

MENCHACA STATEMENT ON THE INTRODUCTION OF INDUSTRY CITY'S REZONING PROPOSAL IN THE CITY COUNCIL

August 27, 2020

"I represent Sunset Park - a community that spent hundreds of hours analyzing and debating the Industry City rezoning proposal. It is because of their work that I do not support it.

"Yet it is being called up today, and the implications are large, not just for my district, but for the whole Council.

"Yesterday, Speaker Johnson said he welcomes debate on the rezoning proposal through the lens of accountability: that we should explore whether legally binding conditions can be found to reap the benefits of a rezoning while mitigating its negative effects.

"Sunset Park agrees, which is why last year after launching a working group, after ten public town halls, numerous letters and petitions, I outlined three specific conditions that would have achieved what the Speaker and I seek.

"Those conditions either failed or cannot be met in the time left on the ULURP clock.

"Industry City should use this pandemic and economic recession as an opportunity to go back to the drawing board and include the community's recommendations in a new application. Instead, they are abandoning our community concerns and ramming through their proposal unchanged.

"Why should the people's representatives defer to entitled developers? Why should this body ignore what Sunset Park achieved after ten public hearings, in multiple languages?

"Yes, the Council will debate the rezoning, but our process includes only one public hearing.

"And before that public hearing a handful of Council colleagues threw their support behind the Industry City developers, without turning to the Sunset Park community to understand the issue.

"Their message is clear: Sunset Park, your voice does not matter. The voice of your representatives federal, state and in the Council, who oppose the project, do not matter. Only Industry City's lofty promises matter, promises with no accountability.

"This massive and historical rezoning is a turning point for us here at the Council and this City. Does Sunset Park have the power, through their representatives, to control a public-land-rezoning procedure, or have we lost all control to developers?

"Colleagues, I am calling on your hearts and minds to listen to our voices and stand with the people."

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