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INTERIM REPORT
OF
BROOKLYN SPORTS CENTER AUTHORITY

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CHARLES J. MYLOD, *Chairman*
ROBERT E. BLUM
CHESTER A. ALLEN

November 15, 1956

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TO THE BOARD OF ESTIMATE:

Pursuant to the suggestion made at the Executive Meeting of the Board of Estimate on October 24, 1956, the Authority is pleased to submit a status report summarizing its activities to date. This report also includes a discussion of projects under consideration and an estimate of budgetary requirements of the Authority for an economic business prospectus and preliminary and final planning as well as administrative expenses prior to completion of the major improvements. For convenient reference by the Board, there is also forwarded an appendix containing exhibits which are identified by Letter designations in this report.

Activities to date:

On April 21, 1956, Chapter 951 of the Laws of 1956 was enacted. This law created the Brooklyn Sports Center Authority for the purpose of constructing and operating a sports center in the Borough of Brooklyn at a suitable location in an area bounded by DeKalb Avenue, Sterling Place, Bond Street and Vanderbilt Avenue, for the use of such amateur, professional and scholastic sports events as the Authority shall deem advisable and for the conduct of meetings, exhibitions and other events of civic, community and general public use. Under the law the Authority was also directed to remove and relocate the antiquated Long Island Rail Road terminal in the area described; to relocate the obsolete meat market; to eliminate substandard and insanitary areas and to revise the present traffic pattern in the Atlantic Avenue and Flatbush Avenue area for the purpose of relieving traffic congestion within the boundaries described.

The Mayor implemented this law on the 24th day of July, 1956, by the appointment of Robert E. Blum and Chester A. Allen as members of the Authority and Charles J. Mylod as Chairman.

Following their appointment, the members physically inspected the entire area available for the several improve-

ments contemplated under the law. In the course of their conferences, which have been regularly conducted, the members examined general sketches which outlined prospective sites for possible relocation of the Long Island Rail Road Terminal and the location of the Brooklyn Sports Center. One of these contemplated the Long Island Rail Road Depot area (A) and the other planned to utilize the opposite side of Flatbush Avenue (B). Thereafter independent studies were undertaken by the Authority members, who also discussed proposed sites with the staffs of several City departments before reaching any conclusion as to the site now recommended.

In its consideration of these proposals the Authority made a preliminary analysis of the possible cost of acquisition of the properties and tax revenue loss upon the basis of a compilation of assessments prepared under the supervision of the office of the Corporation Counsel (C). Final conclusions on this subject necessarily must await completion of preliminary engineering and economic studies.

Projects Under Consideration

On the basis of the foregoing studies, the Authority members have concluded that the Long Island depot area could be developed most economically and efficiently, involves the minimum capital and tax revenue cost to the City and presents the fewest relocation problems. The largest part of this area is owned by the Long Island Rail Road, which has expressed a willingness to have its property become a part of the new proposed sports center. The second largest segment of the area is owned by the Fort Greene Meat Market, whose officers have publicly stated a wish to be located elsewhere.

After extensive review, the Authority proposes a plan (D) which, among other things, would provide a new railroad terminal with track curvature so that the railroad's new rolling stock could enter the depot in Brooklyn. Park-

ing facilities would be provided having a minimum of 2,000 automobiles, and it is anticipated that a substantially greater number can be accommodated. The Fort Greene market would be relocated and the perimeter housing, already described as substandard, would be condemned. There are several possible solutions for the traffic difficulties at Atlantic and Flatbush Avenues. One method would involve the use of an overpass which, however, would require further study and consultation with appropriate City agencies.

This proposal was discussed with the firm of Praeger and Kavanagh, architects and engineers. Mr. Praeger, who has had extensive and diversified experience including the design and construction of stadia, has submitted, at the suggestion of the Authority, a preliminary sketch (D) setting forth the location of the stadium as proposed by the Authority, related parking facilities and arterial plans designed to relieve present traffic congestion and to service any additional traffic demands that would stem from the stadium's use.

As appears from his letter dated November 8, 1956, (E) Mr. Praeger will prepare preliminary studies of relocation of the Long Island Rail Road facilities and of the meat market, traffic pattern revisions and pertinent general site features as well as a plan of the prospective site, possible uses and type of construction of the stadium.

Recognizing the absolute necessity of an independent economic study including determination of the probable income, operating and maintenance cost and other relevant economic data concerning the stadium, the Authority conferred with the firm of Madigan & Hyland, consulting engineers. Within a few days this firm will advise the Authority of the proposed cost of preparation of such a prospectus. It will be on the basis of a sound business prospectus that the Authority will determine the feasibility of a bond issue to finance construction of the stadium.

Upon the basis of its studies, the Authority has concluded that the facts warrant economic, engineering and feasibility studies of the nature and scope suggested by Praeger and Kavanagh and Madigan and Hyland. During the period of the preparation of these studies, the Authority plans also to conduct preliminary negotiations with the Long Island Rail Road and the owners of the Fort Greene market. Thereafter the Authority will promptly review the findings and forward to this Board its recommendations as to the practicability and advisability of proceeding with final plans and construction of the various improvements contemplated by the law. All such plans must be approved by the City Planning Commission, as required by the statute.

Although a final estimate on the prospective dates of completion of planning and construction phases cannot for obvious reasons be presently made, some guidance may be provided in an informal expression of opinion by Messrs. Praeger and Kavanagh. According to their calculations, the preliminary plans will be completed not later than June 1957. If the findings warrant further proceedings, the final plans could be prepared within another eight months, or about February 1958. It is their view that construction of the stadium would require a period of 1½ to 2 years, so that final completion during 1959 could be expected. They believe further that the major aspects of this program, viz. relocation of the railroad and market, traffic pattern, etc., could be completed well within the foregoing period.

Budgetary Requirements

Preliminary to a discussion of the cost that will be incurred, the Authority wishes to state its views on a subject mentioned at the Board meeting of October 24, 1956, viz. whether the funds provided by the City to defray the cost of the Authority's organization and operations prior to the completion of the projects will be in the nature of a contri-

bution or an advance which must be repaid. It has been the understanding of the Authority members that the funds to be allocated by the City would be a contribution. Reference to the Act discloses a regular use of the word "contribution", and authorization for contributions and grants without provision for repayment. Furthermore, the objectives of the Authority are civic improvements beneficial to the City of New York in an area of Brooklyn requiring rehabilitation.

It is also the view of the Authority that the imposition of a prior obligation to refund monies provided by the City might discourage if not foreclose outside financing necessary for improvement of a substantial section of the area. In any event, it is the opinion of the Authority that the sum to be provided by the City for feasibility studies should not be considered as a refundable advance. If the Authority members should recommend termination of activities, following completion of the feasibility studies, there should not be owed to the City a sum of money which the Authority would have no possibility of repaying. The Authority members, who are serving without compensation, should not be required or requested to be associated with a civic enterprise which might conclude its activities with an unfulfilled financial obligation.

The Authority members have been informed that there are precedents for contribution by the City to authorities in the *initial stages* of their establishment. For example, the New York City Parkway Authority, was given an advance by the City which was not intended to be repaid by the Authority. Another example is to be found in the law creating the New York City Parking Authority which made provision for contributions and grants to the Authority similar to that provided in the present statute without any requirement for repayment. Other laws which permitted or required repayment are believed to be distinguishable. In the main, these involve authorities engaged in projects

having assured and certain sources of revenue, i.e. construction and operation of bridges, tunnels, etc.

However, if the Authority should be reimbursed for the cost of preliminary or final plans or any other expenditures theretofore defrayed by the City, such funds will be turned over to the City by the Authority.

The Authority as authorized by the law, has used the facilities of the office of the Corporation Counsel, the Director of Real Estate and other City agencies. With the cooperation of the Bureau of Real Estate, the Authority has selected an office at 302 Ashland Place, Brooklyn, which is conveniently situated for continued studies of the area under consideration. The office of the Director of Real Estate has expressed the opinion that the rental terms are favorable (F). However, a lease cannot be executed unless and until funds are appropriated by the Board of Estimate. Similarly, the Authority is not in a position to engage administrative and clerical personnel nor to employ engineering consultants.

A tentative budget (G) designed to defray the Authority's expenses for the period December 1, 1956 to June 30, 1957, has been forwarded to and reviewed by the Budget Director. This budget provides \$65,600 for personal services, \$200,000 for other professional services and \$22,000 for other than personal services for the balance of the fiscal year, or a total Authority budget in the sum of \$287,600. As appears from the summary of the position descriptions (H), executive compensation has been established at levels sufficient to attract qualified personnel and the salaries of administrative and clerical personnel have been fixed at the corresponding civil service classification. The anticipated compensation for professional services, viz. engineering, legal and accounting, have been estimated in accordance with what the Authority believes would provide adequate and prevailing remuneration for the character and importance of the services to be rendered.

If the preliminary studies justify preparation of final plans and completion of the projects (which the Authority believes will occur in the absence of any unforeseeable condition), funds will be required from the City for its operation until about January 1, 1960, the anticipated date of completion. The estimated budgets for the years of contemplated interim operation are as follows:

1957-1958	
Executive Management	\$ 55,350
Administrative Services	24,100
Legal	21,050
Other Professional Services	90,000
Other Than Personal Services	25,000
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Total	\$215,500

1958-1959	
Executive Management	\$ 56,050
Administrative Services	25,200
Legal	21,350
Other Professional Services	75,000
Other Than Personal Services	25,000
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Total	\$202,600

1959-1960 (July 1, 1959 to December 31, 1959)	
Executive Management	\$ 28,025
Administrative Services	13,150
Legal	10,825
Other Professional Services	37,500
Other Than Personal Services	12,500
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Total	\$102,000

From the foregoing, it is apparent that the total sums to be provided by the City for costs and expenses, including

preliminary plans and surveys in the period December 1, 1956 to June 30, 1957, would not exceed \$800,000.

In addition to the above amount there must be made available in the year 1957-1958 the sum of about \$310,000 for engineering services in preparing final plans for the stadium. There also must be appropriated funds for payment of engineering services in preparation of final plans for construction of projects other than the stadium such as traffic revision, relocation of the Long Island Rail Road, and market etc. The cost of these surveys will be 4% of the construction cost which cannot be presently estimated but will be known prior to June 30, 1957. This sum can be made available either from the expense budget or from the capital budget.

Of course, the Authority is not in any position to represent that either the cost estimates or the completion dates are final. Manifestly, all such forecasts are subject to many circumstances and contingencies which may substantially affect any or all of the estimates.

The members of the Authority wish to express to the Mayor, the President of the Council and the other members of the Board, their appreciation for the time that has been made available by them for consideration of the numerous problems presented for solution in the performance of this civic responsibility.

Respectfully submitted.

CHARLES J. MYLOP, *Chairman*

ROBERT E. BLUM

CHESTER A. ALLEN

November 15, 1956