Good afternoon and thank you for the opportunity to submit this written testimony. I am Roland Lewis, president of the Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance. The Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance is a coalition of over 400 organizations working together to transform the New York Harbor and its waterways into a world-class resource for work, play, transit and education.

The Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance wants to commend the Community Preservation Corporation for its plan for the rehabilitation of the Domino Sugar Factory in Williamsburg Brooklyn and especially for the open space to be created in the new four acres of public open space at the water’s edge. Combined with the four new street ends opening to the water this amounts a major new addition to waterfront acres in the Williamsburg neighborhood. The design and features of this space follow the guidelines set forth in the new Text Amendment for Waterfront Zoning recently adopted by the New York City Planning Commission. The 1,300 foot new esplanade and park also provides a vital link to the existing Grand Ferry Park, a small gem of a park where new Yorkers can actually touch the water.
MWA believes this redevelopment could be improved by also including infrastructure for a ferry stop as well as the infrastructure for boats, including bollards, cleats and gates along the esplanade for possible future maritime use. Addition of this water transit infrastructure to the Williamsburg waterfront would improve the transportation service to a historically underserved neighborhood. The simple maritime infrastructure along the esplanade could provide mooring to historic boats and pleasure boats, increasing the appeal of the park as a destination. Also in times of emergency it will allow for egress and movement of goods and people if necessary.

Though industrial use in New York and in much of the waterfront in Brooklyn is still viable, the appropriate rezoning of this neighborhood where manufacturing can not be sustained is appropriate. The New Domino complex will also embrace its history and has concrete plans to keep and utilize the original 40 foot Domino Sugar sign, by placing it in a prominent location on the roof of the apartment complex as well as retrofit of a large portion of the original building.

We also recognize the waterfront commercial space to be created under the plan. The 2,200 unit New Domino complex will include 660 units of affordable housing. The new zoning will include almost 274,000 sq ft of new retail and community cultural facility spaces as well as approximately 99,000 sq ft of commercial office space that will help bring a vital combination of housing business, recreation, and commerce into the neighborhood.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify and I’d be happy to answer any questions you might have.