



BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD 8

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Julie Reyes, **Chairperson**

Vanessa L. Gibson, **Bronx Borough President**

Farrah Kule Rubin, **District Manager**

MEETING MINUTES OF THE HOUSING COMMITTEE [YouTube Recording](#)

DATE	June 24, 2024	START TIME	6:00 PM	END TIME	7:30 PM
MEETING HELD AT	BXCB8 OFFICE – Conference Room				
ADDRESS	5676 Riverdale Avenue, Bronx, NY 10471				

ATTENDANCE

Present	Ingrid DeLeon, Rosemary Ginty, Lee Chong	Total	3
Absent	Jessica Sosa	Total	1
Extraordinary Circumstances		Total	
Guests	Councilmember Pierina Ana Sanchez, Chair Julie Reyes, CB Members Sylvia Alexander, David Gellman, Laura Spalter and Deb Travis, Community Committee Member Karen Argenti, Ted Weinstein (HPD), Camila Thomas and Danielle DeCerro (DCP), Prettystar Lopez (CM Sanchez Staff), Lisa Daub, CB Staff Farrah Kule Rubin and Ardy Malziu	Total	14

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm.

A quorum being present, the minutes of the March 2024 meeting were approved 3-0 by those members present: Ingrid DeLeon, Lee Chong, Rosemary Ginty.

Chair's Report

The Chair reported that the Housing Guide was printed in English, translated to Spanish and printed in Spanish. Copies were handed out to those present. Additional copies will be distributed at the June Board meeting, to elected officials, libraries and at local street fairs. The committee members were thanked for their work in updating the document and to the district manager for arranging the printing and translation.

The Chair noticed a NYT news article describing a new 12-story tower with 174-unit affordable housing development in Inwood above a new library. She commented it was a practical way to find affordable housing sites. Mr. Ted Weinstein, Director of Bronx Planning at NYC Housing Preservation and Development agency added that his agency is currently working on another affordable housing development incorporating a new library near Lebanon Hospital in the Bronx.

A recent Crain's article announced that the city is starting a program to proactively inspect buildings after several building collapses. It was noted that increasing Department of Building inspectors was a budget priority from the Housing Committee.

The Chair said the Mayor's budget has cut funding to finance affordable housing construction. The news article stated the funding is 30% less than the average since 2018.

The Chair then gave a year-end summary of the major work the committee did over the past year:

- Besides updating the important Housing Guide, the committee hosted Mr. Ted Weinstein and his staff member Mr. Adam Beckerman for a presentation of affordable housing followed by a useful question and answer session for the committee and audience.
- In January the Department of City Planning provided the committee with important US Census statistics regarding housing and income for CB 8 which were discussed.
- In December, Ms. Jenna Klaus, Chief of Staff to Councilmember Dinowitz gave the committee an excellent summary of recently enacted Local Law 97, an important issue for our district.
- In March, Laura Spalter and Karen Argenti gave us an important and informative presentation on "Getting Ready for the City of Yes EIS".
- Lastly, in addition to Councilmember Pierina Sanchez visiting us today, the committee passed a resolution opposing that portion of "City of Yes—Economic Opportunities" that would allow commercial/retail development in R6-zoned NYCHA developments which was then passed by the full board.

Guest Visit from Councilmember Pierina Ana Sanchez, Representative of CB#8 and Chair of the NYC Council Housing Committee

The Chair welcomed Councilmember Sanchez to the Housing Committee meeting with many thanks for giving us her time. She began by saying housing issues are very complex with serious supply problems, tenant protections, keeping up with preservation of housing stock and environmental policies. Recent challenges are Local Law 97 and its effect on building finances and our community's residential buildings with many violations leading to a recent District partial-building collapse. To add, those dislocated families have not been able to find affordable units. Current housing issues are complex and serious.

The Councilmember pointed out that in spite of a \$4 billion/year funding promise (\$2.5B for HPD and new construction and \$1.5B for NYCHA) the city has only been funded 25% of that.

The City Council is proposing, over a 5-year period, \$2.5B for two programs: "Open Door" for new cooperative ownership and "Neighborhood Pillars Program" to transfer ownership of poorly maintained residential buildings to not-for-profit supervision. It is estimated that 12,000 units will be created (30%) or preserved (70%).

The Councilmember described three new efforts the Council is working on:

1. Renewing & updating the J51 program to incentivize private improvement of existing housing by granting up to 15-year tax abatement for the cost of major capital improvements.
2. Since insurance is a major drain on building finances, create a pool of funds for not-for-profits to assist meeting these costs.
3. "Unlocking Doors" which makes available up to \$25,000 for repairs for those buildings that accept voucher tenants.

Ms. Julie Reyes, the Board Chairperson, asked where the Housing Committee and the Community Board might be helpful. The response was for a "Third Party Transfer Program" currently being designed, which deals with buildings having serious problems with tax and water & sewer delinquencies, in addition to a high rate of building code violations. Earlier programs failed in that

they resulted in a disproportionate impact on minority-owned properties. As the Council develops an amended program, they will look to community boards for support.

There were many questions for the Councilmember from Housing Committee members and community members participating in the meeting. The Chair thanked the Councilmember for her time, her details on current housing problems and her suggestions on solutions. The information was instructive and made us all better informed.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned **at 7:30 pm.**

Minutes drafted and reviewed by Rosemary Ginty, Chair