

This application has been the most difficult to come before the Commission in many years; certainly since I have been Chair.

This project is sited at one of the most celebrated locations in the city: on one side, the stately loft buildings of the DUMBO Historic District, and on the other, the majestic Brooklyn Bridge.

During our public hearing we heard much testimony in favor of this development: Many expressed support for a badly needed public middle school that has been proposed by the applicant as an integral part of the project.

We also heard support for the mixed income housing and a new public parking facility which will meet the neighborhood parking demand.

At the same time, the Commission heard considerable testimony against this project, expressing strong opposition to its scale, particularly its height in relationship to the Brooklyn Bridge and the surrounding neighborhood.

We received a great deal of communication in this regard; many letters, emails and articles including from the famed author of THE GREAT BRIDGE, David McCullough.

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It is our responsibility to weigh these issues very, very carefully and to see if there is a solution which addresses, to the greatest extent possible, the spectrum of concerns raised by the public., while also being consistent with sound planning.

To that end, I believe that the resolution we are voting on today achieves that objective.

Regarding the tallest building in the proposed new development, we will be reducing its height to 170' so that its tallest floor sits well below the shoulder cornice of One Main Street, the tallest of the complex of historic Gair buildings west of Front Street.

This height adjustment will better reflect and respect the composition and scale of buildings in the Historic District.

This reduction will also diminish the impact of its scale on the bridge

Secondly, our resolution considers the 9 story mid-rise element on Water Street which was proposed to extend quite close to the Bridge.

We carefully considered the thoughtful testimony of the Brooklyn Borough President, Marty Markowitz and his recommendation regarding the scale of this Water Street building.

Accordingly, we have stepped down the westernmost 50 feet of the proposed nine story building to a maximum of 75 feet.

This adjustment will address both the length of the building slab as well as the narrowness of Water Street.

This modification will also create a better relationship and transition to the Brooklyn Bridge and the surrounding buildings, including the Empire Stores.

We believe these judicious and targeted adjustments to the size and massing of this development will create a better project; one which would facilitate mixed income housing, a public school and parking –

and which will, at the same time, better reflect and respect

the historic composition of surrounding buildings and its adjacency to the magnificent Brooklyn Bridge.