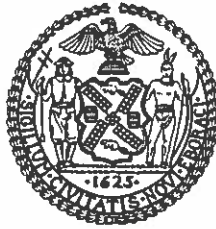


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**The City of New York
Manhattan Community Board 8**

HOUSING COMMITTEE

Wednesday, May 23, 2018 – 6:30PM
Church of the Holy Trinity, Draesal Hall
316 E 88th Street

MINUTES

Community Board Members (Present): Ed Hartzog, Lorraine Johnson, Greg Kirschenbaum, Peter Patch, Rita Popper, David Rosenstein, Marco Tamayo, Lee Chong (Public Member), Kim Selway (Public Member)

Community Board Members (Excused Absence): Loraine Brown, Rebecca Lamorte

Community Board Members (Unexcused Absence): Bessie Schachter (Public Member), Posie Di Sesa (Public Member)

The Meeting was called to order at 6:35 p.m.

1. Update on September 26th Housing Forum.

Rita Popper began the discussion by focusing on the topics and invitees, and pointing out that it is the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) and the developer that negotiates affordable housing amounts, and it is the funding agency that decides the affordability range (i.e., percentage).

Marco Tamayo suggested the need to include the issue of housing losses and the current rate of loss happening in our neighborhoods. As the topic of affordability progressed, Lee Chong noted that a state legislative presence would be good on the panel. She also suggested policy experts from organizations such as, Tenants PAC and Real Rent Reform.

In light of these things, it was suggested that State Senator Liz Krueger would be a good panelist as well as someone from HUD and HUD Tenants. Lorraine Johnson noted that there was a national alliance of HUD tenants. Another suggested panelist was Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer, as well as a representative from Legal Aid.

In terms of issues/topics, an additional one related to development and the creation of affordable housing was infrastructure – specifically, is it keeping up with the current and projected increases. In terms of “affordability,” it was suggested that the indexing of census tracts to Area Median Income (AMI) be discussed.

It was agreed that the forum needed to be put on “people’s calendars” in order to maximize turnout. To that end, the committee agreed on “Affordable Housing – The Challenges” as the title for the forum. With the broad

outline of issues and topics agreed upon, Rita and other members of the committee agreed to inquire with various panelists about their possible participation in the forum. The committee then moved to next item on the agenda.

2. Discussion of Outstanding Certificates for Affordable Housing.

The Housing Committee and Community Board 8 have long been aware of what have commonly been referred to as affordable housing “certificates.” Specifically, certificates that are issued to developers that allow them to build market rate apartments in exchange for affordable housing units at off-site locations. Over the years it has been very difficult to get any information about the existence of these certificates and the circumstances around their issuance – i.e., how many certificates have been issued? Do they have any type of expiration date? Where was the affordable housing built that formed the basis for the certificate? How many units?

In light of these and other questions, Barbara Chocky stated that she would speak with Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer and ask her about a potential “repository” for these certificates developers use to build market rate apartments, in exchange for affordable housing units at off-site locations. Specifically, is there such a repository, if so, where are the certificates and, when will they be used?

3. Update and Discussion of HUD’s proposal to raise rents on federally subsidized housing.

The day of the meeting HUD Secretary Ben Carson unveiled a new initiative, dubbed “Welfare Reform 2.0,” in which the rents on families living in subsidized housing would rise to 35% of their gross income – or, 35% of their earnings working 15 hours a week at the federal minimum wage – up from the current standard of 30% of adjusted income. Nearly 1 million children were at risk of homelessness, according to an analysis of HUD data by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

“The Washington Post” reported that about half of the 4.7 million families receiving housing benefits would be affected by the change. The cap on rent for the poorest families would rise to about \$150 a month – three times higher than the existing ceiling of \$50. About 712,000 households would see their monthly rent rise.

In light of the news, the committee members agreed to reach to our local elected officials, including Senator Gillibrand, to ascertain the likelihood of this initiative taking effect and if so, when? And, what are the steps going forward in the overall process?

Old Business.

There was no old business.

New Business.

There was no new business and the meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Submitted by,

Ed Hartzog and Barbara Chocky, Co-Chairs