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The City of New York
Manhattan Community Board 8

Housing Committee Meeting
Marymount College
221 East 71st Street
Regina Peruggi Room
Tuesday, April 12, 2015, 6:30 p.m.

CB8 members present: Ed Hartzog*, Loraine Brown*, Barbara Chocky*, Rita Popper*, Marco Tamayo

Members of the Public: Ed Brady, Doug Baldor, Diego Barbenna, Bob Menna, Lian Riordan, Madeleine Thompson

*Committee member

The Meeting was called to order at 6:38 p.m.

1. NYCHA Privatization Housing, Taking Park Space Away For Private Development

Edward Brady and Doug Baldor of the Committee for Independent Community Action (CICA) came to the meeting to make a presentation on behalf of their organization regarding the proposed “Next Generation Neighborhoods” developments proposed for Isaac Houses-Holmes Towers and the Wyckoff Gardens in Brooklyn.

CICA is a citywide organization of activists and many are from inner city communities. The committee works on issues that affect poor communities such as afterschool, youth and adult development, and housing. CICA is used to teach people how to develop a voice in their communities and is an effort to further community empowerment in areas affecting the lives of poor and working people.

With respect to Next Generation Neighborhoods, CICA has issues with NYCHA’s and the Mayor’s plan to build new mixed use construction at the proposed sites. Specifically, CICA would like to have additional hearings on the proposal – aside from the one that was held in late January before the City Council’s Committee on Public Housing.

In addition, CICA would like the Mayor to use a ten-year \$400 million surplus from Battery Park City to fix NYCHA’s apartments. Mr. Baldor indicated that Councilman Torres and Kallos support this idea, as well as City Comptroller Scott Stringer. Presently NYCHA has a \$300 million annual operating deficit and a \$17 billion backlog of capital repairs. The City claims that a lack of federal funds requires the public private partnership between NYCHA and developers in order to close the yawning budget gap.

CICA and NYCHA residents are concerned about their lack of input and accountability on the part of the City. At the hearing before Councilman Torres' committee, Councilman Kallos asked NYCHA Chairwoman Shola Olatoye whether the residents could "say no" to the project and was told that the program was moving forward. The Chairwoman indicated that the residents could participate in the engagement process and would be allowed to make recommendations about specific problems at their buildings they would like NYCHA to use the funds to fix.

The week before their presentation to the committee, CICA filed a formal request with the federal government to clarify its role in the process. CICA believes that it is highly questionable whether the City can enter into a land-use deal with private developers without the City Council taking a vote. As such, CICA is calling for Community Board 8 along with other Community Boards to pass resolutions calling on the City Council to vote on the Next Generation Plan and, to vote "no" on the plan.

In the ensuing discussion the public and committee members noted that there have been chronic issues with management at both NYCHA and HPD. As such, there were concerns about the money being generated by these projects and its use at the "generating" sites. In addition, the issue of "affordability" was raised, with respect to NYCHA's definition of \$46,000/year versus the average of \$23,000/year for current NYCHA residents. Under the Next Generation Neighborhood plan, 13,500 of the 17,000 new apartments being created would be reserved for below-market rate tenants – of those 25% would be set aside for current NYCHA residents.

2. Old Business.

There was no old business.

3. New Business.

There was no new business and the meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Ed Hartzog and Loraine Brown, Co-Chairs