

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8

**MINUTES OF THE HOUSING COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON APRIL 29, 2010
AT THE BOARD OFFICE
5676 RIVERDALE AVENUE**

PRESENT

Thomas C. Durham
Anthony Creaney
Philip Friedman
Sergio Marquez
Maria Clark
Scott Krigen
David Morris
Simon Muckatt
Lynn Schwarz
Andrew Sandler

AFFILIATION

Committee Chair
CB 8
Committee Vice Chair
CB 8
Riverdale Press
Citi Habitats Inc.
NYCHA
Marble Hill
Community Committee Member
rep. Councilman G. Oliver Koppell

Meeting started at 7:30 PM,
Chaired by Chairman Mr. Thomas C. Durham.

Introduction of those in attendance.

Approving the minutes of the March 2010 meeting.

The Minutes of the March 22nd, 2010 meeting were approved.

Chairman's Report

1. Department of Homeless Services (DHS) Commissioner Robert V. Hess resigned his post and moved on to head a Non-for-Profit, (the Doe Fund) that specializes in many social programs that aid and houses the homeless.
Mr. Seth Diamond, former deputy commissioner at the Human Resources Administration will replace Mr. Hess.
The Housing Committee was due to have a guest speaker from DHS to explain the "Housing First" program at our May meeting but due to the change in the administration, we'll have to check to see if a speaker for our meeting is still available.
2. Mayor Bloomberg announced that the homeless must work to keep receiving City services. The mayor's program will demand that the homeless pay at least 30% of the services provided for them. The Chairman feels, with 10% of the national average unemployed, where will the homeless find jobs in this recessed economic environment.
3. In regards to Budget Priorities FY 2012, I sent out emails to all of the city agencies that governs NYC housing and asked if they had any budget requests that they would like to be highlighted in the CB's budget request. I've not heard back from any of the agencies. If I do not hear back from any of the agencies by Mays general meeting, we'll just resubmit last year's budget requests. We'll discuss this in detail when this item comes up on tonight's agenda.

Agenda**1. NYCHA' Federalization and Voucher Process Programs.**

The NYCHA presented the Housing Committee with two great speakers to educate the members on these complex housing issues.

Mr. David R. Morris, Deputy General Counsel for Real Estate & Economic Development, speaking on point in regards to the Federalization Program and Mr. Gregory Kearns, Assistant Deputy General Manager for Leased Housing. Mr. Kearns's specializes in the NYCHA voucher process.

- A. Federalization: there are 336 total number of public housing developments in NYC, 21 of these were city and state developed and did not automatically qualify for federal assistance or programs like Federal Stimulus money. NYCHA currently needs one billion dollars annually to operate the 21 developments that were not in the federal program.
- B. Under "Federalization" NYCHA would incorporate these 21 developments under the same umbrella with the 315 developments that do receive federal subsidized monies. NYCHA has a 15 year agreement for which it can stay in the Federal Program. There is a rough draft of the Federalization Plan attached to these minutes.
- C. Third Party Private Funding: Due to the fact that NYC will not be contributing subsidized funding, (NYCHA is an independent "state" agency) a private funding partnership, in this case CitiGroup, (Citi Bank) will raise funds selling bonds. CitiGroup estimates that it can raise an average of 40 million dollars to aid the Non-for-Profit housing. The big carrot for CitiGroup is an 82% NYC tax credit over the 15 years NYCHA remains in the Federalization Program.
- D. NYCHA total Federalization funding package:
 - NYS will allocate 42 million dollars.
 - CitiGroup estimates it will raise over 40 million dollars.
 - Federal Stimulus dollars will be 30% of NYCHA's one billion dollar annual budget. (Currently not funded.)
- E. One of the largest rumors that needed to be addressed was Privatization! Mr. Morris "clearly stated" that there is a covenant with this plan that states, NYCHA properties will remain public housing as long as NYCHA exists, whether it is in or chooses to leave the Federalization Plan.

Mr. Kearns informed the committee of the current Voucher Process and the situation of the program as it stood on the night of the meeting.

- A1. The federal subsidized vouchers are for the Section 8 Program. Out of the two public housing developments in CB8, Ft. Independence/Bailey is in the federal program but Marble Hill houses were not. This will change under the new Federalization Plan.
- B2. Marble Hill Houses will only be accepting Section 8 vouched individuals and families. This practice has started as early as 2008. Presently there is no present funding for Section 8. Due to the lack of funding, there is an estimate of 30 apartments sitting unoccupied in Marble Hill. These apartments will remain empty until funding is restored.
President Obama, placed a 19Billion dollar proposal to allocate new

funding for Section 8 housing. Congress has not acted on this proposal.

- C3. Residents with Section 8 vouchers will be subsidized up to 30% of their net income. Naturally this will be modified for each individual financial status, taking in account if that individual is enrolled in other programs that classifies them as one with “special needs”. The voucher process under Federalization will also help keep working families in the program longer by making adjustments as income grows. For example a 3% in income, the subsidy will be 27% than the full 30%. Just an example! Residents with special needs or considered endangered will be exempt and their Section 8 voucher applications be honored priority. Mr. Kearns reluctantly admitted that there will be a few residents that fall through the cracks and will not be qualified for Section 8 status. These residents will have to seek housing in the open market or some other form of housing.

- D4. Mr. Kearns and Mr. Morris reminded us, that until the Federal Stimulus Money is in place and the Section 8 funding is in place both the Federalization Plan and new Section 8 voucher will not go forward.

The committee was unsettled with the idea that some residents will be forced out of their homes. We will discuss this issue at our next meeting. Due to the fact that we did not have any real numbers to work with and the amount of information we all took in during the long meeting, the chair thought it best to discuss this at May’s meeting when we all had time to reflect on our thoughts and learn how many families will be affected.

2. Budget Priorities FY 2012.

As reported in the Chairman’s Report, the agencies that govern housing has not responded to our request for directions of budget priorities.

The Housing Committee agreed to leave the FY 2011 priorities on the board if we do not hear from these agencies by May’s General Board Meeting.

3. New Business

- A. Ms. Sharon Frey from the Bronx Jewish Community Council would like to present a program BJCC’s Out Reach Program for the Elderly. Ms. Frey will report on how this program collaborates housing and senior issues.
- B. Tony Creaney brought to the Chair’s attention that NYC will change the lighting codes to all NYC buildings over a five year plan. The committee will look into these new changes on behalf of CB8.

Next Housing Committee Meeting

Monday, May 24th 2010

Meeting Adjourned

Meeting ended at 9PM

Thomas C. Durham
Chairman
Housing Committee