

NYC2030District

exploratory committee

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February 27, 2015

Testimony before The NY City Council Environmental Protection Committee Hearing on Site-Sourced and Stored Renewable Energy by Haym Gross, Architect

The NYC 2030 District exploratory committee is established to form an Architecture 2030 District in New York City. Architecture 2030 is a national nonprofit organization which works toward dramatic reductions in fossil fuel consumption and greenhouse gas emissions from buildings and cities. The Architecture 2030 Challenge targets call for phased reductions in fossil fuel consumption to 50% in existing buildings and full carbon neutrality in new buildings and major alterations, with lower transportation emissions and water consumption, by the year 2030.

2030 Districts have been established in eight major US cities, encompass over 170 million square feet of real estate, and cooperate in a growing network to advance sustainable energy and resource management goals at the district scale. The proposed NYC 2030 district will be structured as a private / public partnership of property owners, civic organizations and community stakeholders to achieve broad sustainability and public health benefits through improvements in building energy performance and reductions in fossil fuel consumption, carbon emissions and air pollution. The partnership will share resources and information, aggregate financing, collective action and public support, advocate for sustainable policies, and collaborate to spur technical innovation, adoption of best practices and environmental progress. The NYC 2030 District will deliver energy cost savings, reduced administrative burdens and improved property values to its members, while combating climate change on an urban scale.

The Architecture 2030 organization facilitates emerging districts through a variety of support services and provides an established process for monitoring building energy performance. Successful 2030 Districts have been concentrated in central business districts, are based upon the business case for energy cost savings and the value of environmental benefits, are driven by the voluntary participation of property owners, civic institutions and community stakeholders in a contiguous geographic area, and are sponsored by an established governance structure such as a BID or neighborhood alliance.

The NYC 2030 District exploratory committee proposes to establish a 2030 District through a process of consultation with local businesses, community organizations, civic institutions, and elected officials to be located in an area comprising a portion of a dense NYC commercial district with adjacent residential, institutional or industrial zones. We propose to include affiliated areas as satellites to the 2030 District in order to reach a diversity of populations and income groups; to engage community-based non profits; and to promote broad impact of innovation and wide implementation of both sustainability and resilience goals. We believe that the NYC 2030 District can provide a platform for advancing the objectives of Mayor de Blasio's 'One City Built to Last', including adoption of positive behaviors and best practices through community engagement and constructively competitive interaction between stakeholders. The district will offer a living laboratory to demonstrate and test innovative approaches to aggregated energy efficiency projects, cooperative renewable and distributed energy generation, accessible off-grid emergency power, integration of sustainable energy technologies and design strategies and silo-busting pilot projects to achieve common solutions to the challenges of sustainability, resilience and equity.

The NYC 2030 District exploratory committee is working to apply the technical and market-oriented strengths of the 2030 District framework to address the sustainability challenges faced by all of NYC's citizens, communities and constituencies.