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**Agenda**

1. **Issue #1 - Presentation by Department of City Planning  
Land Use Application N210406 ZRY - Citywide Hotels Text Amendment**
  2. **Issue #2 – Presentation by Sander Hicks  
Co-Living Development at 369 51st Street**
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**Presentation by Department of City Planning  
Land Use Application N210406 ZRY - Citywide Hotels Text Amendment**

Amy Jin – Planner, DCP Brooklyn Office  
Barry Dinerstein – DCP Housing and Economic Development  
Alex Placas – DCP Housing and Economic Development  
Anthony Grande – DCP Brooklyn Office

Background

1. Proposed zoning text amendment will create a new special permit process for hotel development in commercial and manufacturing districts.
2. Intended to ensure hotels do not negatively affect surrounding area.
3. Tourism economy important for city. By 2019, city tourism has seen record growth and high level reached with 67M visitors in 2019. In contrast, limited hotel rooms in city, supply from 2009-2019 only grew from 80,000 to 128,000 rooms. Occupancy rate reached 87%, highest in US. Demand driven by international and domestic travelers – shopping and sightseeing in city.
4. In 2018, City Council adopted special permits for hotels in M1 districts. Originally, one of the few areas where hotels could be built as of right, however, community push-back, like in Sunset Park, demanded more stringent review of new hotels. Other special districts have limited hotels on a case by case basis. DCP sees this as an inconsistent framework, need to streamline rules to know what can and cannot be built.
5. Hotels create land use conflicts in light manufacturing and commercial districts. Examples of recent hotels built show construction across from cemeteries, next to heavy manufacturing uses, unsafe planning with parking fronting sidewalks, unsafe pedestrian environment with entries deep into lot across parking lot.
6. Special permit will require hotel developers to apply for site plan approval to locate in high density commercial, mixed use and M1/residential zones. Special permit findings shall require hotel use to not impair future use and development of the surrounding area.
7. Community Board has a chance to review and comment via ULURP process. Ultimate decision by City Council.
8. Pandemic's impact on hotel industry severe. 146 hotels out of 705 closed, approximately 42,000 rooms currently not in use. Expectation is 10,000 of those rooms may never come back. 96.3% of room closures were in Manhattan. 197,000 jobs lost in leisure and hospitality industries.
9. DCP expects development to return to pre-pandemic levels. DCP also does not expect many developers will be looking to apply for special permits in Sunset Park going forward.
10. Areas applicable are within 100' of expressway entry/exit onramp, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave and 5<sup>th</sup> Ave commercial overlay zones, C8-2 automobile use zoning at Park Circle/Coney Island Ave.

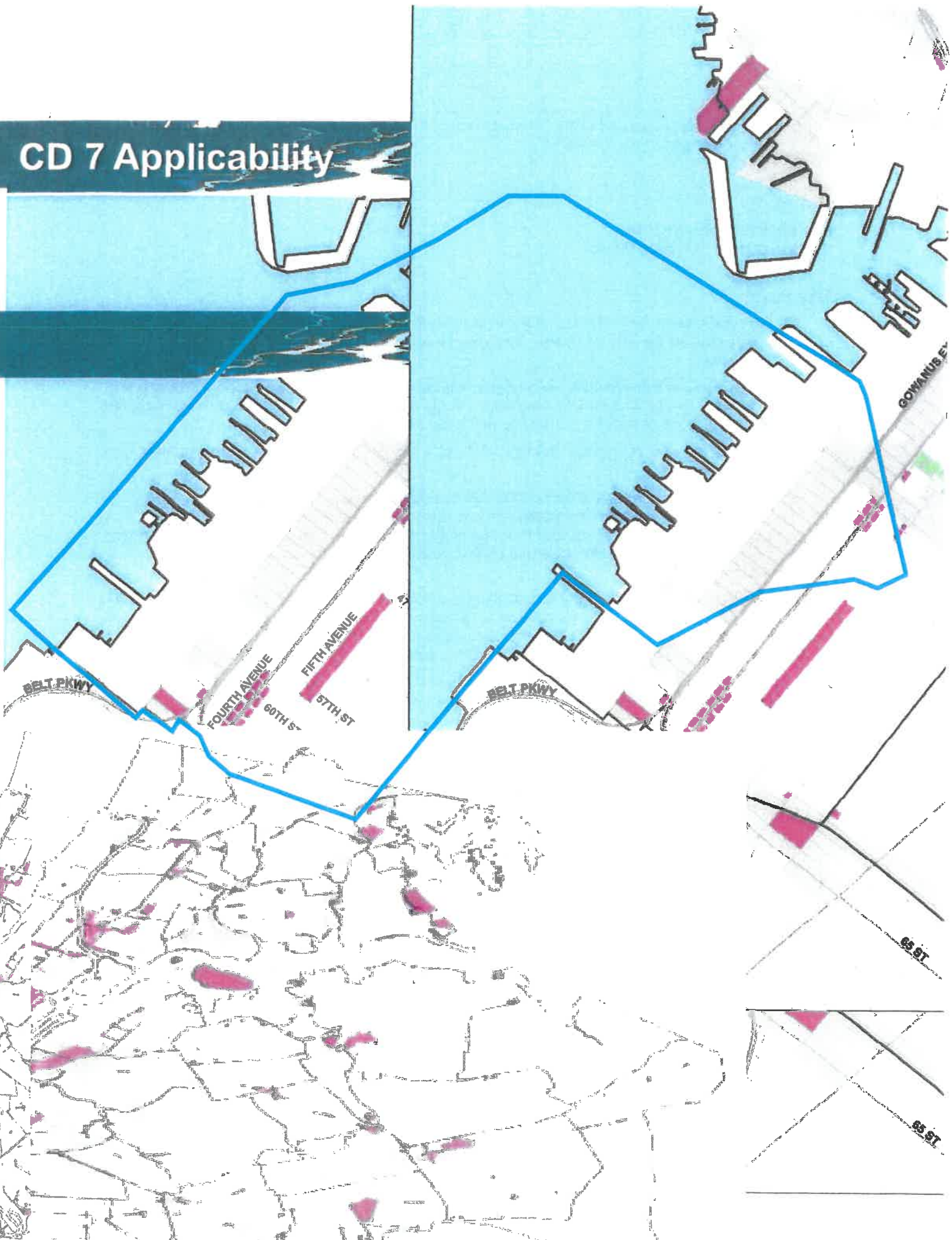
## Discussion

1. John Fontillas noted CB7 has had many issues with hotels in our manufacturing districts, particularly their conversion to homeless shelters. City agencies have ignored the board's concerns. DCP said they have heard community concerns across the city, and this special permit process is a means to more strictly regulate hotels in neighborhoods. DCP is not anti-hotel because of their importance to the city's economy. However, they agree there should be more scrutiny for hotels. Special permit process will allow CB7 ability to review application through ULURP. Time to ask developers questions, and to take a public vote yea or nay. CPC and City Council will take CB recommendations seriously.
2. Jeremy Laufer asked if Special Permit review will apply if hotel is built for the homeless? DCP said purpose built shelters will always have community notice provisions, but if specifically built as a shelter, they will not be part of this process since they are not approved through ULURP.
3. Joan Botti asked for description of locations where the Special Permit will be enacted for hotels. DCP presented map showing commercial districts in pink where permit will be enacted: 5<sup>th</sup> Ave, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave, blocks south of Prospect Expressway on 4<sup>th</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Aves, Coney Island Ave, Park Circle.

DCP noted that 5<sup>th</sup> Ave has C4 zoning, which provides a lot of development rights, and larger buildings could be assembled for hotel use. The overlay districts shown as dotted pink areas along 4th Ave and 5th Ave have limited commercial development rights. Hotels may be possible on these sites, but they would be smaller and less desirable.

4. John Santore asked DCP to confirm if the presumption is strong continued hotel growth, why couldn't hotel developers incentivize affordable housing? 42,000 closed rooms seems at odds with the community's housing needs. DCP stated that the expectation is the special permit will allow fewer rooms to be built. They do not expect a lot of applications in the district. Of the 42,000 closed rooms, they believe 25% will never reopen as hotels. Their question is what will happens to those properties, which are mostly in Manhattan? They believe they will be repurposed for residential. However, visitor demand for hotels remains high and hotel/ancillary industries are supported by hotel development. Tourism pays substantial taxes to government. DCP trying to balance more control over hotel development, but still supportive of tourism growth.
5. Sandra Lopez – 10 year resident, raising family in a small apartment in Sunset Park. She believes hotels are not as important as schools. 39<sup>th</sup> St hotels not save places, sidewalks are blocked by cars, dangerous to walk nearby. Sunset Park needs other uses than hotels,
6. Javier Leon – 8 year resident, Sunset Park family with kids. Community should have the opportunity to decide what comes into neighborhood. We have enough hotels, and many have closed and turned into homeless shelters. We need permanent housing, not temporary hotels, so residents can stay in Sunset Park.
7. Beyra Reyes –single mom with 4 kids, 13 year resident. It is getting more and more difficult to live here, paying \$1500 rent/month, has to rent a room in her apartment to pay rent, she works as a home cleaner for many hours a week to pay bills. Instead of hotels, why can we not make more housing? Community needs to be part of the process making decisions, neighborhoods should decide how land should be used.
8. Guadalupe Amador – 20 year resident, rents are outrageous, every day gets harder to live in Sunset Park. She works in restaurant many hours to make ends meet. We don't need more hotels, we need more affordable housing. Our opinions count, we don't want to be displaced, we don't want to live anywhere else.
9. Emmitt Mendoza-Gaspar – are hotels allowed in the pink areas now? Yes, in the pink areas, hotels can be built as of right. If proposal goes forward, pink areas will require ULURP review action. Areas in gray were M1 manufacturing areas made subject to special permit two years ago. Expectation is not many applications will proceed if this special permit is enacted

# CD 7 Applicability



10. John Fontillas proposed that the Committee hold off the vote and present the action to the full Board at the next meeting for consideration.

**Presentation by Sander Hicks**  
**369 51<sup>st</sup> Street – Co-Living Project**

Background

1. For transparency, new Land Use policy to bring development proposals to Committee prior to any private discussions with the Board. This was the earliest date that Sander Hicks could present to committee.
2. Sander Hicks is a Sunset Park resident and writer/researcher on affordable housing. Housing is a topic very close to his experience and he is looking for a way to develop affordable housing beyond the city's typical institutional procedures which he believes are inadequate.
3. He is the owner of Zen Space Makers on 35th St, a woodworking shop that creates loft beds for city apartments.
4. He would like to purchase 369 51st St from a friend and create a "Co-Living" housing project. Residents would have their own bedroom, but shared access to a bath and to a large living room/kitchen. His project will have 6 private rooms per floor, five floors total for housing. A similar housing concept has been popularized in NYC, Seattle and San Francisco by the company Common.
5. He would also like to develop a socially-beneficial commercial use on the ground floor, modeled on the Park Slope Food Coop. He believes a non-corporate food/grocery tenant may be welcome in the community. Hicks previously ran a union, living wage, fair trade coffee house in Ditmas Park. He wants something on the ground floor that incubates social change and community awareness.
6. Per zoning, he can build 6 floors, up to 65' in this R7A, C2-4 commercial overlay zone. He believes if the storefront occupied the entire lot, then he could build the residential floors to occupy 80% of the lot. Effectively, he is looking to add three stories to the existing three story building.
7. He needs to raise \$4.7M through crowdfunding. He has spoken with INS Construction and Ray Acevedo, local contractors, about participating in the project.
8. He would like to cultivate a communal sense of living in the project, foster community engagement and volunteer spirit.

Discussion

1. Pat Ruiz – community groceries in Sunset Park are typically family run, not corporate. It might be more appropriate for Hicks to open a grocery store rather than a co-living development. Affordable housing is more important and it's unclear if the target market for this project are current Sunset Park families or non-resident populations.
2. Joan Botti – are you really proceeding with the project, would like to see the rendering. Image shown to Board is attached.
3. Nick Azadian – pandering to board members prior to this presentation is unacceptable, presentation to Board members should be in public. Co-living sounds like single room occupancy, Sunset Park needs larger apartments for families instead. The project sounds similar to WeWork's WeLive concept, which targeted millennials and high net worth individuals. This concept was not successful. Proposed project may be out of size and character with neighborhood, proposed rents may be too much for neighborhood, may not pass muster with affordability and sustainability goals.

Sunset Park really needs larger apartments, this is the true community need, Implementation of this project will raise questions, because it doesn't seem to relate to the community's attitude towards housing.

Hicks stated that this project will not be like WeLive. Co-living is not like an SRO, it is more beneficial in that people are not siloed from each other, shared living spaces creates a sense of community. He would like it to be as inviting and universal as possible.

He believes his project is actually as-of-right per zoning. The reason why he came before the board was to discuss the need for a Dept of Buildings variance for windows in bedrooms.

4. John Santore – everyone should take a look at the proposal, there is interesting and creative thinking in the proposal regarding housing. Wanted confirmation about average rents – proposal notes that cost/room is approximately \$1600 per Common, but this number may be difficult for many Sunset Park residents to pay. It would be most helpful if Hicks could work with the Housing Committee and explain where the costs and profit potentials may be in this proposal. Many residents would like to learn about the difficulties in putting together affordable housing, this might be an opportunity to gain greater understanding, both of the community and for residents of development.
5. Katie Walsh – does current zoning allow for 6 floors? Yes, 6 floors in 65' is possible as of right. Only issue is the DOB variance on bedroom windows.
6. Amy Jin – R7A is 4.0 FAR, 4.6 if Inclusionary Housing is added, commercial overlay allows 1 FAR on ground floor. If commercial is fully built out, then upper levels can be built out to 80% of lot. Also programs like ARES/senior housing may allow for additional floor area or bulk changes.
7. Nick Azadian – most Sunset Park buildings do not have central air, lot line windows are not permissible. Perhaps Hicks should speak with an affordable housing developer like Fifth Ave Committee to understand the rigid requirements to meet low 40-60% AMI affordability. CB7 would fully support efforts to create affordable housing, but it is very difficult to make this work given the funding restrictions and cost of land and construction. If Hicks could speak with others who are trying to do the same thing, the community may benefit from the expanded knowledge.
8. Sander Hicks – very helpful discussion tonight. Perhaps a compromise with a couple of floors with larger family units blended with the co-living proposal may make sense. He certainly doesn't want to be a condo developer, not what he is trying to do. He wants to put together something different that he and the community can support.



369 51st Street, Brooklyn  
Existing Building

**N.** **NEW BUILDING**

- Mixed use property
- 6 stories - zoning allows elevation of 65'
- 30 units - shared spaces and individual bedrooms
- Gross Floor Area of 10,000 sq ft



369 51st Street, Brooklyn  
Proposed Building

