The City of New York
Community Board 8 Manhattan
Housing Committee
Thursday, February 2, 2023 – 6:30PM
Conducted Remotely on Zoom

Minutes

The meeting was called to order at approximately 6:35pm by co-chairs Edward Hartzog, Rebecca Lamorte, and Gregory Morris.

Present at the meeting were the following Community Board 8 and committee members: Saundrea Coleman, Billy Freeland, Edward Hartzog, Rebecca Lamorte, Gregory Morris, and Rita Popper.

Item 1: Discussion – A review of Governor Kathy Hochul's Housing Connect Plan, followed by a discussion of affordable housing policies coming out of Albany.

Rebecca Lamorte opened the meeting with a summary of Governor Kathy Hochul's FY24 Executive Budget Housing Compact proposal. She reviewed the proposal's plan to build 800,000 new homes, including apartments, in an effort to address the housing affordability crisis in New York State, and the zoning, density, and other impacts it will have on the community board district.

Following the summary, the co-chairs opened the meeting to questions, feedback, and immediate thoughts from the rest of the committee. Gregory Morris noted how the Governor's housing plan will impact the community and highlighted the recent Manhattan Borough President's report illustrating affordable housing needs/potential development locally and throughout the borough.

Member of the public Boaz Galil asked if the Governor's plan includes building market rate housing. Rebecca Lamorte noted that the plan focuses on affordable housing but will spur the development of market rate housing based on how residential development currently must be done to include both market rate and affordable units.

Edward Hartzog called on member of the public DJ Falkson. DJ inquired about mandatory inclusionary housing and how the Governor's plan would alter those requirements. Rebecca Lamorte explained that state law and housing policy enacted through the budget will preempt city-level development requirements, this time with the goal of expediting development, increasing density, and maximizing the amount of affordable housing built.

Rita Popper raised concerns about New York City still not receiving adequate housing and support from Albany through this plan. Rita also inquired about rent increases for rent-stabilized and controlled housing, as well as getting more tenant relief with a cap on annual increases. Rebecca Lamorte explained that the Housing Compact doesn't include tenant or rental protections but solely focuses on the development of new housing.

Billy Freeland expressed concern about what could potentially be a loss of affordable units in the demolition of smaller residential buildings to make way for larger development. He also inquired about how the plans will relate to local zoning and land use laws, especially as it relates to a more holistic approach to ensure affordable and supportive housing is built and not defeated locally like we've seen.

Gregory Morris agreed with Billy Freeland and discussed issues with getting supportive housing built and navigating the complexities of zoning and land use approvals. Gregory also shared information on actions

Community Board 4 have taken to address their affordable housing needs and expressed a desire for the committee to explore our own district's needs more fully like they did.

Edward Hartzog then called on member of the public Kim Selway. Kim asked about converting vacant office space to housing, and Rebecca Lamorte confirmed the Housing Compact includes commercial to residential conversions.

Following the committee's discussion, Rebecca Lamorte suggested they write a letter to their Assembly and Senate representatives to outline questions and support for the housing plan generally.

There was no new business. The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:30pm.

Edward Hartzog, Rebecca Lamorte, and Gregory Morris, Co-Chairs