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THE CITY OF NEW YORK
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD SIX
211 EAST 43RD STREET, SUITE 1404
NEW YORK, NY 10017

HOUSING, HOMELESS, & HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday, June 12, 2018, 6:30 pm

433 1st Avenue at NYU School of Dentistry, Room 220

MEETING MINUTES

Present: Aissata Camara (Chair), Aaron Humphrey, Carin von der Donk, Claude L. Winfield

Pamela Vassil, Molly Hollister (CB6 Chairperson), Cody Osterman (CB6 Staff)

Excused: Rajesh Nayer (Vice-Chair),

Absent: Kyle Athayde

Guests: Tom Kennedy, TemPositions Health Care; Claire Brennan, CB6 member; Tom Waters, Community Service; Flipchenko Vitaly, CB6 resident; Abigail Krusemark. CB6 member; Penniellen Bergholz, works in CB6 district

Call to order and Adoption of the Agenda and Minutes from Previous meeting.

Aissata Camara (Chair) called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm.

Pamela Vassil made a motion to adopt the agenda. The motion was seconded by Claude L. Winfield and passed.

Pamela Vassil made a motion to adopt the minutes from the May 8, 2018, meeting. The motion was seconded by Claude L. Winfield and passed.

Committee Business

Agenda Item 1: Presentation from the Community Service Society on Intro.0601-2018, a bill that would require the mayor to provide a fair affordable housing plan to the Council.

The Housing, Homeless & Human Rights Committee wanted to learn more about this bill before supporting it, so they invited Tom Waters of Community Service Society of New York to talk to the committee. (One of this organization's initiatives was winning reduced fares for low income residents, and with the help of the City Council, to have that included in the city budget.)

He said the Mayor's affordable housing program builds upon Mayor Bloomberg's plan, such as rehabilitating old buildings and offering incentives to owners of affordable housing to keep buildings affordable that might otherwise be deregulated from rent regulation. (Mitchell-Lama is one such city housing program.)

He added that most of the funding comes from federal money, and the City provides additional funds to bridge gaps in federal money availability. Mayor De Blasio has significantly increased the amount that the city puts into affordable housing, allowing the City to lower income levels so more people can apply for affordable housing. However, residents are saying the planned affordable housing is not enough at the income levels people can afford; many people make less than \$30,000 a year and the programs require a higher income bracket.

The mayor's affordable housing initiatives include upzoning in mostly low-income neighborhoods to increase the supply of both subsidized and market rate housing. The City states it'll be good for these neighborhoods because they need investment and affordable housing; the plan aims to also protect people from rising rents that may come as a result of all the improvements in these areas.

The City has improved transparency for information on affordable units, with a database of buildings and their status so people can more easily track activities.

Intro.0601-2018 would require the Department of Housing Preservation & Development (HPD) to put that kind of information into a package, including the racial makeup of neighborhoods, how segregated they are and how much poverty is concentrated there.

Currently, most of the city's rezoning is being done in low income communities of color. The City will be required to explain why and why not in higher income, "whiter" neighborhoods.

There's a need to be able to easily access data for buildings that are partly affordable. The Automated City Register Information System (ACRIS) records just show how many units are in a building, not how many are affordable, which would be very valuable information to have.

Agenda Item 2: Report on ongoing committee project to investigate allotment of affordable housing units in District 6

Aaron Humphrey presented a spreadsheet that showed information on affordable housing units that the CB6 staff had been collecting. They used the ACRIS site and the "Who owns what in NYC?" site <https://whoownswhat.justfix.nyc/>, which lists building owners and HPD information, such as how many affordable housing units are located in a particular building. The site can also track the taxes owners pay in buildings, one way to determine if there are any rent stabilized units in that building. Aaron and Cody are following up on their research and entering information gathered from these various

sources into a searchable spreadsheet for this district. Specifically, the committee wants to identify the number of affordable housing units within the district and compare records to see if those units actually exist.

Aaron is leading this fact-finding project and the committee will be assigning more people to it, possibly with a subcommittee to help with research. As the HH&H Committee adds news members, some might be interested in data management and research and could participate in this project.

Agenda Item 3: Discussion of Intro. 0884-2018 relating to the short notice transfer of shelter residents (See article: <https://nyti.ms/2KUdv0G>)

Carin von der Donk talked about the background for this bill; a homeless single mother with school age children who had been moved with very short notice several times by the City from temporary apartments and who was unhappy with uprooting her children after they'd settled into their school and a routine. She approached her local City Council Member Rafael L. Espinal Jr., who introduced a bill requiring more information and providing more notice to shelter residents when they needed to move.

Another bill would require the city to publicly report the number of individuals and families being transferred with a 72-hour notice (or less) and to provide the reasons for the transfers.

Carin's research found that the entire shelter/homeless system is overburdened; with rising housing prices, people cannot afford the rent. She added that a Department of Homeless Services study concluded that the City lost 1.1 million housing units from 1996-2017 that rent for below \$800 a month. Added to this is the difficulty of retaining workers in the homeless field; with low pay and overwhelming caseloads, some leave for the private sector and better pay.

Carin agreed that homeless parents should be given earlier notice when they are being asked to move, but the agency is already overburdened and to add more duties (giving notice, reporting) would not solve the larger problem.

Carin said it would be better to find and support legislation that would attempt to fix these larger issues. For example, City Council Member Carlina Rivera, co-wrote in an op ed piece for the Daily News (<http://www.nydailynews.com/opinion/kushner-tip-iceberg-suffering-nyc-tenants-article-1.3888667>) that there's no cross referencing of records between agencies that serve the homeless (the Buildings Department, the Department of Finance), and corrupt landlords continue to exploit the permitting process and harass tenants, forcing them from their rent stabilized units. If developers are receiving tax cuts for providing affordable units, but their reporting is more on the "honor system," with zero oversight, *that* needs to be changed.

Chair Camara said the proposed bill would create more accountability from agencies and it's a first step and she would like the committee to write a motion in support of this bill.

Motion: Aaron Humphrey made a motion that the committee write a resolution in support of Intro 0884-2018 relating to the short-notice transfer of shelter residents, Pamela Vassail seconded. The vote was unanimous.

Agenda Item 4: Budget Priorities for Fiscal Year 2020

Chair Camara will be working with members, probably Claude, and the office, to write the new priorities for 2020 and will have something ready for Board Chair Molly Hollister sometime in August.

Agenda Item 5: Discussion of Housing Fair and related next steps

The fair will happen in September or October and might include new members. The Department of Finance will provide information on the rent freeze programs SCRIE and DRIE. The committee needs to identify topics to cover at the fair and the groups to invite and reach out to them in time to get their participation in the fair.

Agenda Item 6: Chair's Report

Carin attended the Community Advisory Board (CAB) for the Safe Haven and toured the facility. She brought a book of poems created by the fourth grade Student Council members from PS 40. She said it was a great way to connect the safe haven back to the community; at the CAB meeting, Muzzy Goldstein said he would like more community involvement. Staffers are surveying residents to identify their interests, which they can then match to different volunteer opportunities that can serve the residents.

Old/New Business

Community Associate Cody Osterman announced that on Thursday, people will be marching from the 42nd Street public library to the Governor Cuomo's Manhattan office. It will be the year from date at which the rent stabilization laws are set to expire. Many of the New York City-based housing advocacy groups will participate, including New York Communities for Change and the Metropolitan Council on Housing to demand that rent stabilization laws be renewed next year and strengthened.

He added that many of the loopholes that were discussed today, that led to the loss of rent stabilized units and affordable housing, can be fixed with political will and courage, which is what the marchers to Governor Cuomo's office are trying to accomplish. Secondly Cody encouraged this committee and all other community board-related committees to support the Support out Courts Act, bill A11013, which would prevent Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) from arresting undocumented citizens

inside New York State courthouses. Specifically, it would prevent ICE from arresting a person for a civil violation while that person is going to or leaving a court unless ICE agents have a judicial warrant or court order to enter the court house for that specific action.

Adjournment: Motion to adjourn made by Claude L. Winfield, seconded by Aaron Humphrey, Chair Camara declared the meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.

Minutes prepared by CB6 Staff.