OFFICE OF THE BROOKLYN BOROUGH PRESIDENT

August 13, 2007

Robert Dobruskin, Director of Environmental Review
Department of City Planning
22 Reade Street, Room 4E
New York, NY 10007

Dear Mr. Dobruskin:

I am writing to submit comments in response to the proposed scope of work for the Domino Sugar Rezoning Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

The Domino Sugar Project has set a goal to revitalize the site while integrating the historic sugar refinery as part of the overall development proposal. The plan introduces approximately 2,400 housing units for the Williamsburg community, including hundreds of units affordable to area residents. It also incorporates new retail and new publicly accessible recreation space along the riverfront. I will consider the appropriateness of this proposal during its City Charter required ULURP process.

Meanwhile, as had been reflected at the public scoping hearing, many residents in the surrounding community have concerns regarding the Domino Sugar Project. I have heard their concerns regarding housing affordability, building heights, traffic and public transportation. I have taken these concerns into consideration in my attached comments on the draft scope of work.

If you have any questions, please contact Kevin Parris, my land use coordinator at (718) 802-3856. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Marty Markowitz

cc: Honorable David Yassky
Vincent Abate, Chair, CB 1
Mr. Michael Lappin, Community Preservation Corporation

Encl.
MM/kp

COMMENTS ON THE SCOPE OF WORK FOR THE DOMINO SUGAR PROJECT DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT BY BOROUGH PRESIDENT MARTY MARKOWITZ AUGUST 10, 2007

SOCIOECONOMIC CONDITIONS

Indirect residential displacement analysis should include an indicator of the percentage of wages that is used for rent by the surrounding population. The DEIS should disclose statistics related to the ethnic characteristics of this population and direct and indirect costs of relocating families. The analysis should further identify the anticipated impact on rents and property values based on known real estate trends that might occur with and without the proposed luxury units.

URBAN DESIGN/VISUAL RESOURCES

Photographs to be compiled of the area along Kent Avenue and from South 5th Street to Grand Avenue, should be taken from the pedestrian vantage point along sidewalks on both sides of the street. A minimum of two views should be provided as a means of illustrating what a pedestrian views as that person approaches the site. For South 3rd and South 4th Streets, more than two westerly views should be provided to take into account the development site east of Kent Avenue. For the east-west view corridors, one such view should be from Wythe Avenue. In addition, Kent Avenue views should be taken from both north and south of the site.

TRAFFIC AND PARKING

Additional intersections are recommended for inclusion in the DEIS analysis, including

- Havemeyer Street / Grand Avenue / South 4th Street
- Grand Street / Meeker Avenue (Rodney Street)
- Metropolitan Avenue / Meeker Avenue

The operation of area truck routes should be assessed, including Broadway, Grand Street, and Kent Avenue, and the potential impact of the proposed project on these routes. Current efforts by the NYCDOT to implement the results of its city-wide Truck Route Management and Community Impact Reduction Study should be reviewed and referenced where appropriate.

TRANSIT

Transit has been widely accepted to include subway and bus services. Given the location of this redevelopment site, adjacent to the East River, and the increasing availability and ascendance of waterborne services, transit should be defined to include water taxi services.

Water Taxi Service

As noted above, existing water taxi services to the Williamsburg area should be described, including service frequency; span of service; available capacity; and, characteristics of the areas within short walking distance to the waterfront sites served. Given the orientation of traditional transit systems to developed areas and the increasing pattern of new development along the waterfront, such service may be most effective to locations within a short walking distance of travelers' origins and destinations.

The ability of water taxis to provide the most direct route and shortest travel time to its service locations should be compared to traditional transit. In addition, the ability to connect the proposed waterfront esplanade to the nearest site served by water taxi should be discussed.

Subway Service

The subway stations to be analyzed should include the Metropolitan Avenue (G)/ Lorimer Street (L) station complex, Bedford Avenue (L) and Marcy Avenue (J, M, Z.) stations. These need to be differentiated in terms of areas accessed and the distribution of residents to their travel destinations. Further:

1. Efforts to install Communications Based Train Control (CBTC) on the Canarsie line, served by the L train, and its schedule and service implications should be described in the FEIS in the context of service to neighborhoods between the Lower Manhattan and Mid-town business districts.
2. Current crowding levels and service frequency on the G train (which serves the cross-town line and provides direct access to Downtown Brooklyn and to mid-town Manhattan via transfer to the 7, E, V trains in Long Island City) should be analyzed and plans to expand/improve service should be obtained from NYC Transit and described in the DEIS.
3. Service and crowding levels on the J, M, Z trains operating on the Brooklyn Broadway line, which provide access to the Lower East side and Lower Manhattan, should be analyzed and improvement plans should be obtained from NYC Transit.

Bus Service

Bus service to local destinations within Brooklyn and Queens is provided by the Q59 and B61. However, only the Q59, operating on Kent Avenue, provides direct bus service to the development site. The Q59 also provides feeder service to the Metropolitan Avenue (G)/Lorimer Street (L) station complex, while the B61 provides access to the Bedford Avenue station (L). The current ridership and operating characteristics of these services should be discussed in light of their respective service areas.

Additionally, there is no transit link between the development site and the Marcy Avenue station (J, M, Z). As the potential for implementing a shuttle bus to this station was implied in the draft scope, demand estimates would need to be developed. The value of such a shuttle service should be reconsidered in light of the potential for establishing a regular local bus service at no cost to

the developer. Such a service could be provided by modifying the Q59, which currently terminates at Kent Avenue/Broadway, by extending it along Broadway so that it terminates at Washington Plaza. This location is the terminus for several local bus routes in the area, and is adjacent to the Marcy Avenue station (J, M, Z). The suggested modification would enhance the role of Washington Plaza as a transit hub, while providing improved transit connectivity to residents of the proposed development.

The demand for these services should be estimated and contact initiated with NYC Transit to discuss the extension of the Q59 noted above.

Pedestrian analysis should be undertaken at the Metropolitan Avenue (G) station, because of the proximity of the Q59 to the development site along Kent Avenue, and the direct service it would provide to the station complex on Union Avenue. Analysis should also be undertaken at the Washington Plaza intersections adjacent to commercial locations, and entrances to the Marcy Avenue station stairs. Washington Plaza would be the destination of the suggested shuttle bus, as well as the modification of the Q59 that is suggested above.

The incorporation of traffic calming measures, such as sidewalk bulb-outs, at intersections along the local streets adjacent to the development site, by subway stations and all other analyzed intersections should also be considered.