

**BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8**

**MINUTES OF THE HOUSING COMMITTEE MEETING  
HELD ON NOVEMBER 23, 2015  
AT THE BOARD OFFICE  
5676 RIVERDALE AVENUE, BRONX NY 10471**

**PRESENT**

Paul Ellis  
Julie Reyes  
Anthony Creaney  
Georgia Santiago  
David Kornblau  
David Gellman  
Amy Joy Robateau  
Lisa Daub  
Rosemary Ginty  
Vivean Olean  
John Sims  
Lee Chong  
Francine Scherer

**AFFILIATION**

CB8 Housing Committee, Chair  
CB8 Housing Committee  
CB8 Housing Committee  
CB8 Housing Committee  
CB8 Housing Committee  
CB8 Housing Committee  
CB8 Housing Committee  
CB8  
CB8  
Sopher Realty  
Community Resident  
Community Resident  
Community Resident

**Absent:** Sergio Marquez, Leonel Baez, Lenora Croft, Margaret Donato, Noah Friedman, Omar Murray, James Rather, Lucy Mercado and Ruby Palma.

The meeting came to order at 7:37pm.

Mr. Paul Ellis, Chair of the Committee, introduced himself, and welcomed the attendees. Mr. Ellis reviewed the agenda for the evening.

**1. Planning for Upcoming Affordable Housing Forum**

Mr. Ellis announced that the Housing Committee will host three forums, as follows:

1. Affordable Housing: Fundamental terms and concepts (to be held 12/9)
2. Affordable Housing: Financing of new construction (date TBA)
3. Affordable Housing: Financing of preservation activities (date TBA)

The 12/9 forum will have guest speakers Kimberly Darga, Assistant Commissioner, Preservation Finance, Ted Weinstein, Director Bronx Planning, Jose Sanchez, L & M Development Partners, and possibly representatives of HCR and a housing advocacy group.

Further discussion on this topic covered the following subjects:

- Role of the Affordable Housing Working Group
- Various organizations and agencies involved in financing such construction
- Distinguishing between financing for new construction and preservation
- Need to publicize events through distribution of flyers for local posting in libraries, stores and other venues
- Background regarding L&M Development Partners, one of the participants in the 12/9 forum
- Assistance being provided by Christina Lang of Senator Klein's office

- Logistics of event
- VA benefits that relate to housing costs
- Involvement of the state with respect to tenant programs and benefits
- Panel established by Senator Espaillat to address co-op issues, such as the ability to influence boards to decide on co-op board inclusion and the ability of co-op shareholders to know why their purchasers are rejected. Panel recommended that NYS Attorney General establish a co-op/condo ombudsman's office.

## **2. Status report on activities of Affordable Housing Working Group and NYCHA Working Group**

Mr. Ellis noted that the activities of the Affordable Housing Working Group had largely been summarized in connection with the previous agenda item.

With respect to the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) Working Group, Mr. Ellis reported the following:

- The group has had a couple of meetings in person or by conference call as well as other conversations among the members.
- Ms. Mercado and Ms. Palma are going to be summarizing current issues at Marble Hill Houses and Fort Independence/Bailey Houses and set them forth in correspondence to NYCHA to request an update on status over the next few months.
- The Working Group has taken the initiative with respect to illegal dumping at Marble Hill Houses as far as it can at the moment, and the Marble Hill Tenants Association has been working on tenant education activities.
- In spite of what appears to be a sincere effort on behalf of NYCHA to improve conditions at its developments, the perennial issues of illegal dumping of garbage, insufficient janitorial staff, slow and inadequate maintenance, security concerns and need for roof repairs continue to be a problem.

## **3. New Business**

Mr. Ellis raised the topic of the various meeting spaces that could be used by the committee in light of the fact that the conference room at Riverdale Mental Health is not currently available on Monday evenings. A discussion followed as to the benefit/advisability of having a regular meeting location.

## **4. Old Business**

Mr. Ellis reiterated his statement from a previous meeting that all members who felt capable of taking meeting minutes would be requested to do so on a rotating basis and that members should speak with Julie Reyes about scheduling.

Mr. Ellis then turned to the subject of meeting topics that the committee might wish to take up over the coming months. He noted the following possible topics/speakers:

- Informational forum on the Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE) and Disability Rent Increase Exemption (DRIE) programs, which Lisa Daub proposed could be a joint meeting with the Aging Committee
- A town hall involving the Marble Hill Houses and Fort Independence/Bailey Houses Tenant's Associations
- Budget meetings with Housing Preservation and Development and the Department of Buildings

Other topics that were proposed were as follows:

- A meeting on supportive housing/housing for the mentally-challenged population/housing for the homeless (proposed by David Kornbluh)
- A meeting on rent regulation issues (proposed by Lee Chong)
- A meeting on the process for buying co-ops and condominiums
- A meeting to take up issues of particular interest to co-ops and condos, perhaps in collaboration with The Association of Riverdale Cooperatives and Condominiums

The meeting was adjourned at 8:50 pm.

Minutes recorded by,

Frances Scherer  
Community resident

Respectfully submitted,

Paul Ellis  
Chairperson  
CB8 Housing Committee