

PENDING COMMITTEE APPROVAL

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8

**MINUTES OF THE HOUSING COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON MONDAY, MARCH 27, 2017 AT 7:30 P.M.
AT THE FORT INDEPENDENCE COMMUNITY CENTER
3350 BAILEY AVENUE, BRONX, NY**

Board/Community Members Present:

Paul Ellis
Anthony Creaney
David Gellman
David Kornbluh
Omar Murray
Julie Reyes
Georgia Santiago
James Santiago

Affiliation:

CB8 Housing Committee, Chairman
CB8 Housing Committee
CB8 Housing Committee
CB8 Housing Committee
CB8 Housing Committee
CB8 Housing Committee
CB8 Housing Committee
CB8 Housing Committee

Guests:

Javier Almodovar
Jimmy Santana
Jose Alicea
Barbara Lauray

NYC Housing Authority (NYCHA)
NYCHA
NYCHA
President, Fort Independence Tenant
Association

Tiesha Jones

President, Bailey Houses Resident
Council

Helene Wilson

Vice President, Bailey Houses Resident
Council

Audience/ Community Members:

Hennessy Reyes

Representing NYS Senator Gustavo
Rivera

M. Rondon

Community Resident

R. Press

Community Resident

D. Williams

Community Resident

M. Ventura

Community Resident

D. Ventura

Community Resident

E. Coakley

Community Resident

P. Adams

Community Resident

C. Gayco

Community Resident

L. Whittingham

Community Resident

T. Gray

Community Resident

H. Isla

Community Resident

S. Whittingham

Community Resident

T. Williams

Community Resident

C. Butler	Community Resident
M. Santiago	Community Resident
L. Gill	Community Resident
R. Deiran	Community Resident
L. Jackson	Community Resident
M. Sepulveda	Community Resident
D. Williams	Community Resident

Absent:

Amy Joy Robateau	CB8 Housing Committee, Vice Chair
Sergio Marquez	CB8 Housing Committee
John Sims	Community Committee Member

The meeting was called to order at 7:40 PM.

Paul Ellis, Chair of the Housing Committee, welcomed the attendees and introduced himself. Mr. Ellis then went on to review the agenda for the evening.

1. Approval of minutes

Mr. Ellis made a motion to approve the November 3, 2016, November 28, 2016, December 22, 2016 and February 27, 2017 Housing Committee minutes. After being seconded and followed by discussion, the minutes were unanimously approved.

2. A Public Discussion with Residents and with Representatives of the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) regarding Heat and Hot Water, Maintenance and other Issues at Fort Independence/ Bailey Houses

Mr. Ellis introduced the following individuals: Jimmy Santana, NYCHA Bronx Borough Administrator, Jose Alicea, NYCHA Fort Independence Property Maintenance Supervisor, Javier Almodovar, NYCHA Deputy Director of Operations, Heating Services, Barbara Lauray, President, Fort Independence Tenant Association, Tiesha Jones, President, Bailey Houses Resident Council, Helene Wilson, Vice President, Bailey Houses Resident Council.

Mr. Ellis started out the discussion by reflecting on the significant attention the Committee had given to issues involving NYCHA developments over the last several years. He also noted that, in spite of this attention and the commitments of NYCHA representatives, the problems persisted.

The NYCHA representatives in attendance explained their roles and responsibilities and discussed the procedure for requesting repairs and maintenance. The representatives of the tenants associations made introductory remarks concerning the various types of concerns tenants in their developments were currently having.

Numerous residents had complaints and concerns regarding issues that were ongoing, some of which went back many years. Among the issues raised were the following:

- Visible mold in apartments
- Lack of GFCI receptacles in kitchens and/or bathrooms to prevent shock
- Parking lot lights not operable
- Rodents in apartments buildings and playgrounds
- Lack of notice to tenants when work being done in buildings
- Water being turned off without notice
- Resident being displaced for months due to necessary repairs that did not get done
- Regular lack of hot water
- Bailey Houses not receiving the same level of services as Fort Independence
- Old and non-working refrigerators and stoves (Council member Fernando Cabrera has covered the cost of some refrigerators and stoves at Ft. Independence out of his discretionary funds)
- Water leaks in hallways
- Leaks in heating pipes going back as long as 10 years
- Gas lines inoperable on occasion, requiring some tenants to use hot plates
- Window leaks throughout buildings
- Roof damage
- Damaged pipes resulting in floods in the buildings requiring elevators to be shut down
- Insufficient heat
- Windows that do not stay opened or are difficult to close
- A kitchen sink with a hole
- Sheetrock in bathrooms falling down
- Radiator taken apart by worker and never put back together
- Hole drilled in wall and never repaired
- Property Manager regularly unavailable
- Lack of response to work order request
- Concerns regarding possible new policy allowing for locks to be drilled out if a resident is not home to let in workers for a work order
- Leaks from roofs and walls during rainstorms
- Systemic problem in that work orders are not completed or are cancelled

Responses from NYCHA representative to the above-listed issues included the following:

- The boiler at Fort Independence has been rehabilitated, which should help to alleviate, but probably not eliminate, the heat and hot water problem
- Hot water systems generally have not been fixed due to budget cutbacks
- They committed to review the capital budget to determine the status of window repairs
- Damaged pipes in Fort independence may be related to the heat regulation/hydraulic system
- Bursting pipes together with flooding may be related to the heating system, which they agreed to look into
- They agreed to check on the possible new policy regarding the drilling out of locks

The NYCHA representatives noted that residents may check on work orders by logging onto MyNYCHA app – <http://www1.nyc.gov/site/nycha/residents/mynycha.page>.

Mr. Kornbluh inquired whether ongoing meetings among all parties take place to discuss the various issues as discussed at this evening's meeting. After discussion, all parties agreed to meet to start a dialogue and schedule ongoing meetings.

At the request of Mr. Ellis, the NYCHA representatives maintained a list of the issues discussed, including name, building number and apartment number. Upon review and investigation of the issues, NYCHA will report the findings to Mr. Ellis and to the newly formed group of representatives being formed from this evening's meeting.

Mr. Ellis noted that while he appreciated the willingness of the NYCHA representatives to address the issues that had been raised this evening, it was troubling that it required a meeting such as this to put attention on tenant issues that had been unresolved for months or, in some cases, years. He noted that there was clearly a systemic problem that NYCHA needed to address.

Community resident R. Press inquired as to the funds, over one billion dollars, NYCHA has for repairs including to roofs. NYCHA representatives advised they would have to check the budget and see if funds are being allocated to any of the NYCHA buildings located in CB8.

3. Old Business

There was no old business.

4. New Business

There was no new business.

There being no further business before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 9:10 P.M.

Minutes recorded by,

Julie Reyes
Housing Committee Member
Bronx Community Board 8

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Ellis
Chairperson
Housing Committee
Bronx Community Board 8