

Save Central Park NYC

Three questions for Candidates for Manhattan Borough President 2021

The Candidates:

[Lindsey Boylan](#), former Deputy Secretary for Economic Development and Special Advisor to the Governor, candidate for New York's 10th congressional district in 2020
[Elizabeth R. Caputo](#), former Chair of Manhattan's Community Board 7
[Brad Hoylman](#), New York State Senator for the 27th district
[Ben Kallos](#), City Council member
[Mark Levine](#), City Council member
[Kimberly R. Watkins](#), President of Community Education Council 3

The Questions:

1. (a) Is your campaign accepting money from the real estate community?

Ms. Lindsey Boylan: None whatsoever! I will not because this job is so much about real estate and the built environment.

Ms. Elizabeth R. Caputo: Our campaign has had no bundling or fundraisers organized by members of the real estate community and have no plans to do this in the future.

Senator Brad Hoylman: No! As the Borough President is involved in land use, I will not be accepting money from real estate community.

Council Member Ben Kallos: No. And such funds have been formally refused

Council Member Mark Levine: *pending*

Ms. Kim Watkins: No

1. (b) Have you accepted real estate money in the past?

Ms. Lindsey Boylan: Yes, in my run for congress

Ms. Elizabeth R. Caputo: *pending*

Senator Brad Hoylman: Yes

Council Member Ben Kallos: No. And, any such funds would have been refunded

Council Member Mark Levine: *pending*

Ms. Kim Watkins: No. This is the first time that I'm running for public office.

2. Are you in favor of closing real estate loopholes (like mechanical voids) that are resulting in Super Tall towers?

Ms. Lindsey Boylan: Absolutely. Their point is to get around rules that protect quality of life.

Ms. Elizabeth R. Caputo: Yes, I support closing the loopholes. Specifically, I support further strengthening the 2019 amendment from the City Council that attempted to close this loophole.

Senator Brad Hoylman: Yes! In addition to being a co-sponsor on the MDL amendment in Albany, I support height caps. Other world cities have them and it's time for New York.

Council Member Ben Kallos: Yes! And, I have run the effort on the zoning text amendment in the City which is continuing as districts are added. I also worked with Assembly Member Linda Rosenthal on developing the State legislation that has been introduced in Albany. It is important that we approach this on multiple fronts. I am also working on height caps in my district while adding some flexibility for affordable housing.

Council Member Mark Levine: *pending*

Ms. Kim Watkins: Yes. I'm familiar with the issue because we've discussed this within the school system as it relates to capacity.

3. Will you commit to protecting Central Park from additional shadows?

Ms. Lindsey Boylan: She managed public parks for a decade as an urban planner preserving quality of life. She also was with a private non-profit that protected Bryant Park, Herald Square, Greeley Square and other pocket parks in NYC. Parks are her passion.

Ms. Elizabeth R. Caputo: Yes, I commit to protecting Central Park and other public places from additional shadows.

Senator Brad Hoylman: Yes. I'm a champion of these efforts. I feel strongly whether it's Billionaires' Row or other incursions, these result in a diminishment of the quality of life. 421A is another problem; I want to get rid of this tax program.

Council Member Ben Kallos: Yes. And other parks as well. I am currently fighting for St. Catherines Park on 67th Street that is threatened by a Supertall.

Council Member Mark Levine: *pending*

Ms. Kim Watkins: Yes. I live on the Upper West Side and use the park probably more than any other candidate.

Candidate Statements:

Ms. Lindsey Boylan: I spent the first decade of my career managing public parks and green spaces in New York City. Central Park is a vital part of the culture and quality of life of New Yorkers as a whole, and supertall towers pushed by profiteering developers threaten to cast a literal shadow on one of our most treasured green spaces. This fight goes beyond the green space and skyline that define our shared landscape. If we continue allowing developer-led land use initiatives, we are not going to get the affordable housing we need, we are not going to help preserve small scale retail, and we are not going to address the fundamental affordability and equity problems of our city.

Senator Brad Hoylman: I was proud to join Save Central Park in the fight against the blight of supertall buildings as your State Senator, and I promise to continue to stand with you as Manhattan Borough President. We need laws and a zoning code that restrict the abuse of mechanical voids and other loopholes developers have long exploited at the cost of our communities. Our neighborhoods and our green spaces must be protected for all New Yorkers, not just the super-wealthy.

Ms. Elizabeth R. Caputo: *pending*

Council Member Ben Kallos: Too many parks and open spaces in Manhattan are under attack by supertall buildings and the shadows they cast. If we keep building supertalls the only people who will get to enjoy the light and air in our City are billionaires. Construction in Manhattan needs to be contextual to the neighborhood it is in. That means developers have to take into account how their structures affect the neighborhoods and areas they are in. I make sure I am not beholden to developers that is why I have not and will not take their political contributions. Building as tall as possible every time there is an opportunity is detrimental to our neighborhoods. We need height caps and we need to work to protect the parks that give New Yorkers open space to enjoy the sun and be outside on something other than concrete.

Council Member Mark Levine: *pending*

Ms. Kim Watkins: *pending*