

**Meeting Minutes of the Housing Committee
Bronx Community Board 8
Monday, January 27, 2025**

Attendance

Present (4): Lee Chong (Vice Chair), Yngrid DeLeon, Rhashida Hilliard (Chair), & Jessica Sosa

Absent (1): Sebastian Chittillappilly

We had a quorum.

Guests:

On Zoom: Mary Elizabeth Rosa, Louise Parmis

1. Welcome & Roll Call:

The meeting was called to order by Rhashida Hilliard at 6:01pm.

2. Approval of the Housing Minutes from December 23, 2024

The minutes were approved unanimously,

3. Department of Buildings (DOB) Guest Speaker (Nairobi Lazo-Hayes):

The Department of Buildings is in charge of enforcing building and zoning codes, permitting construction activity, providing licenses for construction trades, and ensuring safety in construction in New York City. Guest speaker, Nairobi Lazo-Hayes attended the Housing Committee's monthly meeting to address specific questions related to DOB's aforementioned roles. The questions and answers are below.

- **What is DOB's role with respect to servicing: coops, condos, NYCHA, and various buildings?**
DOB's role is to make sure buildings are compliant: elevators , permits, zoning must be up-to-code. As far as condos [and coops] are concerned, they have their own management agencies, but DOB checks structural work outside not inside apartments unless a ceiling collapses, for example.
- **How does DOB ensure that all buildings' interiors/tenants are safe?**
DOB does regular inspections of boilers and plumbing. It depends on the type of inspections. They do inspections based on complaints, so they really rely on 311 calls.
- **Does DOB do regular checkups on all buildings outside of FISP and parapet laws?**
The DOB does inspections that are mandatory.

- **If a building is in violation of a law/code (such as FISP and the parapet laws), how does DOB make sure the person/building pay(s) the fine/assessment? Does this vary by building type?**

Everything depends on the gravity of the violation. For example, a Class 1 violation or what is considered an immediately hazardous violation (i.e., situations where the violating condition poses a threat that severely affects life, health, safety, property, the public interest, or a significant number of persons so as to warrant immediate corrective action, or, with respect to outdoor advertising, those where the violation and penalty are necessary as an economic disincentive to the continuation or the repetition of the violating condition) are considered Class 1 violations. If the violation is found in the moment, and the entity that receives the violation is not able to address the situation immediately, they are required to put up a sign, for example, or pay the fine. Violations are classified due to their severity. Violations that are more severe require the Emergency Response Team (ERT) to address the situation more immediately (within 1-40 days). Class C & D violations are less severe. A lesser violation could be a complaint about occupancy in an apartment. As long as the situation is not hazardous, it is not as big an issue.

- **If someone cannot pay/has limited funds, are there programs to assist them? This is particularly for coops/condos.**

If a person/entity receives a violation and is fined, they must pay. If it is an OATH violation (a violation of a city rule or regulation that is heard by the **O**ffice of **A**dministrative **T**rials and **H**earings), the person/entity must always pay the fine. However, paying the fine is an admission of guilt. Rarely will the violation be dismissed. After it is paid, the situation gets resolved. If a person/entity cannot pay the fine, civil penalty fines might be incurred. If it is a Class 1 violation, the ERT can keep checking in every 2-3 days to determine if the situation is taken care of. There is no public assistance for people who cannot pay. Maybe there are organizations that can pay.

4. **Question and Answer Session began at 6:18pm:**

Lee Chong posed a question regarding Local Law 97 (LL97). Now that we are 100 days out from the roll out of LL97, what is the current status? Answer: TBD. In general, the DOB has different units such as plumbing, electrical, emergency response, facades, developments (projects), etc. If there are any questions regarding particular building issues, they can be addressed to a specific unit. NYCHA has their own inspectors, but they have a representative that works with the DOB. If there are further questions that were not answered at Monday night's meeting, they can be directed at Nairobi Lazo Hayes at nlazohayes@buildings.nyc.gov.

5. **Budget:**

In December, Farrah redistributed a document with 16 years of budget requests. We reviewed some of the requests to look for trends at the last meeting. We intend to hear back from different agencies about what was previously funded. In the meantime, we will continue to have budget conversations and invite others to pose their budget concerns.

6. **Chair's Report:**

N/A

7. **Old Business:**

N/A

8. **New Business:**

N/A

9. **Adjournment:**

Meeting was adjourned at 6:46pm

The Housing Committee meeting was not recorded.

Minutes submitted by Rhahshida Hilliard, Housing Committee Chair