

## **PRESS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

December 19, 2025

### **Brooklyn Residents File Legal Challenge Against NYC EDC for Violating Open Meetings Law in Brooklyn Marine Terminal Redevelopment Process**

**Brooklyn, NY** – Three longtime Brooklyn residents have brought a lawsuit in New York State Supreme Court alleging that the New York City Economic Development Corporation (“NYC EDC”) violated state transparency laws by holding secret Task Force meetings that led to the approval of a sweeping redevelopment plan for the Brooklyn Marine Terminal (“BMT”). The case was filed in October and has now been formally served.

The lawsuit, filed pursuant to Article 78 of the Civil Practice Law and Rules, asserts that the NYC EDC’s BMT Task Force conducted closed-door deliberations and a final vote on September 22, 2025, in direct violation of New York’s Open Meetings Law. The plaintiffs, John Leyva, David Lutz, and Bruce Mazer, are all residents of the Columbia Street Waterfront District, a neighborhood adjacent to the BMT site, and allege they were explicitly denied access to the meeting at which the final Vision Plan was adopted.

“This legal challenge is limited to ensuring that the rules governing public decision-making are followed,” said attorney Michael C. Pope, lead counsel for the petitioners. “When public land is on the line, the public has the right to be in the room. That is not a policy preference. It is the law.”

The Brooklyn Marine Terminal, a 122-acre publicly owned waterfront site, represents one of the most significant redevelopment opportunities in New York City. The Vision Plan approved by the Task Force outlines more than \$3.5 billion in projected investments, new infrastructure, and land use changes with long-term implications for Brooklyn’s working waterfront and surrounding communities.

Despite the magnitude of the project, the NYC EDC Task Force, which the State’s Committee on Open Government has determined qualifies as a public body, met behind closed doors without proper notice, without releasing meeting materials or minutes, and without providing public access or livestreams.

Plaintiff Bruce Mazer, a neighborhood resident and longtime civic advocate, said, “I asked the EDC to let me attend the meeting. They refused. I then sought guidance from the State’s oversight agency, which agreed that the public had a right to be there. Despite that, the meeting went forward in secret.”

The lawsuit seeks three forms of relief:

1. A stay of further implementation of the Vision Plan while the case is pending;
2. Annulment of the September 22 vote approving the Vision Plan; and

3. A declaratory ruling requiring any future Task Force proceedings to comply fully with New York's Open Meetings Law.

“This is not just about Red Hook or the Columbia Waterfront,” said petitioner John Leyva. “It is about how our city makes decisions that affect millions of New Yorkers. If the law can be ignored here, it can be ignored anywhere.”

David Lutz, another petitioner, added, “The Task Force met for months behind closed doors, made major changes without public input, and then locked the doors on the day of the vote. That is not community planning. It is exclusion.”

The case, *Leyva et al. v. New York City Economic Development Corporation*, Index No. 537131/2025, is pending in Kings County Supreme Court. An Order to Show Cause is currently under review, seeking immediate judicial intervention to pause further implementation of the Vision Plan while the Court determines whether the approval process complied with state law.

For more information or to request interviews, please contact:

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#### **MEDIA NOTE:**

All claims in this lawsuit are allegations. The case is pending judicial review, and no findings of law have yet been made. Petitioners and counsel are committed to respecting the integrity of the legal process.