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## CB 6 Bulletin CM Rivera

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Wed, Feb 3, 2021 at 1:14 PM

Hello CB 6,

See below the CB 6 bulletin from CM Rivera. In the email below you can also find CM Rivera's full e-newsletter, which we encourage everyone to sign up for. Let me know if there are any questions and I'll see you all next week!

# Carlina Chairs Emergency Oversight Hearing on COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution



Chairwoman Rivera, Committee on Hospitals  
Oversight: COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution & Accessibility in NYC

As Chair of the Council's Committee on Hospitals, Carlina is keeping a close eye on the current state of the City's fumbled vaccine rollout. On January 14, she co-chaired an [emergency vaccines hearing](#) with Health Committee, Chair Council Member Mark Levine to better understand the City's planning process and response capabilities regarding vaccine distribution.

While Health Commissioner Dr. Dave Chokshi provided answers to many questions in his testimony, he did fail to deliver direct answers on several matters of concern, most notably including vaccine supply, appointment availability and scheduling.

Following the hearing, which you can view by clicking "video" [here](#), Carlina has continued to closely monitor the situation, and will share updates on her conversations with the administration both in our newsletter and on social media. She also wrote an article for Data for Progress wherein she laid out her plan for solving our vaccine rollout problems, which starts with prioritizing teamwork and renewing trust by installing a "Vaccine Czar" to run the program. You can read her plan [here](#).

In February, the Committee on Hospitals, chaired by Carlina, will hold another COVID-19 oversight hearing, focusing on Access to Language Services and Equitable Care in NYC Hospitals During COVID-19. If interested in receiving details on viewing the live hearing or submitting testimony, please email us at [district2@council.nyc.gov](mailto:district2@council.nyc.gov).

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## Carlina Rallies in Support of Community Opportunity to Purchase Act



On January 19, the City Council Committee on Housing and Buildings, chaired by Council Member Robert E. Cornegy, Jr., held a hearing on Carlina's Community Opportunity to Purchase Act (COPA), which could play a significant role in the production of more affordable housing in New York City. Ahead of the hearing, advocates joined Carlina and Council Member Brad Lander to rally in support of their legislation.

COPA would give qualified affordable and community housing developers the right to submit the first offer to purchase certain residential buildings when they are offered for sale.

Amidst the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, it is imperative that investments are made in community-led affordable housing development to address two new fronts in the housing crisis: an unstable real estate market vulnerable to predatory exploitation and an onslaught of expected evictions. Moments of crisis historically allow for speculators to swoop in, purchase properties quickly, and increase gentrification in the city's neighborhoods – Carlina's bill seeks to prevent that from happening again by giving affordable housing developers a better shot to secure financing and time to purchase some of these buildings. This bill could also help Community Land Trusts, including Cooper Square CLT in District 2, to grow and expand their innovative model of community-owned housing in New York City.

## City Council Passes Legislation to Support Street

## Vendors



On Thursday, January 28, the City Council voted to pass [Intro 1116](#), which would serve to support our City's street vendors by expanding the availability of food vendor permits, creating an office of street vendor enforcement, and establishing a street vendor advisory board. The bill, which has been under fierce debate in the Council for years, would open up the cap on food vendor permits, which has been in existence for over three decades and forced vendors to secure licenses in an underground market where licenses could go for nearly \$30,000.

Carlina has long been a supporter of our City's street vendors, believes these vendors are small business owners, and that they deserve the resources and protections we would want for any brick and mortar shop during the COVID-19 pandemic. Increased access to permits is a major legal protection for vendors – many who are immigrants who see vending as one of the only options available to escape poverty.

At the same time, Carlina understands the importance of better enforcement when vendors violate rules, and believes that creating a food vendor advisory board and office of food vendor enforcement will ensure the community has a voice at the table.

## Carlina Works with Local & Agency Partners to Improve Public Safety in District 2

Our office wants to acknowledge that a recent spate of public safety incidents, including on East 30th Street as well as Avenue C, which are deeply concerning to Carlina. As the NYPD continues to investigate these incidents, our office has been in touch with community leaders as we work ensure holistic solution to these conditions, including investments in mental health services, addiction prevention and treatment, harm prevention, and long-term investments in jobs and permanent affordable and supportive housing are made.

It's our job to acknowledge here at Team Carlina how this impacts our community, how it feels to walk in the neighborhood and take our kids to school and go grocery shopping amidst a pandemic. Everyone deserves to feel safe at home in their community, and Carlina wants everyone to feel safe in our District.

Sometimes the improvements our office are able to make are small, like removing a decrepit phone booth from a particular corner, and sometimes they're more impactful, like clearing an encampment in front of an abandoned Duane Reade and getting individuals access to services. Regardless, every action matters, and we will continue to address these concerns as they are brought to our office. As a reminder, if you'd like to report a specific hotspot for attention or action, please email us at [district2@council.nyc.gov](mailto:district2@council.nyc.gov) or call and leave a message at 212-677-1077.

## Carlina Attends Open Streets Town Hall Hosted by CB3 and CB6



On January 12, Carlina joined Council Member Margaret Chin and Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer for a town hall on Open Streets and Open Restaurants hosted by Community Board 3 and Community Board 6.

Last spring, at the height of the pandemic, Carlina brought Open Streets to New York City through legislation that she introduced and then worked on with the Department of Transportation. She pushed for this bold initiative because New Yorkers needed adequate space to leave their cramped apartments and enjoy the outdoors – or even just safely commute to their essential jobs – while still being able to practice social distancing.

In the months since, Open Streets has led to other models like Open Restaurants, Open Schools/Outdoor Learning, Open Retail, and now, Open Culture, each championed by their own Council Members and advocacy

organizations.

The current Open Streets plan, which through partnerships with community-based organizations brought safe and equitable access to outdoor spaces to New Yorkers in all five boroughs, is set to expire in September of this year. Carlina is currently working to make Open Streets a permanent fixture in our communities, and the Mayor promised the same in his State of the City address last week.

To be clear: permanent Open Streets does not mean permanent Open Restaurants. Open Restaurants is a separate legislative initiative, led by Council Member Antonio Reynoso, specifically introduced to provide our city's restaurants with an opportunity for economic survival during the COVID-19 pandemic. If Open Restaurants were to become permanent, it would require new City action and additional public hearings, and should not happen without a seat at the table for all impacted New Yorkers.

In the meantime, please continue to share specific instances of restaurants violating safety guidelines pertaining to outdoor structures and ventilation with our team.

We have received several complaints regarding bad open restaurant operators who are not adhering to proper guidelines for outdoor structures or ventilation. If you know of specific locations violating safety guidelines, please continue to share these instances with our team.