 the Powerhouse Arts Neighborhood Association. We
 10 have been in touch with them. We shared our plans.
 11 So we let them know that this is going on and we
 12 did not receive any negative feedback from them on
 13 that.
 14 So with that said, happy to answer any
 15 questions the Commissioners may have.
 16 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Are there any questions
 17 from any Commissioners at this time?
 18 COMMISSIONER SAKONG: Chairman, I just
 19 have one. The steel posts that support the
 20 mezzanine, can you just confirm that those are
 21 landing on spreaders that are expanding the existing
 22 roof of the yellow building and not adding any
 23 additional stresses or problems to the existing
 24 roof?
 25 THE WITNESS: That's great. That's a

1 a motion to open and close public comment.
 2 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: Motion.
 3 VICE CHAIRMAN SANDKAMP: Motion.
 4 COMMISSIONER LEWIS: Second.
 5 MS. O'NEILL: I have Gucciardo and Lewis.
 6 All in favor?
 7 (Whereupon, a voice vote was taken; chorus
 8 of "ayes" heard.)
 9 MS. O'NEILL: We'll move into staff
 10 comments. Okay. So I will, as usual, scroll right
 11 on down to "Staff Recommendations and Comments."
 12 Generally staff finds these changes to be
 13 pretty de minimis, but the standards in our
 14 ordinance, you know, changing of opening sizes as
 15 well as signage, require it to come to the HPC.
 16 They're contextual with what they were previously
 17 approved for and staff does not think that any of
 18 the proposed changes will have an adverse impact on
 19 either of the historic resource itself or the
 20 surrounding historic resources within the Powerhouse
 21 Arts District. And we do recommend the approval of
 22 a COA and subsequent recommendation for approval to
 23 the Planning Board.
 24 There are standard conditions on this
 25 approval. The only two that are nonstandard

1 conditions, of course, are the first one, just that
2 all other conditions are still in effect for the two
3 other approvals. And then just a condition that
4 notes that any additional signage -- so, for
5 example, if the Commission members went to Tacombi,
6 which is a tenant in this building, came to us with
7 some exterior wall painting, things like that do
8 need to come to the Commission. They're not
9 approved as part of this. And that the interior
10 fit-out of any tenant spaces is not included in this
11 application.

12 THE WITNESS: Understood.

13 MR. PIZZILLO: I was going to say should
14 the Board approve or issue a favorable
15 recommendation, my client has no problem complying
16 with any and all of those conditions.

17 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: And the signage that
18 we're shown, that's just really placeholder signage
19 anyway, correct? So I'm assuming whoever comes in
20 as a tenant there will come in with their own
21 signage anyway.

22 MS. O'NEILL: Yeah. So the signage that's
23 shown there -- if you remember in the Tacombi
24 application, they had applied for the exterior wall
25 painting and then some pin letters on top of the

1 loading dock. The signage that's here is really
2 just mimicking that pin lettering on top of the
3 loading dock.

4 So if someone comes in with their store
5 name and wants to put that up, that's okay. They
6 won't need to come back. That's considered part of
7 their site plan. But, for example, if someone
8 wanted to change those letters to neon lettering or
9 something like that, because that's a change that
10 would have to come back to the Board. And, of
11 course, any additional signage or anything like
12 that.

13 Just for the Board, the signage that was
14 approved as part of their site plan was signage on
15 the door, pendant signage below the loading dock for
16 pedestrians as they walk across, and now we have the
17 pin lettering up on top of the loading dock. So I
18 don't really know what additional signage anyone
19 would need besides that, but if they want more, they
20 have to come back.

21 VICE CHAIRMAN SANDKAMP: I'll make a
22 motion to approve with conditions.

23 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Second.

24 MS. O'NEILL: All right. We'll do a roll
25 call vote.

1 Commissioner Gunther?

2 COMMISSIONER GUNTHER: Aye.

3 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Gucciardo?

4 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: Aye. And thank
5 you for that very clear and concise presentation.
6 Very helpful.

7 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Garriga?

8 COMMISSIONER GARRIGA: Aye.

9 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Lewis?

10 COMMISSIONER LEWIS: Aye.

11 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Sakong?

12 COMMISSIONER SAKONG: Aye.

13 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Cronin?

14 COMMISSIONER CRONIN: Aye.

15 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Gordon?

16 COMMISSIONER GORDON: Aye.

17 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Amatuzzo is
18 absent. Commissioner Stango is absent.

19 Vice Chair Sandkamp?

20 VICE CHAIRMAN SANDKAMP: Aye.

21 MS. O'NEILL: And Chairman Blazak?

22 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Aye.

23 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. There are nine votes
24 in favor, none against, no abstentions. The
25 certificate of appropriateness with conditions and

1 recommendation for approval to the Planning Board is
2 approved.

3 THE WITNESS: Thank you. Thanks,
4 everyone.

5 MR. PIZZILLO: Thank you. Have a nice
6 night, everybody.

7 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: Thank you.

8 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: All right. So it's
9 8:25. We'll take a five-minute break and come back
10 at 8:30. Just remember to mute yourself, turn your
11 camera off, and then just turn your camera on when
12 you're back so we know when to begin again.

13 (Whereupon, a recess is taken.)

14 * * *

1 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: All right. So it's
 2 8:31. We're going to call back to order here.
 3 The next case is 9.B, H22-548, Jensen C.
 4 Vasil, Architect PC, on behalf of Raymond Raad and
 5 Jiangehaun Yuan, owners. This is 116 Wayne Street,
 6 Block 12807, Lot 21, in the Van Vorst Park Historic
 7 District. This is for a certificate of
 8 appropriateness for the alteration of the rear
 9 facade and the construction of a rear deck partially
 10 visible from Christopher Columbus Drive of an
 11 altered, contributing, vernacular Italianate
 12 rowhouse, built circa 1880, Van Vorst Park Historic
 13 District.

14 J E N S E N V A S I L, having been duly
 15 sworn, was examined and testified as follows:
 16 THE REPORTER: And if you can state and
 17 spell your full name for the record.
 18 THE WITNESS: Sure. My first name is
 19 Jensen, J-E-N-S-E-N. Last name is Vasil, V-A-S-I-L.
 20 THE REPORTER: Thank you.
 21 MS. O'NEILL: Staff notes Jensen has been
 22 previously qualified in front of this Board as an
 23 expert in the field of architecture.
 24 And, Jensen, you should be good to share
 25 your screen.

1 by the lot width and it goes down to a conforming
 2 rear yard with planting and pavers. So the lot
 3 coverage is conforming as well. It's a mixture of
 4 kind of a meandering path of bluestone pavers with
 5 some planting around.
 6 And the floor plans of the parlor level,
 7 we're proposing to enlarge the existing windows.
 8 There are three windows in the rear. Those windows
 9 are 3 feet. We'd be enlarging those to 4 foot 6 to
 10 accommodate double outswing French doors. And that
 11 would be the extent of those openings. And I'll
 12 show you the rear elevations.
 13 And then here, also, you can see the
 14 9-foot deck with the stairs to the rear, which are
 15 tight against the property line to the property to
 16 the west.
 17 On the next page, HPC-4, you can see the
 18 original configuration. There was a fire escape in
 19 the back. That was taken down. And as I mentioned,
 20 the windows will be enlarged to be these outswing
 21 French doors.
 22 The original line of the headers would
 23 remain. That's not going to be changed, so that's
 24 the limit of the header, and then they'd be dropped
 25 down to the parlor floor.

1 THE WITNESS: Thank you.
 2 Good evening, Commissioners, Chair
 3 Blazak. Thank you very much for hearing this case
 4 tonight. This project is for the -- as Chair
 5 Blazak mentioned, the rear deck enlargement of
 6 openings. It's a two-family residence, midblock on
 7 Wayne Street between Jersey Avenue and Varick
 8 Street.
 9 There is an open parking lot that
 10 fronts Christopher Columbus Drive which obliquely
 11 you can see the rear of the building and I'll show
 12 you some photos of what that looks like from ground
 13 level.
 14 I will mention that the proposed deck does
 15 not trigger any variances, nor do the stairs. The
 16 building is conforming otherwise.
 17 So on the site plan you can see there was
 18 a small addition there originally. Oh, I should
 19 mention that the interior renovation is actively
 20 underway via separate application. And so there's a
 21 small rear addition in the back which is stairs from
 22 the basement level or the garden level. That will
 23 be removed. So the bulk of the building, the main
 24 structure, is back to the original structure.
 25 The deck is proposed to be 9 feet in depth

1 Here's a photo of the existing conditions.
 2 And then Detail 6 is the view from Christopher
 3 Columbus Drive seen through that parking lot. Or
 4 this is the original condition, I should say.
 5 The deck is shown -- the deck is a wood
 6 deck with Ipe finish on top, a pressure-treated
 7 structure with Ipe finish and Ipe front. Cable
 8 rail, metal cable rail, around the perimeter.
 9 Stairs going down, as I mentioned, at the property
 10 line to the west. And then a light on either
 11 side of the door openings, on the outside door
 12 openings.
 13 We are proposing that the upper windows
 14 would be replaced in the same opening and that they
 15 be two-over-two aluminum-clad windows in the rear.
 16 And the doors would be three horizontal panels at
 17 the parlor level with muntins or mullions.
 18 The stairs would be same cable rail going
 19 down, Ipe treads, and then this is the detail for
 20 the cable railing.
 21 In the front we're requesting that the
 22 existing one-over-one windows be considered for
 23 two-over-two, again, replacement windows in the
 24 existing opening. They're all ultimate wood
 25 windows, Marvin wood windows. So no change to the

1 openings but just the mullion pattern.
 2 And on HPC-6 we're showing the front
 3 openings with, again, the two-over-two pattern.
 4 Existing lintels and sills all remain.
 5 On HPC-7 we're showing the outswing French
 6 doors.
 7 And on HPC-8 -- which I added. You didn't
 8 have it because it was in the set originally for
 9 Maggie. But this is for the rear window. For
 10 completeness I should show the proposed windows and
 11 the existing openings. So, again, we're retaining
 12 the existing lintels and sills at the upper levels
 13 at the rear.
 14 That concludes the walk-through with the
 15 drawings and I'm happy to answer any questions the
 16 Commission may have.
 17 MS. O'NEILL: All right. Any
 18 Commissioners have any questions?
 19 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Stephen, I'm seeing your
 20 lips moving, but I can't hear you.
 21 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: Thank you so
 22 much, Brian. My lips always seem to be moving.
 23 Quick question about the doors out to the
 24 deck. The material that they're made of and the
 25 color of those doors and the windows above?

1 calls it a vernacular Italianate rowhouse built --
 2 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: There you go.
 3 Okay.
 4 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: I think two over two is
 5 appropriate here.
 6 COMMISSIONER GUNTHER: Yeah. Looking at
 7 the date of the building, that's probably about
 8 right.
 9 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: Yeah. Yeah.
 10 And, lastly, on the parking lot view, is there a
 11 fence between the applicant's property and a
 12 fence -- and the property closer to the parking
 13 lot?
 14 THE WITNESS: So there would be -- at the
 15 back of our fence -- or at the back of our property,
 16 there would be a 6-foot-high privacy fence around
 17 the perimeter of the lot, our lot, our property.
 18 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: Okay. Thank you
 19 very much. Thank you.
 20 THE WITNESS: You're welcome.
 21 COMMISSIONER SAKONG: Could you go to the
 22 rear elevation again?
 23 THE WITNESS: Sure.
 24 COMMISSIONER SAKONG: Thank you.
 25 Can you zoom in to the upper half of this

1 THE WITNESS: These would be aluminum clad
 2 and they would be black, is the proposal, for both
 3 the windows and the doors.
 4 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: Okay. And my
 5 other question, since it affects the facade: Do you
 6 have anything that substantiates the two over two or
 7 your reason for going to two over two?
 8 THE WITNESS: Only aesthetic preference of
 9 the owner. No. We did -- I can show you the --
 10 I'll share this. I can show you the tax photo. The
 11 tax photo shows --
 12 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: That would be
 13 helpful.
 14 THE WITNESS: -- one over one was the
 15 original.
 16 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: And style of the
 17 building, would you consider that --
 18 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: The neighbor has --
 19 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: I'm sorry?
 20 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: I said the neighbor
 21 looks like it has two over two there.
 22 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: Yeah, it does.
 23 And I don't know if you'd consider this
 24 Italianate or a mixture of styles.
 25 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: The description of work

1 sheet?
 2 THE WITNESS: Yes. I'm going to try. I'm
 3 going to get out of this screen mode. Yes.
 4 COMMISSIONER SAKONG: I just want to note
 5 there's some discrepancy between the stated -- well,
 6 yes, and it's also the proportions of the left two
 7 windows on that floor compared to the drawing. I
 8 only point it out because a lot of the buildings
 9 that we see on this Commission, the rear facade is
 10 not in as good a shape as that is. And I just think
 11 it's important for the record that the drawings are
 12 accurate to reflect the actual conditions that
 13 you're intending --
 14 THE WITNESS: That's it.
 15 COMMISSIONER SAKONG: So I would just
 16 request that the existing elevation --
 17 THE WITNESS: Sure.
 18 COMMISSIONER SAKONG: You've also added a
 19 water table, right?
 20 THE WITNESS: No, that's the deck.
 21 COMMISSIONER SAKONG: Oh, I'm sorry.
 22 That's the deck. Okay. Got it.
 23 And then sort of -- so if we were to ghost
 24 in the left two windows there, the left jamb would
 25 actually be closer to the building edge than where

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1 the existing door is, right?

2 THE WITNESS: That's correct.

3 COMMISSIONER SAKONG: So there's a little

4 infill work that you're doing.

5 THE WITNESS: That's correct.

6 COMMISSIONER SAKONG: So the intent is to

7 find the brick that matches.

8 THE WITNESS: We saved all the -- we're

9 going to be saving all the brick from this that we

10 take down and then we can reuse it.

11 COMMISSIONER SAKONG: Okay. That's great.

12 That's great. Okay. Thanks for clarifying.

13 THE WITNESS: Sure.

14 COMMISSIONER GORDON: I have to say that

15 was a great catch.

16 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: Yeah, I missed

17 it, too.

18 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: All right. Are there

19 any other questions from Commissioners at this

20 time?

21 Should we open up to public comment?

22 MS. O'NEILL: Sure. Are there any members

23 of the public in attendance who would like to --

24 actually, before we do that, Jensen, does that

25 conclude your testimony?

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1 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: I actually can't see it.

2 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: There we go.

3 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Now it's sharing.

4 MS. QUINLAN: Okay. Delayed reaction.

5 I'm going to skip down to staff comments.

6 So after reviewing the proposed project,

7 staff finds that the proposal is somewhat consistent

8 with the Secretary of the Interior standards for

9 historic preservation.

10 While the proposed rear deck and rear

11 facade alterations will be partially visible through

12 the parking lot on Christopher Columbus Drive, staff

13 notes the addition of a rear deck shall have no

14 adverse effect on the historic fabric of the

15 resource, proximate resources or the historic

16 district, as rear decks and additions fall within

17 the paradigm of the block, as well as the vernacular

18 traditions of the neighborhood.

19 In addition, although the proposed

20 alterations to the rear facade involve modifying the

21 existing openings by dropping the sills, the rear

22 fenestration pattern is generally retained.

23 Regarding the two-over-two windows on the

24 front facade, the HPC has previously approved

25 two-over-two windows on similar rowhouses within

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1 THE WITNESS: Yes, it does, Maggie. Thank

2 you.

3 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. If there's any

4 members of the public in attendance tonight who

5 would like to speak on this application, you can use

6 the "raise hand" function on the bottom of the

7 screen or you can press *9 on your phone to address

8 the Commission.

9 Okay. Staff sees no hands raised and

10 recommends a motion to open and close public

11 comment.

12 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: Motion.

13 COMMISSIONER LEWIS: Motion.

14 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: Second.

15 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. All in favor?

16 (Whereupon, a voice vote was taken; chorus

17 of "ayes" heard.)

18 MS. O'NEILL: All right. Sara, you should

19 be good for staff comments.

20 MS. QUINLAN: Okay. I --

21 MS. O'NEILL: Hold on. Hold on. Now

22 you're good.

23 MS. QUINLAN: Okay. Can you see my

24 screen?

25 MS. O'NEILL: Yes.

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1 this row and on this block, most notably across the

2 street at 121, 125, and 133 Wayne Street.

3 In HPC staff's opinion, this will not

4 cause an adverse effect on the character and/or the

5 integrity of the Van Vorst Park Historic District as

6 two-over-two windows are regularly found on

7 Italianate buildings throughout Jersey City.

8 In HPC staff's opinion, the project as

9 proposed will not cause an adverse effect on the

10 character and/or integrity of the historic resource

11 or the Van Vorst Park Historic District. HPC staff

12 recommends approval of a certificate of

13 appropriateness with the following conditions, and

14 then we essentially have our standard conditions,

15 including any lighting conditions for the rear

16 lighting fixture.

17 Do the Commissioners have any questions

18 for staff?

19 COMMISSIONER SAKONG: So the proposed

20 lighting fixture is not downcast in nature right

21 now.

22 Does the staff recommend that the

23 architect find an alternate picture?

24 MS. QUINLAN: It's just our general

25 exterior light fixture.

1 MS. O'NEILL: So the light fixture is less
 2 of a concern. They can put kind of a cone cap that
 3 directs the light downward inside. So if they're
 4 willing to do that, that's fine. That's generally
 5 how people solve this instead of changing the
 6 fixture.
 7 THE WITNESS: Sure. Absolutely.
 8 COMMISSIONER SAKONG: I would request the
 9 added condition of updating the drawing set to
 10 reflect the existing conditions.
 11 MS. O'NEILL: Sara, I have that written
 12 down.
 13 MS. QUINLAN: Okay. Yeah, me too.
 14 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: All right. Does the
 15 applicant accept the conditions as read by staff?
 16 THE WITNESS: I do.
 17 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Okay. I'll make a
 18 motion to approve this with conditions as read by
 19 staff.
 20 COMMISSIONER GORDON: Second.
 21 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. I have Brian and then
 22 Robert. I'll do a roll call vote.
 23 Commissioner Lewis?
 24 COMMISSIONER LEWIS: Aye.
 25 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Cronin?

1 MS. O'NEILL: All right.
 2 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: All right. Now we go to
 3 9.C. This is H23-028, 343 and 1/2 Eighth Street,
 4 Block 9908, Lot 18. This is in the Hamilton Park
 5 Historic District and is for the introduction and
 6 discussion of a report for the individual local
 7 designation of 343 and 1/2 Eighth Street under
 8 Criterion B, for its association with Venus
 9 Pellagatti Xtravaganza. Formal action may be taken.
 10 And this is a recommendation to the Jersey City
 11 Planning Board.
 12 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. Hi, guys. So I
 13 have -- we have the applicant team as Mike Stafford
 14 on here.
 15 Is there anyone else you would like me to
 16 promote? They can raise their hands and then I can
 17 promote them before we swear everyone in. No, you
 18 guys are already promoted. You're okay.
 19 MS. ALICEA: Can we get promoted again?
 20 MS. O'NEILL: No, you're all good.
 21 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: We have a couple people
 22 with their hands raised now.
 23 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. So we have Jonovia.
 24 Is that for the applicant team?
 25 MR. ROBERSON: Yes.

1 COMMISSIONER CRONIN: Aye.
 2 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Gordon?
 3 COMMISSIONER GORDON: Aye.
 4 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Sakong?
 5 COMMISSIONER SAKONG: Aye.
 6 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Gucciardo?
 7 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: Aye.
 8 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Garriga?
 9 COMMISSIONER GARRIGA: Aye.
 10 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Gunther?
 11 COMMISSIONER GUNTHER: Aye.
 12 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Stango is
 13 absent. Commissioner Amatuzzo is absent.
 14 Vice-Chairman Sandkamp?
 15 VICE CHAIRMAN SANDKAMP: Aye.
 16 MS. O'NEILL: And Chairman Blazak?
 17 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Aye.
 18 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. There are nine votes
 19 in favor, none against, no abstentions. The
 20 certificate of appropriateness with conditions as
 21 read into the record is approved.
 22 THE WITNESS: Thank you all very much.
 23 Have a great night.
 24 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Thank you.
 25 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: Thank you.

1 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. So we're looking for
 2 people who will be testifying. That's different
 3 than public comment.
 4 MR. ROBERSON: Yes.
 5 MS. O'NEILL: So they're part of your
 6 testimony, correct?
 7 MR. ROBERSON: Yes.
 8 MS. O'NEILL: All right. It looks like we
 9 have Ken Lapham, who is the owner. Is he testifying
 10 or is he public comment?
 11 MR. ROBERSON: Not for testifying.
 12 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. Ken, since you're --
 13 we recognize you as the owner. You will have ample
 14 time for public comment. We're looking just for the
 15 applicant team on this.
 16 Okay. All right. So what we're going to
 17 do, guys, we're going to swear everyone in first
 18 before you'll be able to begin your testimony.
 19 Okay? So since there's four of you on one Zoom,
 20 we'll just go whatever, left to right, whatever
 21 order you want. Just one at a time, please.
 22 DANIELLA CARTER, having
 23 been duly sworn, was examined and testified as
 24 follows:
 25 THE REPORTER: And if you could state and

1 spell your full name for the record.
 2 MS. CARTER: My name is Daniella Carter.
 3 D-A-N-I-E-L-L-A, last name C-A-R-T-E-R.
 4 G I S E L E A L I C E A, having been
 5 duly sworn, was examined and testified as follows:
 6 THE REPORTER: And could you state and
 7 spell your full name for the record?
 8 MS. ALICEA: My name is Gisele Alicea. And
 9 it's spelled, first name, G-I-S-E-L-E. Last name
 10 A-L-I-C-E-A.
 11 M I C H A E L R O B E R S O N, having
 12 been duly sworn, was examined and testified as
 13 follows:
 14 THE REPORTER: And could you state and
 15 spell your full name for the record?
 16 MR. ROBERSON: It is Michael Roberson.
 17 M-I-C-H-A-E-L, Roberson, R-O-B-E-R-S-O-N.
 18 I S A B E L L A A K E L, having been
 19 duly sworn, was examined and testified as follows:
 20 THE REPORTER: And if you could state and
 21 spell your full name for the record.
 22 MS. AKEL: Yes. Isabella Akel.
 23 I-S-A-B-E-L-L-A, last name A-K-E-L.
 24 THE REPORTER: Thank you. And for the
 25 ladies there, since you're all together, I might not

1 MR. ROBERSON: Is there a person named
 2 Tyra?
 3 MS. O'NEILL: No. No. Yeah. But if I
 4 see that she rejoins either by -- if I see anyone
 5 rejoin, I'll get you guys know. Like if that
 6 attendee number changes at all. But right now there
 7 are four people here and neither of them are by
 8 those two names. Okay.
 9 So in that case you guys are welcome to
 10 begin.
 11 MS. ALICEA: Okay. Well, I can start.
 12 One of the reasons why this is really important is
 13 because this is where Venus Xtravaganza was raised
 14 and this is where her experience is and manifested
 15 basically.
 16 So I think that this is a monumental place
 17 and a place that should be a landmark for the
 18 community, especially with her story and with the
 19 impact that she has had on the trans community and
 20 just her life alone and the impact of the ballroom
 21 and the impact of everything that she was is
 22 extremely important for our community, for our
 23 culture, for trans culture, for trans people of
 24 color. You know, she went -- it was so much that
 25 all of our girls go through every day and she

1 know who's talking. If you could just raise your
 2 hand maybe when you talk. Okay? Thank you.
 3 MS. O'NEILL: And then Bridget will also
 4 swear in Jonovia as well.
 5 J O N O V I A C H A S E, having been
 6 duly sworn, was examined and testified as follows:
 7 THE REPORTER: And if you could state and
 8 spell your full name for the record.
 9 MS. CHASE: Jonovia Chase, J-O-N-O-V-I-A,
 10 last name Chase, C-H-A-S-E.
 11 THE REPORTER: All right. Thank you very
 12 much.
 13 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: All right. You guys are
 14 all sworn and you're welcome to begin your
 15 testimony.
 16 MR. ROBERSON: I have a question. We were
 17 expecting, also, Dominique Jackson to be on. She
 18 got on earlier, but -- she thought that the time was
 19 earlier, but she had to jump on another call. Is it
 20 possible to swear her in just in case she jumps on,
 21 or how do you want to do that?
 22 MS. O'NEILL: So she's not listed in the
 23 attendees right now unless she's under a different
 24 name. But if she rejoins, we can promote her and we
 25 can swear her in when she rejoins.

1 basically -- do you want me to continue?
 2 MS. O'NEILL: Yeah. I'm sorry. We do
 3 want you to continue. Just for the Commission, why
 4 don't you explain a little bit about who Venus was
 5 before we dive into the significance just so all the
 6 Commissioners have a full story.
 7 MS. ALICEA: Okay. Well, Venus
 8 Xtravaganza was a trans woman who was in the House
 9 of Xtravaganza. And she joined the House at the
 10 early stages when the House first started. So she's
 11 a huge history in the ballroom as well. Venus was
 12 Puerto Rican and Italian and she lived in New
 13 Jersey, in Jersey City, exactly where the address is
 14 here where we have her marked down.
 15 And she basically was a trans woman who
 16 inspired and influenced a whole culture and a
 17 generation and people and millions. You know, she
 18 inspired me. She inspired so many girls just like
 19 her. And we all share the same experience. We all
 20 have similar experiences. And her experience was
 21 very unique to our community and very, very
 22 powerful. And she was just a fabulous trans woman,
 23 you know. She was an amazing human being and she
 24 was a trendsetter and a pioneer in our community.
 25 And my name is Gisele Alicea. I'm also

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1 the mother of the House of Xtravaganza. And I
2 basically -- this is very emotional for me and very
3 personal to me because this has to do with my house.
4 This has to do with a member who was here before I
5 was who basically pioneered this in order for me to
6 be who I am.

7 So I'm very grateful for Venus's existence
8 and her struggles. And, yeah, she died at a very
9 young age, you know. She was brutally murdered in a
10 hotel. And right there, it's just a horrible,
11 horrible ending, but she had a beautiful, beautiful
12 story.

13 And, you know, did you want to say
14 something?

15 MS. CARTER: Yeah. So I think when we
16 speak to the historical value that this home has, I
17 think about how New Jersey has in a way always been
18 a champion of LGBTQ rights. LGBTQ -- you know,
19 promoting LGBTQ, excuse me, exclusivity in their
20 communities and ensuring that there was a level of
21 safety.

22 And so I think back to when the first law
23 that was passed in the late 1980s and that was
24 allowing the LGBTQ people to experience the same New
25 Jersey that non-LGBTQ people were having. And so

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1 Venus's story has done for so many generations. Not
2 only for filmmakers, but also for the local LGBTQ+
3 folks living in New Jersey.

4 And so I think that when we think about
5 the historical value this has is that in this very
6 unprecedented time where 264 antitrans bills have
7 been introduced and the extinguishing of LGBTQ
8 people seem like to be a political pawn, right, and
9 they're erasing us from the history book, but what
10 we know is that we've always been a part of these
11 movements. Not only to liberate people like
12 ourselves, but the people who live in the
13 communities that we oftentimes operate in which is
14 the most marginalized.

15 And so to give this woman not only a
16 legacy of perseverance, a legacy that tells her that
17 even though she died at the hand of injustice, that
18 her legacy and her impact goes beyond just her as a
19 subject in a critically acclaimed film. This film
20 has not only changed the lives of its filmmakers,
21 but as you heard it has been, again, the catalyst
22 into sustaining a history and a legacy of people
23 who are now not only targeted, again as political
24 pawns, but are most vulnerable and in desperate
25 need, you know, of the visibility in the history

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1 during the time where, you know, it was the
2 beginning of the AIDS epidemic, New Jersey made sure
3 to stand down in terms of not only being allies, but
4 being an example of protecting their LGBTQ plus
5 constituents.

6 Venus was a subject in a critically
7 acclaimed documentary that not only has helped to
8 shape the way we tell the stories of LGBTQ people
9 in the media, but the ways in which this
10 marginalized community used ballroom, a space which
11 was only a safe haven for so many queer and black
12 LGBTQ folks.

13 And so when Venus told her story for Paris
14 Is Burning, this very famous documentary that
15 covered about four to six subjects, talking
16 specifically about their experience as black trans
17 people, as ballroom participants, but most
18 importantly during a time when this community was
19 being extinguished, right, and they needed the
20 visibility, they needed the empathy.

21 And Venus's story has been the blueprint
22 for that. I think if you think about any
23 documentaries that you have felt personally moved
24 by, that has either told your story or has told the
25 story of someone in your family, that is what

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1 books.

2 Because I think about a young, you know,
3 trans queer Daniella who feels like there was no
4 hope, but it was Venus Xtravaganza's story, even
5 though it ended the way that it did, but it told me
6 I belong.

7 And I think that so many trans people
8 don't have a place that they can call home. I think
9 so many of us know, right, that 40 percent of LGBTQ
10 youths are attempting suicide; 23 percent of them
11 are experiencing homelessness; 41 percent of them,
12 which is double the average rate, right, of
13 unemployment.

14 And so I think that when we remind New
15 Jerseyans what this is, this is not just an
16 opportunity to preserve just Venus's legacy. This
17 is telling LGBTQ community leaders, pioneers of what
18 has been an overlooked community, of people who have
19 fought and demanded for a space, who says that, you
20 know, with limited resources, right, that I'm going
21 to use my voice to create systemic change.

22 And we, I feel, have an opportunity to
23 send a message to not only states across this
24 country that it's okay to be trans, it's okay to be
25 LGBTQ. And if you are contributing to our history

1 books like all the other amazing people from the
 2 scholars to the activists, public speakers,
 3 musicians, that you deserve to have your legacy
 4 preserved.
 5 And if it's the one thing that we can tell
 6 our community right now is you deserve a home, you
 7 deserve a home even if you was murdered outside of
 8 it, and had that history preserved. Because there
 9 will be so many young LGBTQ youth, kids who will be
 10 able to visit Venus Xtravaganza's home not only in
 11 passing, but feel like they can go and enter the
 12 space that really honors their history and their
 13 legacy.
 14 And so if what we're going to say is that
 15 we can't be in the classrooms, why not at least in
 16 the community give us a space that honors our
 17 history?
 18 MR. ROBERSON: And so to that wonderful,
 19 wonderful, wonderful thing that Daniella just said,
 20 I'll add two things. Daniella said it's the right
 21 that trans women deserve. Trans women have a divine
 22 right to be. I want to historically situate this.
 23 So I'm going to be like Sophia from the Golden
 24 Girls. Picture this. If not for slavery, if not
 25 for the Emancipation Proclamation, if not for the

1 Duchess LaWong, Pepper LaBeija. And I'm missing
 2 somebody. It will come back to me. And then other
 3 houses began to be created in the '70s.
 4 But why Venus is real important is because
 5 in 1982, Angie and Hector created a House of
 6 Xtravaganza and entered large numbers of Latinos.
 7 And so she emerges from that space and the
 8 significance of her course is not only for Latin
 9 trans women but also for black trans women.
 10 And, you know, Jersey is an interesting
 11 space. I was born in Camden, New Jersey, so, you
 12 know, I'm kind of nervous talking to you all. But I
 13 was born in Camden, New Jersey and you have sort of
 14 a trifecta in North Jersey of three historical trans
 15 woman: Marsha P. Johnson was part of the stonewall
 16 rebellion; Tracey Norman was the very first
 17 African-American super model of the wall; and now
 18 Venus.
 19 And to Daniella's wonderful point, if you
 20 do this -- no, when you do this -- this will make
 21 trans women know they matter, whose history is
 22 important to learn outside of trans women. So to
 23 the very least of these we will situate the folks
 24 who have been demonized, have been beat, brutalized,
 25 and at the sake of other people's progress.

1 rise of Jim and Jake or racism after the dismantle
 2 of black --
 3 THE REPORTER: I'm sorry. Repeat that
 4 last line and slow down, please.
 5 MR. ROBERSON: If not for slavery, at
 6 least the dismantling of slavery, if not for the
 7 black reconstruction, and black people moving from
 8 the north to the south -- I mean from the north to
 9 the south to create new spaces of freedom. And
 10 Harlem becomes a new space. And in this new space
 11 of freedom and this new space of home, ballroom
 12 creates itself in contestation in many ways of the
 13 black church and at the intersection of white
 14 supremacy.
 15 And so Drag Ball becomes not only a
 16 theological space in which you matter, but a
 17 political space to organize. And after World War
 18 II, where other cities became blacker -- DC,
 19 Detroit, Baltimore, Philadelphia, Chicago -- these
 20 drag balls migrate. But in 1967 a black trans woman
 21 named Crystal LaBeija resisted racism and color in
 22 the pageant circuit. And so she made a decision to
 23 go back to the old Harlem Drag Ball circuit.
 24 And then these five who are called freedom
 25 fighters emerged: Avis Pendavis, Paris Dupress,

1 MS. CARTER: And I think, too, having
 2 Venus's family in support of this speaks volumes to
 3 what we've been told in the media, right? That
 4 these are the deplorables. These are the ones that
 5 nobody want. But here it is, a family who has went
 6 through years and years of agony, never getting
 7 justice for this death.
 8 And what they ask is not only that this
 9 ground be protected because of its historical value,
 10 but it's sending a message, too, to New Jerseyans
 11 that not only is there family, but there's local
 12 politicians, people who represent your community,
 13 that understand the importance, okay, of this
 14 visibility.
 15 This is not like we're trying to preserve
 16 the Governor's Mansion, you know, that has ample
 17 resources going into it. This is a woman who had
 18 nothing. This is a woman whose kitchen is still the
 19 same way that she left it the night she went out and
 20 got murdered. This is still left intact the same
 21 exact way that her spirit remembers the day she
 22 never was able to go back into it. Okay?
 23 And so when we think about what we're
 24 doing for our culture, it's not just the LGBTQ
 25 culture. This is going to be a part of New Jersey's

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1 history in turning the table and saying we stand on
 2 the right side of history; that any New Jerseyan who
 3 has made an historical impact, they deserve to be
 4 represented in our history books.

5 I don't think that it should go as far as,
 6 like, LGBTQ rights versus, you know, human rights.
 7 But what I think is that this is a human. A human
 8 that in y'all community, who had impact on y'all
 9 people, that then went on to have local impact.
 10 It's saying can we preserve her life? And can it
 11 start out where so many extraordinary people have
 12 started, right? And it starts out in a New Jersey
 13 home. Okay?

14 And I think about how the governor is in
 15 support of us. And so if the governor, local
 16 politicians, understands the importance of our
 17 visibility, we only ask that you understand the
 18 importance of preserving our history. As much as
 19 people say it shouldn't be in history books, then
 20 how about you give us a house? How about you give
 21 us a space that we shouldn't fight for, we shouldn't
 22 die for, but a fight that, as a community, we're
 23 saying let us have that place that reminds us of
 24 what home looked like, of what love looked like,
 25 when we don't have it in our own.

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1 the trans community and for the gay community. All
 2 of us.

3 MS. CARTER: But I think if we can
 4 remember Venus's life as part of being one of those
 5 bricks during the Stonewall rebellion, right, so she
 6 was the plain black trans woman, but it was her life
 7 that was so vulnerable that it made these people who
 8 felt like they had no voice, who felt like they had
 9 no community, they had no safety, that they said
 10 that what we can use is our slain brothers and
 11 sisters. And that aggravation and frustration of
 12 never getting justice is saying I'm throwing this
 13 brick to honor Venus. I'm throwing this brick to
 14 honor Octavia.

15 And what we've done is we've found a way,
 16 right, to keep persevering with all the obstacles we
 17 had in front of us. We did it. Some people say we
 18 shouldn't access, you know, certain public
 19 establishments. We shouldn't be a part of sports.
 20 We shouldn't be, you know, accepted by the American
 21 traditional family.

22 But here we have this traditional American
 23 family who loves their child, who wants to preserve
 24 their child's legacy, and that is their brick. And
 25 they're taking a brick out of their own house and

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1 MS. ALICEA: I would also like to add that
 2 this would be a sense and a form of justice for
 3 Venus that she did not get when she was alive. And
 4 this is a representation of the entire community of
 5 all trans women that go through her experience. And
 6 if this is granted, this will show girls like us
 7 that we matter, that we value our lives, that we are
 8 loved.

9 Just like as Daniella explained with the
 10 family that is involved, it takes a lot for sisters,
 11 brothers, or straight people who identify as
 12 straight to come out and to defend trans people.
 13 Because we don't even have our husbands really
 14 coming out to defend us or our boyfriends. Yeah,
 15 they support us, but where is the public faces that
 16 they show? That is very important.

17 So showing the world this public
 18 acknowledgment is showing the world that we also
 19 matter no matter what we go through. No matter what
 20 a trans girl's experience is, she should be loved
 21 because everyone goes through different things in
 22 life and everyone should be respected, you know,
 23 somewhat for their life.

24 So it would be a form of justice for House
 25 of Xtravaganza, for the family and for Venus and for

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1 extending it to community and saying here's our
 2 token to you in saying that we want to extend not
 3 only her legacy but our home to so many of you who
 4 need to see this.

5 It's not that we want it; we need it at
 6 this point for literally the ever-growing number of
 7 homeless youth. And Jersey City, again, has been a
 8 champion at that. And so I ask, can you champion
 9 visibility so that we can also be on the right side
 10 of history and knowing that our community and the
 11 pioneers who have put this in our heart knows that
 12 we haven't given up and you haven't forgotten about
 13 them.

14 MS. CHASE: Absolutely.

15 And I would love to add that this is a
 16 story of belonging and I think that I'm just so
 17 honored to be a part of this family. You all are
 18 speaking so eloquently on this matter and about the
 19 legacy of Venus Xtravaganza and largely the legacy
 20 of our community and the large conversation around
 21 the ongoing continuous fight that has been going on
 22 for generations and generations, to not just be
 23 seen, to be heard, but to be understood in a way
 24 that allows people to feel the need to be activated
 25 and to be understanding to larger social human

1 justice issues that are not just only indicative of
 2 black trans women or trans women at large, but to
 3 people that live just within New Jersey and any type
 4 of background and identity.
 5 I think that largely this landmark is a
 6 beacon of hope for the larger New York State --
 7 State of New Jersey for people to really get
 8 activated and understand that this is just a part of
 9 the work. And something as simple as a landmark and
 10 a physical memorabilia or beacon can really kind of
 11 elevate the education and understanding as to why
 12 trans women belong and as to why New Jersey is
 13 pushing the conversation to associate itself with
 14 the progression of pushing the needle forward for
 15 all of these particular issues.
 16 New Jersey -- Newark, New Jersey
 17 particularly -- has a growing crime rate often with
 18 trans women being targeted for hate crimes. And I
 19 think that a part of the barrier is having people to
 20 understand the larger education around who it is
 21 that trans people are and what our existence is in
 22 the community. And I think that this is one step to
 23 create that visibility. This is one step to create
 24 that milestone that allows the world to understand
 25 how truly valued we are as a people and how much New

1 awards. And, again, the only people who were not
 2 directly benefited anything from that were the
 3 subject because, unfortunately, the majority of them
 4 were murdered, right? If they weren't murdered
 5 during the filming of the documentary, they were
 6 murdered shortly after.
 7 And so we've now seen, you know, people
 8 try to play a sense of catch-up with us, right, and
 9 go back to our elders and give them the flowers that
 10 they thought that they would die and never receive.
 11 And so I think that it's a moment in time right now,
 12 too, as Jonovia said, right, where we can turn the
 13 page and say that New Jersey is not a state that
 14 protects all of its residents and say that it only
 15 directly wants to represent a specific demographic.
 16 And I don't believe that's the New Jersey that you
 17 all worked so hard to not only make safer
 18 communities, but better communities for.
 19 And so I'm hoping that you understand that
 20 this is as important to us as it has been to
 21 filmmakers, as it has been in, you know, the
 22 Recording Academy, in the Hollywood Foreign Press
 23 Association. So the big institutions have
 24 acknowledged her, but now we're asking New Jersey
 25 to.

1 Jersey as a state values the identity of trans
 2 people at large and also their families that are
 3 taking care of them, that are being invisibilized
 4 because often there's a narrative in the story that
 5 our families are not there for us.
 6 But clearly in Venus's story, her family,
 7 her brothers, her grandmother are all people that
 8 have been in her life, as well as her extended
 9 family of the House of Xtravaganza --
 10 THE REPORTER: I'm sorry. If you could
 11 slow down a little more.
 12 MS. CHASE: Sorry.
 13 And, also, the family of the House of
 14 Xtravaganza and the larger house ballroom community
 15 has never left the side or never have left Venus's
 16 name and legacy unheard of and unfought for. And so
 17 generations later here we are today to push that
 18 needle forward to speak about not only her as an
 19 individual, but what her presence meant to earth,
 20 you know, to this world, to the State of New Jersey,
 21 to the City of Newark.
 22 MR. ROBERSON: Absolutely.
 23 MS. CARTER: But I think that her life has
 24 shown the level of impact it has, right? Because
 25 this documentary has went on to win a number of

1 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: All right. Thank you
 2 very much for that very passionate testimony. I
 3 really appreciate it.
 4 I guess I just had one question. Kind of
 5 where did this idea come from to have this house be
 6 an individual landmark and where did this idea kind
 7 of germinate and how did you kind of come together
 8 with this campaign and come to us?
 9 MS. ALICEA: It was basically, like, an
 10 idea that we all had, right, together. It was like
 11 a group idea.
 12 MR. ROBERSON: Along with the family.
 13 MS. CHASE: Yeah, along with the family.
 14 I think that, largely, as we looked to tell the
 15 story of Venus Xtravaganza at large and her story
 16 around her family, it's just not enough to just
 17 speak on someone's legacy without showing up and
 18 having some particular action behind the type of
 19 movement that we're trying to move, pushing the
 20 needle forward for not just the LGBTQ community but
 21 particularly the house ballroom community itself.
 22 And so with digging and wanting to tell
 23 her story in a particular way, we just knew that it
 24 was just the right thing to look for a way to really
 25 remember her and for the world to remember her in a

1 much more significant way than just through media
 2 and film, but to have some type of physical
 3 memorabilia that's left behind to be a reminder and
 4 a beacon for the community to look back at and say
 5 that this was not just some other project just to
 6 tell a tale, but this is a project that was looking
 7 to really bring about some type of transformative
 8 justice towards the ongoing pattern of detriment
 9 that the community has often faced.

10 And so I think that this is one of the
 11 many things that we'll be doing to commemorate
 12 Venus's life, but it is one of the biggest and most
 13 significant as it's connected to a lot of the
 14 particular social issues that the house ballroom
 15 community and LGBTQ+ young people are facing every
 16 single day.

17 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: All right. Thank you.

18 MS. O'NEILL: Do any other Commissioners
 19 have any questions or comments?

20 COMMISSIONER GORDON: I have questions but
 21 I think they're for staff, not the applicant.

22 MS. O'NEILL: Sure.

23 COMMISSIONER SAKONG: My only comment is
 24 just to say thank you for that.

25 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: I did actually have one

1 building, you know, in recognition of her
 2 significance, we would need it to be probably the
 3 primary building that she lived in. Was she there
 4 for a significant number of years or do we know
 5 that?

6 MS. CARTER: Yes. She lived there for
 7 most of her life, half of her life, yeah, and that's
 8 the building that we want to landmark. When she was
 9 murdered, the night that she was murdered, she
 10 resided in that home.

11 VICE CHAIRMAN SANDKAMP: Okay. Great. I
 12 mean, not great, but...

13 MS. CHASE: And this is also the home that
 14 she was filmed in in the documentary Paris is
 15 Burning as well, too, which is really a big
 16 significance because she was actually still living
 17 there so...

18 VICE CHAIRMAN SANDKAMP: Great. Well,
 19 thank you for that.

20 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. If there are no other
 21 Commissioner questions or comments, applicant team,
 22 does that conclude your testimony?

23 MR. ROBERSON: Yes.

24 MS. CARTER: Yes.

25 MS. ALICEA: Yes.

1 question. It's for anyone, for staff or for the
 2 applicants. But is there any plan to, you know, add
 3 any sort of plaque or something that kind of
 4 describes her life and her connection to the
 5 building somewhere on the building? Often you'll
 6 see on a historic building, you know, such and such
 7 lived here. Is there any plan for that at some
 8 point?

9 MS. ALICEA: We could definitely work on
 10 that.

11 MS. CHASE: Yeah, absolutely. I think
 12 that's a larger plan. In terms of design, we have
 13 not particularly looked at the design of what that
 14 could be at the moment, but we are, of course,
 15 definitely wanting to make sure there's some public
 16 notice so people understand who and why this space
 17 is a particular landmark to the public.

18 MS. O'NEILL: And, Brian, we can expand a
 19 little bit on that during staff comments as well.

20 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Okay.

21 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. Any other
 22 Commissioners' comments? questions?

23 VICE CHAIRMAN SANDKAMP: I just had a
 24 quick question. I just read that she was only 23
 25 when she died. And if we're going to designate a

1 MS. O'NEILL: Wonderful. All right.
 2 Thank you guys for that.

3 So at this point, we can open this for
 4 public comment. Ken, I know you had raised your
 5 hand earlier. So if there are any members of the
 6 public who would like to speak regarding this
 7 application, you can use the "raise hand" function
 8 at the bottom of the screen to address the
 9 Commission.

10 MS. CARTER: I think we're good, yeah.

11 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. Ken, I see your hand
 12 raised. So just before I promote you, I will just
 13 very briefly go over public comment rules per the
 14 bylaws.

15 So, Ken, you'll be promoted to address the
 16 Commission. We'll have Bridget, our court reporter,
 17 swear you in first, and then you'll have five
 18 minutes to address the Commission. I'll run the
 19 timer. I'll let you know when you have a minute
 20 left. And all questions can be directed to the
 21 Chair, Brian, who can then disseminate them
 22 following the close of public comment. All right?

23 So with that said, I'll go ahead and
 24 promote you. Actually, before I promote you, we
 25 need a motion to open public comment.

1 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: Motion.
 2 COMMISSIONER GARRIGA: Second.
 3 COMMISSIONER GUNTHER: Second.
 4 MS. O'NEILL: All in favor?
 5 (Whereupon, a voice vote was taken; chorus
 6 of "ayes" heard.)
 7 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. Great.
 8 All right, Ken. You should be able to
 9 unmute yourself and turn on your camera.
 10 MR. LAPHAM: Can you hear me now?
 11 MS. O'NEILL: Yes. Do you have the
 12 ability to turn on your camera?
 13 MR. LAPHAM: How do I do that?
 14 MS. O'NEILL: I am not sure. At the
 15 bottom, on the bottom left if you're on a computer,
 16 there should be an item where it will say --
 17 THE REPORTER: I see him, Maggie.
 18 MR. LAPHAM: You see me now.
 19 MS. O'NEILL: Oh, yes. Got it.
 20 K E N L A P H A M, having been duly
 21 sworn, was examined and testified as follows:
 22 THE REPORTER: And if you could state and
 23 spell your full name for the record.
 24 MR. LAPHAM: Ken Lapham, L-A-P-H-A-M.
 25 THE REPORTER: Okay. Thank you.

1 already landmarked on the exterior because of the
 2 district it is in.
 3 Does the landmark status pertaining to
 4 the interior do anything in terms of being able
 5 to work on the home or is that not part of the
 6 issue?
 7 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: We usually don't do like
 8 a question-and-answer session. So I guess you could
 9 ask the questions and then we'll address them after
 10 your testimony.
 11 MR. LAPHAM: Okay.
 12 MS. O'NEILL: I'm taking notes, so we'll
 13 make sure we get them all down.
 14 MR. LAPHAM: Okay. That was a question.
 15 This is a question. This is a residential
 16 district in a residential block. Does the
 17 residential status of the building change any
 18 through landmarking like this? So that's a question
 19 as well.
 20 I don't really have any other questions,
 21 Commissioners. It's pretty straightforward. I did
 22 want to say to the members of the House of
 23 Xtravaganza you're always welcome here. The door's
 24 always open.
 25 MS. ALICEA: Thank you so much. I

1 MS. O'NEILL: Ken, you're welcome to start
 2 your public testimony.
 3 MR. LAPHAM: Great. First, I want to
 4 acknowledge the applicants and the family for
 5 bringing this issue forward. It's a very important
 6 issue that I was actually totally unaware that Venus
 7 had lived in this house despite the fact I've lived
 8 here now 29 years and despite the fact that I've
 9 actually participated in ballroom through HBO's
 10 Legendary Specials which I've been lighting director
 11 for for a number of episodes. So I was that close
 12 to the community without actually knowing that the
 13 walls that I live within were part of her life. So
 14 thanks for bringing that up.
 15 Another thing you guys brought up that I
 16 think we need to punch up a little bit more is that
 17 the Library of Congress has actually now nominated
 18 the film to be kept in the Library of Congress as an
 19 important cultural heritage piece. So that's great
 20 as well.
 21 I more have questions for the Commission
 22 than I have any -- certainly no objections to this.
 23 I support it wholeheartedly. But I was curious
 24 about the ramifications of this kind of landmarking
 25 to the property. And I understand the property's

1 appreciate that very much.
 2 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Thank you, Ken.
 3 MR. LAPHAM: Sure.
 4 MS. O'NEILL: Thank you.
 5 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: So, Maggie, we don't
 6 have any -- oh, I guess we should see if there's
 7 anyone else that wants to testify before we answer
 8 his questions.
 9 MS. O'NEILL: Yeah. All right.
 10 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: It's unusual that
 11 we're answering questions from the owner of the
 12 building.
 13 MS. O'NEILL: I know.
 14 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: It's just different than
 15 we're used to.
 16 MS. O'NEILL: Is there any additional
 17 members of the public present who would like to
 18 speak regarding this application? Please use that
 19 "raise hand" function. If you go to the bottom of
 20 your screen, it should be right near the center. If
 21 you're on the phone, you can press *9.
 22 Okay. Staff sees no additional hands
 23 raised.
 24 So, Brian, do you want to go ahead and
 25 close public comment, or since Ken is the only

1 public comment, just keep it open as we respond?
 2 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Keep it open just in
 3 case. I mean, I think the answers to his questions
 4 are very straightforward.
 5 MS. O'NEILL: Yes.
 6 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Maggie, maybe you want
 7 to answer that because --
 8 MS. O'NEILL: Sure. Yeah.
 9 So, Ken, for your ramifications, like you
 10 noted, this building is already locally designated
 11 within the Hamilton Park Historic District. So
 12 adding additional individual designation on top of
 13 this, it does not -- you're basically maintaining
 14 the exact same restrictions you have on the property
 15 right now. They do not increase as a result of this
 16 individual designation.
 17 So you don't -- you will still be able to
 18 do work to the house with the exact same procedures
 19 that you do now. And the fact that your property is
 20 residential, additional designation does not change
 21 that classification.
 22 MR. LAPHAM: Great.
 23 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. Did that answer your
 24 question or do you have any additional questions?
 25 MR. LAPHAM: No, I think that's the only

1 let's say we're designating this and the period that
 2 Venus lived there is now the period of significance
 3 to the building.
 4 One more theoretical question is let's say
 5 this is a building that -- I don't know what the
 6 exterior looks like off the top of my head. Let's
 7 say it did have formstone like the building on Fifth
 8 Street that we saw first tonight. Something like
 9 that, that was a later substitute material put on
 10 the building and we make it an individual landmark.
 11 Then we may want to think about if someone wanted to
 12 come in and remove a substitute material that was on
 13 the building when Venus lived there.
 14 Does that then have it its own importance
 15 and does it outweigh the period of significance of
 16 when it was in the historic district? So that's why
 17 I asked what the exterior looks like. So maybe
 18 let's just take a look at that.
 19 MS. QUINLAN: Yeah. So --
 20 MS. O'NEILL: Bridget, do you mind marking
 21 this as B-1, exterior photo.
 22 THE REPORTER: How about we mark this B-2
 23 since we already have a B-1.
 24 MS. O'NEILL: I'm sorry. You're right.
 25 THE REPORTER: No problem.

1 questions I have at this juncture.
 2 MS. O'NEILL: Great.
 3 MR. LAPHAM: There was mentioned before
 4 signage on the exterior of the building. I also
 5 support that.
 6 MS. O'NEILL: Great. Okay. Yeah. That
 7 was one of the things -- well, Sara can talk about
 8 it more on staff, but that is something that would
 9 have to be approved by the owner, of course. So,
 10 Ken, if that is something that you and the applicant
 11 team want to pursue in the future, that is just
 12 something that you would come talk to staff about
 13 and we'll be happy to walk you through how to do
 14 that.
 15 MR. LAPHAM: Great.
 16 MS. O'NEILL: Okay.
 17 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: What's the current state
 18 of the building? Do we have photos of the exterior
 19 of the building in the staff report anywhere?
 20 MS. QUINLAN: Yes.
 21 MS. O'NEILL: Brian, before we do this, do
 22 you want to close public comment?
 23 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Well, my question is --
 24 and I wonder -- my question is, like, we've had --
 25 there are a few cultural landmarks in New York. And

1 MS. O'NEILL: I always forget about the
 2 Sunshine.
 3 (Whereupon, exhibit is presented and
 4 marked Exhibit B-2 into evidence.)
 5 MS. QUINLAN: So, Brian, to kind of answer
 6 that question, in writing the statements of
 7 significance, sort of like beefing it up from what
 8 the applicant team did in a description of the
 9 house, I did look kind of back at our files and
 10 historic photos. And based on one from when Venus
 11 lived there, the house is pretty much the same. The
 12 door has been replaced as far as I could tell and
 13 the stoop and the railings and the fence around the
 14 areaway has been restored. Other than that, the
 15 house is essentially in the same condition that it
 16 was as when Venus lived there.
 17 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Okay.
 18 MS. O'NEILL: That being said, though,
 19 from, like, an applicability standpoint -- and Sara
 20 will delve into this in the staff report -- the way
 21 our ordinance goes about, like, designating things,
 22 it relies pretty heavily on all of the guidance from
 23 the Secretary of the Interior and, of course, the
 24 way that you apply the different criterias is
 25 different.

1 Hamilton Park is designated under
2 Criterion A and Criterion C. So the first period of
3 significance, which is the architecture and
4 development of this property, is designated under A
5 and C. This designation is only under Criterion B
6 with that different period of significance.

7 So the way that we would interpret
8 anything that would go about changing the
9 architecture of the building would be interpreted
10 under that Criterion C designation unless you guys
11 are doing it differently in New York, which is
12 entirely a thing.

13 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: I think we do it
14 differently but that's okay.

15 MS. O'NEILL: That's okay.

16 MR. LAPHAM: The door was given to me by
17 Commissioner Amatuzzo, by the way.

18 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Where is he tonight?

19 MS. O'NEILL: He wasn't able to make it.

20 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: He knows this block so
21 well. He would have been a valuable resource
22 tonight.

23 MS. O'NEILL: Yes, and he was upset to
24 miss it.

25 MS. CARTER: And I'm not sure if it's

1 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Now, if this were -- I
2 don't know if we're getting too theoretical, but if
3 we were only designating it for B, then it might be
4 different.

5 MS. O'NEILL: Yes. If Hamilton Park was
6 designated under Criterion B, we would have really
7 delved into this, found some case studies and
8 presented them. But Hamilton Park is not designated
9 under Criterion B.

10 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: And we're also
11 fortunate we have a building that looks like it's in
12 very good condition and very true to its original
13 architecture. So it's a win-win for everybody.

14 COMMISSIONER GORDON: So going back to
15 the question of the actual legal effect and
16 implications of approving this, it's really
17 bestowing an honor and making sort of a historic
18 finding, but not much in terms of practical
19 implications, is that right?

20 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Yes. So I think let's
21 let Sara go through the staff report. We really
22 walked through how we're going to go about doing
23 this.

24 And, also, just before we get too ahead of
25 ourselves, Ken, thank you very much for your

1 important to note that that was also Venus's
2 friend.

3 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Yes. Okay. Let's close
4 public comment.

5 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. All right. We need a
6 motion and a second.

7 COMMISSIONER GUNTHER: Motion to close.

8 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Second.

9 COMMISSIONER SAKONG: Second.

10 MS. O'NEILL: All in favor?

11 (Whereupon, a voice vote was taken; chorus
12 of "ayes" heard.)

13 MS. O'NEILL: All right. Sara will take
14 us into staff comments.

15 COMMISSIONER GORDON: Before you do, so
16 were you saying, Maggie, that the original
17 architecture, whatever it is, based on the 1937 tax
18 photo, that would take precedence over the condition
19 at the time that we're talking about now?

20 MS. O'NEILL: Right. So the way our
21 ordinance reads is if someone wants to make
22 architectural changes, you use the historic
23 documentation of the architecture, right? So in
24 this case we would be referencing that Criterion C
25 designation.

1 testimony. I do have to bump you back down to an
2 attendee now.

3 MR. ROBERSON: I think they took all of us
4 out.

5 MS. O'NEILL: All right. Sara, whenever
6 you're ready.

7 MS. QUINLAN: So tonight's staff comments
8 are going to be a little bit different. First, I'm
9 going to go through briefly just the sort of summary
10 paragraph of these statements that the applicant
11 team primarily prepared to describe Venus's
12 connection to the house, her family's connection to
13 the house and her prominence in this community.

14 Can you see my screen before I dive in?

15 MS. O'NEILL: Yes.

16 MS. QUINLAN: So built in circa 1887, the
17 Venus Pellagatti Xtravaganza House is a late 19th
18 Century townhouse located on a .032 acre parcel at
19 343 and 1/2 Eighth Street in the Hamilton Park
20 Historic District of Jersey City, New Jersey. It's
21 the westernmost house in a book-matched pair of
22 Neo-Grec Italianate eclectic townhouses. And it's a
23 three-story townhouse that was originally a
24 single-family, five-bedroom, four-bathroom home with
25 an entry portico, a two-story bay window, and a

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1 fenced-in front areaway, as well as a backyard.
 2 Based on the family's history of the
 3 house, they believe that their grandparents,
 4 Sestero and Justina Buroso, bought the house in the
 5 late 1920s. These were Venus Pellagatti
 6 Xtravaganza's grandparents. Venus lived there
 7 intermittently from the time of her birth in 1965
 8 through 1977 and then it was her primary residence
 9 from 1977 until the time of her death in 1988.
 10 The first-floor kitchen and her
 11 third-floor bedroom were the primary shooting
 12 locations for the 1990 film Paris is Burning.
 13 Paris is Burning was released to critical acclaim
 14 and numerous awards including the Sundance Grand
 15 Jury Prize and the GLAAD Media Award. And as I
 16 believe Ken had mentioned earlier, in 2016 the
 17 documentary feature was added to the National Film
 18 Registry.
 19 Unfortunately, Venus would not live to see
 20 any of it. She succumbed to violence in December of
 21 1988, a fate for many trans woman into today. 343
 22 and 1/2 Eighth Street in Jersey City is the site of
 23 historic shift in public awareness for the trans --
 24 particularly trans people of color -- ballroom, and
 25 the LGBTQ communities, and its preservation is

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1 We also included the powers and duties
 2 under 345-9, that we have "the power and duty to
 3 recommend to applicable county, state and federal
 4 agencies, where appropriate, recognition of historic
 5 districts and landmark buildings, places and
 6 structures; to carry out such other advisory,
 7 educational and informational functions as will
 8 promote historic preservation in the municipality;
 9 and to review all proposed National Register
 10 nominations in accordance with New Jersey's
 11 certified local government guidelines."
 12 So down to Recommendations and Comments.
 13 We did closely follow the Secretary of the
 14 Interior's and the National Park Service's standards
 15 for designation criteria as that's what the
 16 ordinance heavily relied on.
 17 So following for Criterion B, Criterion B
 18 applies to properties associated with individuals
 19 whose specific contributions to history can be
 20 identified and documented. "Persons significant in
 21 our past" refers to individuals whose activities are
 22 demonstrably important within a local, state, or
 23 national historic context. The criterion is
 24 generally restricted to those properties that
 25 illustrate, rather than commemorate, a person's

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1 critical for future generations as few sites of this
 2 magnitude remain in this area.
 3 The house itself is in good condition and,
 4 as we stated before, has undergone relatively few
 5 exterior alterations since its construction and
 6 since Venus resided there.
 7 They did send us a few photos that show
 8 Venus in the house, specifically those that are
 9 screenshots from the documentary. I can put a
 10 couple of those up. Yes, one of the images from
 11 Paris is Burning, that was in the bedroom in the
 12 house.
 13 Okay. So now I will jump into the staff
 14 report. Okay. So outside of what we typically
 15 review our staff reports under, we changed a little
 16 bit of some of the standards in here. And for this
 17 one we put under our jurisdiction regarding the
 18 property per 345-30, procedure for nominating sites,
 19 landmarks, and districts for local designation.
 20 "Any interested party may nominate a site, landmark
 21 or district for local designation. The nomination
 22 may originate at either the Historic Preservation
 23 Commission, the Planning Board or City Council;
 24 however, in any case, it shall be reviewed by all of
 25 these bodies."

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1 important achievements.
 2 And under Criterion B there are three
 3 steps to determining whether a property is
 4 significant: One, the significance of the
 5 individual, their association with the property, and
 6 the comparison to related properties.
 7 Per the bulletin under significance of the
 8 individual, it must be shown that the person gained
 9 importance within his or her profession or group.
 10 And as we had beautifully stated in the testimony
 11 before, Venus was well known within the ball culture
 12 and the African-American, Latino, gay and
 13 transgender communities in Jersey City and New York
 14 City.
 15 Venus attended and competed in balls and
 16 clubs throughout New York City and brought national
 17 prominence to this community through her appearance
 18 in the critically acclaimed 1990 documentary Paris
 19 is Burning. Her interviews in the film created a
 20 legacy in the community and popular culture that
 21 continued on past her tragic death in 1988.
 22 In her association with the property, the
 23 individual's association with the property must be
 24 documented by accepted methods of historical or
 25 archeological research, including written or oral

1 history. Through the exhaustive research of the
2 applicant team, Venus's association with the
3 property and its pivotal role, her life is well
4 documented. Venus moved into 343 and 1/2 Eighth
5 Street full time to live with her grandmother, who
6 was fully supportive of Venus's desire to pursue her
7 true identity.

8 While living at the property, Venus and
9 her grandmother would attend balls. And during one
10 competition in New York City, they met the director
11 of Paris is Burning, Jennie Livingston, and later
12 Jennie conducted Venus's interviews for the
13 documentary in her bedroom and in the kitchen at the
14 property.

15 And in comparison to related properties,
16 properties associated with an individual's formative
17 or later years may also qualify if it can be
18 demonstrated that the person's activities during
19 this period were historically significant.

20 Venus's decision to move into her
21 grandmother's house full time enabled her to pursue
22 her true identity and she would frequently invite
23 members of the ballroom community to visit or stay
24 at her grandmother's house. 343 and 1/2 Eighth
25 Street is also where she filmed her Paris is Burning

1 Bergen in 2015. And when I say "we," I do not mean
2 me and Sara.

3 MS. QUINLAN: Brian and Dan.

4 COMMISSIONER GORDON: Does anyone remember
5 an individual designation like this for a person of
6 historical significance?

7 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: No. I think the only
8 thing that's really comparable is, like, maybe the
9 Apple Tree House.

10 MS. O'NEILL: Yeah, I think that would be
11 correct.

12 VICE CHAIRMAN SANDKAMP: There's a house
13 in Lafayette that we were going to designate
14 associated with a significant African-American. I
15 think she was a nurse or --

16 MS. O'NEILL: Oh, yes, I know which one
17 you're referring to.

18 VICE CHAIRMAN SANDKAMP: Yeah.

19 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: And when we wrote
20 the designation for the embankment, we also
21 acknowledged the architect of record for the
22 structure and that was a big part of the State
23 considering it a landmark as well.

24 Sorry, Tony, I didn't mean to cut you off
25 if you had more there.

1 interviews, which best represents her historic
2 contributions to ball culture and the
3 African-American, Latino, gay, and transgender
4 communities in Jersey City and New York.

5 After reviewing the documents and the
6 statement of significance provided by the
7 applicant team, HPC staff strongly recommends that
8 the HPC accepts this application for local
9 designation and make a recommendation to the Jersey
10 City Planning Board for approval. HPC staff
11 believes that this property is significant not only
12 on a local level, but also on a state and federal
13 level and should be recognized as a significant site
14 representative of marginalized and underrepresented
15 histories.

16 MS. O'NEILL: Are there any Commissioner
17 questions for staff?

18 COMMISSIONER GORDON: Yes. I don't think
19 I've ever seen one of these in my time on the HPC.
20 Do these ever come up?

21 MS. O'NEILL: You haven't. This is the
22 first one since you've been on the Board.

23 COMMISSIONER GORDON: When is the last
24 time one of these was filed?

25 MS. O'NEILL: When we designated West

1 VICE CHAIRMAN SANDKAMP: No, I don't. No,
2 that was it.

3 Have we designated anything for Mayor
4 Hague? I don't know if we've designated anything
5 for Hague. No?

6 MS. O'NEILL: No. So, Robert, your answer
7 is not very often.

8 COMMISSIONER GORDON: I'm just looking at
9 what we need to evaluate for this application and I
10 think from the staff memo, numbers 2 and 3 are very
11 clear. And I think for any application like this,
12 probably one of the major challenges would be
13 considering the significance of the individual and
14 I'm just wondering how one would go about evaluating
15 that.

16 I mean, in this case, as was mentioned, we
17 had impassioned testimony about that specific issue,
18 but it's a hard thing to kind of put a number on, so
19 to speak. I'm just looking at -- it says -- and,
20 also, it says "the criterion is restricted to
21 properties that illustrate rather than commemorate a
22 person's important achievements."

23 I'm just thinking out loud here, but,
24 Sara, would you say that is applicable here because
25 Venus's documentary that really put her on the map

1 was partially filmed at the house?

2 MS. QUINLAN: Yes. And the most common
3 images that come up when you research her are these
4 images from the documentary of her in her bedroom.
5 And she specifically moved into this house and lived
6 in this bedroom because it's where she could be
7 herself, which was an important part of her
8 connection to this community obviously.

9 COMMISSIONER GORDON: That's helpful to
10 me. Thank you.

11 And just one more question since there was
12 some discussion about potentially adding signage
13 with the homeowner's consent.

14 Would the HPC need to be involved in
15 approving any such signage?

16 MS. O'NEILL: We would. I mean,
17 depending on the extent of the signage, that is
18 likely something that could be done at the staff
19 level.

20 COMMISSIONER GORDON: Very good. That's
21 it for me. Thanks.

22 MS. O'NEILL: Do any other Commissioners
23 have any questions?

24 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: I don't. I just want to
25 say this was very laid out. So thank you, Sara.

1 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Cronin?

2 COMMISSIONER CRONIN: Aye.

3 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Gordon?

4 COMMISSIONER GORDON: Aye.

5 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Amatzuzzo is
6 absent. Commissioner Stango is absent.

7 Vice Chair Sandkamp?

8 VICE CHAIRMAN SANDKAMP: Aye.

9 MS. O'NEILL: And Chairman Blazak?

10 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: A very happy aye and I
11 hope we have more of these for all sorts of
12 individuals.

13 MS. O'NEILL: Thank you. All right.
14 There are nine votes in favor, no nays, and no
15 abstentions. The motion is made to recommend this
16 for local designation to the Jersey City Planning
17 Board.

18 COMMISSIONER CRONIN: Congratulations.

19 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Thank you, all.

20 MS. O'NEILL: Congratulations.

21 MS. CARTER: Thank you.

22 MS. O'NEILL: We'll be in touch on the
23 next step, guys.

24 MR. ROBERSON: That was good.

25 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Thank you.

1 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: Yes. Much
2 appreciated.

3 MS. QUINLAN: You're welcome.

4 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: All right. So I guess
5 the only thing left is to take an action. So I
6 think this has been -- you know, you've taken us
7 through this. I think it meets all of these
8 Criteria 1, 2 and 3, so I'm prepared to make a
9 motion to recommend this to the Planning Board.

10 COMMISSIONER LEWIS: Second.

11 COMMISSIONER CRONIN: Second.

12 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. We have Commissioner
13 Blazak making a motion and Commissioner Lewis making
14 a second. I will go through on a roll call vote.

15 Commissioner Gucciardo?

16 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: Aye.

17 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Garriga?

18 COMMISSIONER GARRIGA: Aye.

19 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Gunther?

20 COMMISSIONER GUNTHER: Aye.

21 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Lewis?

22 COMMISSIONER LEWIS: Aye.

23 MS. O'NEILL: Commissioner Sakong?

24 COMMISSIONER SAKONG: Aye. I consider it
25 a privilege to be able to vote aye.

1 MS. O'NEILL: Have a great night, guys.

2 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Keep up the good work.

3 MS. CHASE: Thank you. Have a great one.

4 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Okay.

5 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: That was fun.

6 MS. O'NEILL: All right. Not much else
7 that's that much fun on our agendas, right, guys?

8 COMMISSIONER SAKONG: At least we had fun
9 for once.

10 MS. O'NEILL: I know. I agree.

11 MS. QUINLAN: The joy of recommending
12 something to City Council.

13 MS. O'NEILL: Robert, that is actually the
14 answer to that, is how -- determining significance
15 for the individual, that is quite literally the role
16 of the HPC. So we get to determine what is
17 significant.

18 COMMISSIONER GORDON: I had never heard of
19 the documentary or the individual, but I was won
20 over.

21 MS. O'NEILL: I strongly recommend to
22 watch.

23 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: It's on HBO Max if you
24 want to watch it.

25 MS. O'NEILL: Okay. Continuing on on the

1 agenda. Tabled cases, I have nothing Jewett Avenue.
 2 We are anticipating 591 Montgomery to come back in
 3 March. Nothing for French American. Nothing for
 4 Sugartown. Nothing for Erie Street. Nothing for
 5 289.
 6 COMMISSIONER SAKONG: Ninety-nine
 7 Montgomery Street, that's next to the Jones
 8 building?
 9 MS. O'NEILL: Yes. So actually two quick
 10 things on 591. Obviously we have a bunch of new
 11 Commissioners who have not been on since that was
 12 last heard. I will provide the transcript for that
 13 so you guys can review it and participate in that.
 14 Because it's a larger application, like in the past,
 15 if anyone wants hard copy plans, let me know. I can
 16 get you hard copy plans and drop them off to you
 17 just like the old days.
 18 All right. And, actually, I'll make a
 19 note to send out the transcript sooner rather than
 20 later so that if there are any questions, we can
 21 address them.
 22 COMMISSIONER GORDON: Maggie, can I ask
 23 for another update on Subia? Because they still
 24 have that very ugly, incomplete signage up and I'd
 25 like to see it resolved.

1 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: It's a chicken or the
 2 egg situation.
 3 MS. O'NEILL: Yeah. Yeah. All right.
 4 That being said, we have no resolutions to
 5 introduce --
 6 VICE CHAIR SANDKAMP: Just a two-second
 7 demo subcommittee, demo ordinance subcommittee.
 8 Paul and I were able to meet. We weren't able to
 9 meet with Cory, but we did do a walk-around up in
 10 his district. We looked at the Manhattan Avenue
 11 project, the one that was selectively demoed by
 12 taking off the facade elements. And I think we have
 13 a good idea of issues that are, you know, inherent
 14 in the current ordinance and a direction, but we're
 15 going to try and meet in the next month and come
 16 back and give you guys a good report at our next
 17 meeting.
 18 MS. O'NEILL: Great. Thanks, guys. I
 19 appreciate that.
 20 Okay. We have no resolutions to introduce
 21 or discuss, no resolutions to memorialize, and we do
 22 not need an executive session. So I believe that
 23 just leaves us with adjournment.
 24 COMMISSIONER GUCCIARDO: Motion to
 25 adjourn.

1 MS. O'NEILL: Yes. The answer we got from
 2 them was that they had to finish the ventilation
 3 stuff before they touched the sign. That was not a
 4 sufficient answer for me.
 5 COMMISSIONER GORDON: No.
 6 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: So we're working with
 7 zoning to figure something out.
 8 COMMISSIONER GORDON: That sign that's
 9 currently there, they did that without any kind of
 10 approval, right?
 11 MS. O'NEILL: Correct. Yes.
 12 COMMISSIONER GORDON: Yeah.
 13 MS. O'NEILL: But you need to have a sign
 14 for a business in Jersey City, so we can't just have
 15 them take it down because then we'd be causing them
 16 another zoning violation. But I am working on the
 17 replacement sign timing with the zoning officer. If
 18 we have to --
 19 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: But wait a minute. If
 20 there's no signage for your building, that's a
 21 zoning violation?
 22 MS. O'NEILL: Yes.
 23 CHAIRMAN BLAZAK: Even if you put up a
 24 sign without any HPC approvals? That's interesting.
 25 MS. O'NEILL: I don't pretend to --

1 COMMISSIONER CRONIN: Second.
 2 MS. O'NEILL: All in favor?
 3 (Whereupon, a voice vote was taken; chorus
 4 of "ayes" heard.)
 5 MS. O'NEILL: It is 9:52.
 6 (Whereupon, the hearing was adjourned at
 7 9:52 p.m.)
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CERTIFICATE

I, BRIDGET LOMBARDOZZI, Notary Public and Certified Shorthand Reporter of the State of New Jersey, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and accurate transcript of the testimony as taken stenographically remotely by and before me at the time, place and the date hereinbefore set forth.

I DO FURTHER CERTIFY that I am neither a relative nor employee nor attorney nor counsel of any of the parties to this action, and that I am neither a relative nor employee of such attorney or counsel, and that I am not financially interested in the action.

BRIDGET LOMBARDOZZI,
Certified Shorthand Reporter
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