11 IN ATTENDANCE: JUSTIN YU (D-NEW YORK)

LINDA LIN (D-QUEENS)

JOHN ROBERT (D-BRONX)

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\begin{gathered}
\text { CITY OF NEW YORK } \\
\text { 2012-2013 DISTRICTING COMMISSION } \\
\text { PUBLIC MEETING } \\
\text { New Dorp High School } \\
465 \text { New Dorp Lane } \\
\text { Staten Island, New York } 10305 \\
\text { October 9, } 2012 \\
\text { 5:30 P.M. }
\end{gathered}
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BENITO ROMANO, Chairperson
THADDEUS HACKWORTH, General Counsel
CARL HUM - Executive director

JAMILA PONTON BRAGG (D-NEW YORK)

GLORIA CARVAJAL WOLFE (R-NEW YORK)
ROXANNE J. PERSAUD (D-KINGS)
OSCAR ODOM, III (R-KINGS)
SCOTT CERULLO (R-RICHMOND)
KAMILLAH M. HANKS (I-RICHMOND)
MARC WURZEL (R-NEW YORK)
ROBERT HART (D-RICHMOND)

1
2 S PE A K ER S:
3 William Stanford, Jr.
4 Michael Morrell
5 Edward Malone
6 Joseph Granello
7 Richard Verardi
8 Patrick Donegan
9 Brandon Patterson

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## DISTRICT COMMISSION HEARINGS

MR. ROMANO: Good evening and thank you all for coming today. This is the second round of New York City Districting and Commission public hearing.

My name is Benito Romano. I'm the chair of the New York City District and Commission. On behalf of the Commission I want to thank New Dorp High School for hosting us here tonight.

We have only a handful of speakers pre-registered, but we do want to hear from everyone who signed up and for those of you who haven't signed up and want to speak, please see the staff at the door and they will sign you up so you can speak. If you require translation for your testimony, please let the staff at the registration desk know and we will provide a translator before hearing your testimony.

I want to just make a few

## DISTRICT COMMISSION HEARINGS

 observations. At the beginning of this month the Commission advertised in community and ethic newspapers announcing the Commission's public hearing schedules.An e-mail blast was sent to over 5,500 individuals, various advocacy groups helped spread the word throughout their individual network and the hearing schedule was publicized on our Facebook and Twitter page.

We will continue to find other ways to maximize community participation and we welcome your ideas.

Tonight represents the second round of public hearings that the Commission will conduct throughout the city.

Over 450 attended our first round of hearings in late August and the Commission heard from more than 131 individuals. Since then the

## DISTRICT COMMISSION HEARINGS

Commission has released a preliminary draft Council district plan on September 4th that adjusted the current Council lines for population proportionality because in the last ten years many Council districts either increased or decreased in population creating significant deviation from the ideal Council district for the population of 160,710.

This preliminary draft plan was also posted on the Commission's website www.NYC.gov/districting. It was also displayed in public areas such as Brooklyn's Borough Hall, the Queen's Library and the District Commission offices Downtown, in Downtown Manhattan. It's also linked to other websites such as the website for New York City Public Library.

On the same day we released our preliminary plan, the Commission also launched an online mapping tool to

## DISTRICT COMMISSION HEARINGS

allow the public to draw Council district maps for the Commission's consideration.

The Commission's staff also opened the resource room at the Commission's offices in lower Manhattan.

The resource room is available for those without access to computer terminals who wish to draw and submit a map to the Commission's or for those wishing to receive one-on-one assistance with map drawing as the resource room is staffed by Justin Bassett, our mapping associate.

The room is by appointment only, but it does operate well past normal business hours so it should be readily accessible.

The Commission has received a few maps so far. We encourage you to explore the mapping tool available on our website.

We will also be able to see

## DISTRICT COMMISSION HEARINGS

 some of the maps submitted by other members of the public.Finally, the Commission also launched a speaker's bureau where an organization or group can request a staff member to talk about the decennial districting process.

So far the speaker's bureau has addressed a number of civic organizations, community boards and even a grade school class.

If there is anyone wishing to have a speaker's bureau attend to address their group or organization, please see one of our representatives at the desk at the back of the room.

The Commission is eager to hear tonight's testimony and comments on the preliminary draft plan.

Be assured the draft is preliminary. We will listen and take in your comments and hope that the next variation of the map will reflect those comments.

## DISTRICT COMMISSION HEARINGS

After tonight's hearing, and the others in the second round of hearing, the Commission will consider the comments during its next scheduled public meeting on October 18th.

At that meeting the Commission will direct the staff to revise the preliminary district plan in response to the comments received during the second round.

Then at the Commission's public meeting on October 30th, a revised plan reflecting the comments received will be presented and the Commission will decide whether to adopt that plan.

If the Commission adopts the plan, it will then be delivered to the City Council for its inspection and approval by November 5th.

According to the city charter, by November 26th, the City Council must either adopt the revised

## DISTRICT COMMISSION HEARINGS

district plan at which point the plan will then be filed with the city clerk or the Council can object and revise the district plan at which point the plan would be returned to the Commission with the Council's comments and concerns.

If the Council takes neither action, it will be deemed adopted. If the counsel objects to the revised plan, the Commission will then have until January 5, 2013 to create a revised plan.

This will then trigger a new set of public hearings to receive comments and feedback on that revised plan. The commission will then have until March 5th to create, adopt and submit a final plan to the City Clerk and to the U.S. Department of Justice for pre-clearance under the Voting Rights Act.

This process is further described in a flow chart that's

## DISTRICT COMMISSION HEARINGS

available for you here tonight and as it was in our first round of hearings. Other handouts that are available include a copy of the preliminary draft map and a large map of Staten Island with the preliminary draft map lines and a listing of public participation tools that are available.

Let me review again, I know
I've done this before, it's worth noting that there are certain factors in the law that obligates the Commission to consider during the districting process.

These include that the
difference in population between the least populus and most populus district shall not exceed ten percent of the average population for all districts.

Each district must maintain
fair and effective representation of the racial and language minority

## DISTRICT COMMISSION HEARINGS

 group in New York City. Each district should keep neighborhood and communities with established ties of common interest and associations intact.Each district must be compact and the districts must be contiguous. We must keep districts within boroughs and we must avoid diminishing the effective representation of voters.

I want to bring to your
attention our website
www. NYC.gov/districting. This site
is the federal repository of all documents and videos related to the Districting Commission.

It also contains a complete schedule of our public hearings, all the documents and maps submitted to the commission, our online mapping tool and portal where you can pre-register for all the hearings and be added to our mailing list.

## DISTRICT COMMISSION HEARINGS

I hope you will visit the site and let us know how it could be made more effective and informative.

One final note, we have only a handful of speakers tonight, but we have time limited nonetheless. Each of you will be given three minutes, which isn't very long.

Keep in mind though, we have assembled a substantial amount of data from the U.S. census and elsewhere. We also will take and welcome written submissions if you want to offer them to the Commission.

The data that we have will be important to our decision, but these hearings provide critical input as well.

Tell us about your neighborhoods, where are the natural boundaries as you see them. We really don't know that and we need to hear it from you.

That concludes my opening

## DISTRICT COMMISSION HEARINGS

remarks. I now am going to ask the commission members to introduce themselves beginning at the far left. MS. LIN: Linda Lin from Queens.

MR. ODOM: Oscar Odom, III, Brooklyn.

MS. PERSAUD: Roxane Persaud, Brooklyn.

MR. YU: Justin Yu, Manhattan. MR. ROBERT: John Robert, Bronx.

MS. WOLFE: Gloria Carvajal Wolfe, Manhattan.

MR. ROMANO: Benito Romano from
Manhattan.
MR. HUM: Carl Hum.
MS. BRAGG: Jamila Ponton
Bragg, Manhattan.
MR. CERULLO: Scott Cerullo, Staten Island.

MR. HART: Rob Hart, Staten Island.

MS. HANKS: Kamillah Hanks,

## DISTRICT COMMISSION HEARINGS

Staten Island.
MR. HACKWORTH: And I'm
Thaddeus Hackworth staff (in
audible).
Commission members, our first speaker will be William Stanford, Jr.

MR. STANFORD: A quick
reminder, you shouldn't tell us you're ending these public hearings at nine and then disregard those who pre-registered, pre-registered speakers, which is exactly what you did to me last Tuesday.

I'm get here at 8:10 and then $I$
learn that public hearing ended and it's only 7:30. Did you forget I pre-registered? Did it ever -- I guess you forgot that part.

You could have waited until nine, even if it meant putting me last on line, but did you do that? No. Therefore, you didn't practice what you preach.

Therefore, the motion failed

## DISTRICT COMMISSION HEARINGS

unanimously. If you can't accommodate the pre-registered
speakers before 9:00 p.m., before 9:01, why the hell are you here? Why the hell do you bother holding public hearings to begin with?

Can you answer? Can anybody answer that for me? No, you can't. You can't answer. You can't tell me why you mistreated me in my borough last Tuesday either.

You can't show accountability, reliability, responsibility for your actions. You can't show accountability for your actions. It's outrageous.

You're all older than me and you can't take responsibility for your own actions. It's outrageous. You're all older than me and you can't act responsibly minded. You can't act professional. You can't be professional. You can't (in audible) sportsmanship.

DISTRICT COMMISSION HEARINGS
What happened last Tuesday
proves that you're unwilling to -you want to hold public hearings, but primarily for yourself, not for us.

So technically, I'm glad you screwed me last Tuesday. I'll remember that officially. I'm sad because what you did was unprofessional.

I mentioned this to you last Thursday and you still haven't apologized to me yet. It's obvious you don't intend on apologizing to me because you don't care.

As I said before, regarding these districts, the best way to redraw them is to go by the bus portals.

Here in Staten Island you have three City Council districts. You can draw the lines directly in the middle. Directly or almost directly, in the middle. Since you only have three districts here in Staten

## DISTRICT COMMISSION HEARINGS

Island, that's the best way to do it.
This way -- it's your
responsibility, you're required to keep certain committees together and from what I heard and saw last Thursday, from what I heard last Thursday, you didn't do that. In Manhattan you decided to break up committees which you're not supposed to do. So I guess when you decide to break up the Manhattan communities, I guess you had to break up to make up which is of course (in audible) on your mind.

MR. ROMANO: Thank you.
MR. HACKWORTH: Our next
speaker is Michael Morrell.
MR. MORRELL: Good evening,
Commissioners. My name is Michael Morrell. I'm president of the Westerleigh Improvement Society.

I would like to thank the Commission for giving me the opportunity to present this society's

## DISTRICT COMMISSION HEARINGS

input regarding the districting process.

Our Civic Association has
represented the Westerleigh community, a close-knit neighborhood, since 1893. We have over 600 active members and most are owners of single-family homes.

Many families have lived in
Westerleigh for generations. For more than two decades our community has been divided between two councilmanic districts, the 49th and the 50th.

Our civic group has had to work with two representative in the City Council. Consequently, much of what we do is duplicative. It would greatly simplify our work as a civic group if Westerleigh was in a single Councilmanic district.

Issues regarding land use among many others are more confusing when the community is divided with

## DISTRICT COMMISSION HEARINGS

representation. This opportunity to testify regarding the City Council districts arises only once every ten years. This makes it all the more vital that if the society make its views known to the Commission.

I would urge the Commission to seriously consider our request and simplify our City Council representation. Thank you.

MR. ROMANO: Which district?
MR. MORRELL: We are mostly in
the 49th right now, but the map
proposal has us put just about all in the 50th, but not all.

MR. ROMANO: Sir, you're asking for either all in the 49th or all in the 50th.

MR. MORRELL: Well, yes. That would be the bottom line. Thank you.

MR. HACKWORTH: Our next
speaker is Edward Malone.
MR. MALONE: My name is Edward

## DISTRICT COMMISSION HEARINGS

Malone. I have been a resident of Westerleigh community for the past 43 years.

In addition, I am the treasurer
of the Westerleigh Improvement Society and as Mr. Morrell said, the society has represented the Westerleigh community since 1893.

The community we represent comprises the area bounded on the east by Manor Road, the west by Willowbrook Road, the south by Victory Boulevard and the north by Forest Avenue.

In an editorial dated September
17, 2012, the Staten Island Advance referred to the new proposed 50th Congressional district as follows: "With Oakwood Beach all of Westerleigh and Todt Hill being included in the revised map".

With all due respect to the Advance, even though the proposed boundaries of the 50th Council

## DISTRICT COMMISSION HEARINGS

district now includes most of Westerleigh that we represent, not all of the community that we represent is included.

As it now stands, a small portion area south of Forest Avenue and west of Manor Road still remains in the 49th.

I believe that moving this area north to Forest Avenue and including all the area as stated that the Westerleigh Improvement Societies services will facilitate the services that the society provides to the entire Westerleigh community.

In addition, $I$ believe that this change will not affect the demographics and will only shift a small portion of the population from the 49th Council district to the 50th Council district.

Whatever the outcome of your deliberations, we, the members of the Westerleigh Improvement Society

## DISTRICT COMMISSION HEARINGS

appreciate the hard work done by the Commission to have the residents of Staten Island properly represented before the City Council.

Thank you.
MR. ROMANO: Thank you.
MR. HACKWORTH: Our next speaker is Joseph Granello.

MR. GRANELLO: Good evening everyone. This is my second time before this commission. I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to speak again on this very important topic concerning New York City Council redistricting.

My name is Joe Granello. I'm a home and business owner in the Sunnyside section of Staten Island. Sunnyside is a part of the Clove Lake's Civic Association and the roman catholic parishioners of St. Teresa's of which I am a member of both.

First I'm speaking tonight

## DISTRICT COMMISSION HEARINGS

about the New York City Council district preliminary draft plan for 2012. With a focus on districts 49 and 50 .

The proposed plan states that there is a population total of 428,576 in the three Council districts 49 and 50 and 51 while the three Staten Island community boards show a total population of 467,968 or 608 less.

Which number is; correct?
Well, it is a small difference. It might save the identity of some neighborhoods being torn a part by the proposed preliminary draft plan. The plan is tearing our Civic Association and parish apart into two separate Council districts under the City of New York charter district and commission section 52C. It states, and I quote, "district lines shall keep intact neighborhoods and communities which establishes ties of

## DISTRICT COMMISSION HEARINGS

common interest and association whether historical, racial, economic, ethnic, religious or other."

It's not just about the numbers as the charter as Mr. Hackworth senior Council New York City law department stated. It's also about, and I quote Mr. Hackworth, if I may, staying away from odd looking districts. We don't want to draw districts based on favorite animals or anything like that.

The districts, to the extent possible, should be standard district shapes. Look at district 49 and 50 in Castleton Avenue and Meyers Corners communities, it sure does look like someone's favorite animal. I strongly believe that this Commission can truly do a better job. Dr. Joseph Salvo from the New York City planning community district (in audible) let's maintain this amazingly diverse place to the extent

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possible. Let's keep it that way.
Thank you for your attention.
MR. ROMANO: Sir which district would you want, Sunnyside?

MR. GRANELLO: I'm from Sunnyside, yes.

MR. ROMANO: Where would you
want it, 49 or 50 ?
MR. GRANELLO: It doesn't
matter. Just don't split the districts.

I would suggest in my last comments the expressway as a boundary and that was community board district one.

MS. WOLFE: The expressway is the same boundary?

MR. GRANELLO: Yes. That would be 49 or that would be 50, but don't -- take a look at the map closely. It kind of claws out a big (in audible) of district 49.

MR. ROMANO: Do you have oral testimony for the boundaries for the

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community you're talking about? Can you tell us what they are? MR. GRANELLO: Of which one, sir?

MR. ROMANO: Sunnyside.
MR. GRANELLO: Sunnyside, yeah. Sunnyside is kind of the Clove Road on the eastern side, Little Clove Road on the Westerleigh side, Victory Boulevard on the north and the expressway on the south, but the claw takes place at Royal Oak. Just about -- I tried to put this into a narrative, but it took three pages and you make a right turn on the Royal Oak and a left turn on Rice and a right turn on Slosson.

MS. WOLFE: It extends all the way to Clove Lake's park? MR. GRANELLO: Yes. That's exactly right.

MR. ROMANO: It's that boundary, that area marked by that boundary, you're saying the line

## DISTRICT COMMISSION HEARINGS

splits?
MR. GRANELLO: Yes.
We are being split. You can
see the Civic Association takes in
Sunnyside, Meiers Corners, Castleton Avenue. We are neighbors of the Westerleigh Improvement Society. So we are kind of north of them and then St. Teresa's parish is right smack dab on Victory Boulevard just before 00 just after rather.

The boundary takes a right turn onto Royal Oak and then the church boundaries are smack dab in the middle of that turn. They go east and it goes west. So you're splitting the parish, you're splitting the Civic Association and, as I said, it's not about the numbers only.

MR. ROMANO: Thank you.
MR. GRANELLO: Thank you, sir.
MR. HACKWORTH: Our next speaker is Richard Verardi.

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MR. VERARDI: Good evening.
I'm not here today to talk about the district lines. Although I'm happy that we have three Councilmanic districts, I'm here to talk about the way the census 2010 was conducted.

I was local census office
manager in 2000 and also in 2010. Coincidentally, Mr. Ed Malone who spoke earlier was the manager in charge of counting and non response follow up.

We finished in six weeks, had the best record in the United States. 2010 when we finished at the end, and in my opinion, Staten Island was under counted.

2000 we had 443,708 residents. 2010 we had 468,730. The city data website in July of 2007 said we had 481,730 people. Where do all these people go to?

I'll tell you, the first operation we had was address

## DISTRICT COMMISSION HEARINGS

canvassing with hand-held computers. They did not work. We missed housing units, we missed tracks, blocks and (in audible) districts both in Brooklyn where I started and then moved over to Staten Island.

We complained, we were made fun of, whatever. Every time we issued a complaint, we were told it's not technical, it's administrative.

My admin manager from 2010 is here also. She bore the brunt of it. During NRFU non response follow up, we got no support at all from partnership.

We had to go out and get
testing sites, training sites, we had to get (in audible) sites, questionnaire assistance sites, big sites, (in audible) sites. We got no tinsels targeting shelter outdoor living sites.

I had 25 people out in the field and another 25 in the office

## DISTRICT COMMISSION HEARINGS

from midnight to 3:00 in the morning. We found 25 homeless people on Staten Island.

We got absolutely zero from partnership. 2000, we did it all ourselves. We had the computers, P-box, paper based operation control system. We referred to it as P-box, as in litter box.

The system didn't work. I had to hire ten people in the admin plus a supervisor for the midnight shift, seven for field ops, seven for QA.

In admin Linda proved that we can do everything in a shift and a half. In field ops the computers were down for maintenance from 11:00 at night to 7:00 in the morning, couldn't key punch.

During the day when we would key punch, I would have two, maybe three people on the computer and then they crashed.

QA, we would call up people and

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say did an enumerator come, yes or no? You're not allowed to call people after 9:00 at night. We got no cooperation from the "managers" in the NYRCC New York regional census center. We were treated like dirt. Thank you. I'm looking, hoping, that 2020 is a lot different then 2010. Thank you.

MR. HACKWORTH: Our next speaker is Patrick Donegan. MR. DONEGAN: Hi. First I would like to thank the Commission for basically -- how I do put this? This island is basically now going to have three districts that are entirely within the boundaries of Staten Island which hasn't happened in a while which I think is great news for Staten Island and all the communities from the North Shore down to the South Shore and, I don't know. I've also -- there was also some district plans that I submitted

## DISTRICT COMMISSION HEARINGS

 using the redistricting map program that was offered by the Commission, so, yeah, I hope you guys will be able to look at it and basically make decisions that are in the best interest of Staten Island and I'm sorry if I'm speaking a little nervous.Thank you.
MR. ROMANO: Thank you.
MR. HACKWORTH: Our last
registered speaker is Brandon Patterson here on behalf of Council member Debi Rose.

MR. PATTERSON: I just wanted to apologize again (in audible) I had an emergency.

My name is Brad Patterson from the Council of Debi Rose. Staten Island is run by five percent, the fastest growing borough in all of New York City and the North Shore has grown by eight percent, the largest out of all the three Staten Island

## DISTRICT COMMISSION HEARINGS

 districts.So this increase, Council
member Rose knows inevitably her district must face a loss in size.

With that being said, she opposes the proposal by the Commission and asks that they move forward using the lines that she has proposed at the Districting Commission Resource room.

The Commission's proposal lines will remove communities of Westerleigh and Castelton Corners from 49th Council district, reshaping the face of the district.

The lines that she has tested at the Districting Commission Resource Center also exhibit the current lines while conceding at some level of residents must be lost due to North Shore population growth.

The proposal lines would keep the East shore community of Staten Island in the 50th Council district

## DISTRICT COMMISSION HEARINGS

 where it currently is. While maintaining parts of Westerleigh between Forest Avenue and College Avenue towards Jewett in the 49th Council district.This will give residents in the impacted area effective representation while maintaining working relationships in the sense of the community that they have developed over the many years and avoid any disfranchisement.

In terms of community safety, the 121th police precinct which is proposed to be in the 49th Council District according to the proposal will be serving the area fully in the 50th Council district as I described before.

To leave part of Westerleigh as the Council members has proposed in the 49th district would allow the 121 to work with our staff.

The 120th precinct is currently

## DISTRICT COMMISSION HEARINGS

 one of the most active in the City and we have a nice relationship working with them on a daily basis and, obviously, we hope to continue with the 121.The concern is many of the neighborhoods not only separates communities of interest, but takes away from the diversity of the district.

To go forward with the proposed lines will marginalize the district. Which means that the communities in your district will go beyond traditional lines that have been connected through years of working together as community based organization.

The key there is obviously the community that this district has. Although redistricting is required, the proposed lines continuity a long standing relationships that we have forged as an office.

## DISTRICT COMMISSION HEARINGS

Thank you.
MR. ROMANO: Thank you.
MR. HACKWORTH: With that
testimony, we exhausted our pre-registered and registered speakers tonight.

MR. ROMANO: Does anyone else want to address the commission here?

We are going to stand adjourned for 15 minutes, then we will resume to see if any speakers arrive and we will decide what to do from there.
(Whereupon, a 15-minutes recess was taken.)

MR. ROMANO: Can we come to order, members of the commission.

I'm informed that we have no further speakers waiting to appear before us or any that are pre-registered or registered.

Therefore, I suggest that we adjourn until tomorrow evening unless I hear any objections.

MS. PERSAUD: The gentleman who

## DISTRICT COMMISSION HEARINGS

just walked in?
MR. ROMANO: Did you want to
speak to us?
A SPEAKER: Me?
MR. ROMANO: Yes.
Some seem to think that you wanted to provide testimony. Is that the case?

A SPEAKER: No. I'm Ralph
Porzio with Senator Lanza's office, but I didn't sign up to speak at all.

MR. ROMANO: I just wanted to make sure that we weren't leaving anyone out.

A SPEAKER: I appreciate the kind information.

MR. ROMANO: Hearing no objections, we stand adjourned until tomorrow evening. Thank you.
(Whereupon, at 6:30 p.m., the above matter concluded.)

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## DISTRICT COMMISSION HEARINGS

I, Patricia A. Venditti, a Notary Public for and within the State of New York, do hereby certify that the above is a correct transcription of my stenographic notes.


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