

## BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8

### MINUTES OF THE HOUSING COMMITTEE APRIL 23, 2012 AT THE BOARD OFFICE

<b>PRESENT</b>	<b>AFFILIATION</b>
Thomas C. Durham, Committee Chair	CB8
Steven Balicer	CB8
Tony Creaney	CB8
Philip Friedman	CB8
Julie Reyes	CB8
Georgia Santiago	CB8
Patrick O'Hagan	NYCHA
Andrew Sandler	rep. Councilman G. Oliver Koppell
Gordon Slade	KHNIA
Elizabeth Thompson	KHNIA
Donald Ranshte	Department of Buildings (DOB)

#### 1. Introductions

- A. Meeting started at 7:45 PM.
- B. Meeting held at Community Board Office
- C. Approving the minutes of the last Housing Committee Meeting  
March 26, 2011

#### 2. Chair's report:

- A. The Chairman reported that he attended three housing related meetings/forums since the last committee meeting on March 26, 2012. He reported:
  1. On April 19, Visitation Roman Catholic Church hosted a "Tenant's Rights" forum targeting residential housing issues in the open market rental community. Due to a last minute emergency, I was unable to attend this meeting but will try to obtain the minutes. This would have been a great opportunity to learn what the main items of concern are to those that live in our rental housing.
  2. Saturday, April 21<sup>st</sup>, NY State Senator G. Rivera held a housing forum at Lehman College to help the Senator learn the need and concern of all housing issues in his electoral district. The Senator's staff member, Ms. Josiris Urena did a great job in organizing this event that had several workshops dealing with homelessness to foreclosures and every housing issue in between.
  3. Before tonight's April 23<sup>rd</sup> Housing Committee meeting, the chair attended a forum hosted by Manhattan College. This forum targeted the Problem Buildings & Property in the community, focusing on landlords & property managers, housing court, licensing all landlords & property

managers and suggesting some remedies to curtail the problems many citizens find in dealing with housing issues.

4. The Chair reported on the fire in the Marble Hill houses where several critical injuries were reported.

### 3. Agenda

- A. Discussion on NYC Housing Authority Security Issues with Mr. Patrick O'Hagen, Security Director, Office of Security. (NYCHA)
  1. Community Board 8 has two NYCHA complexes within its borders. They are the 11 buildings in the Marble Hill Houses complex and 2 buildings in the Ft. Independence House on Bailey Avenue, which is within half mile northeast of Marble Hill.
  2. Mr. O'Hagan addressed the concerns and questions put forth by the housing committee. These issues covered security cameras, building entry systems, policing, enforcement of NYCHA rules and general public safety.
  3. In regards to security cameras, Mr. O'Hagen acknowledged that Councilman Cabrera allocated \$700,000 of discretionary funding for security cameras for Marble Hill Houses. This is the estimated cost to put all 11 buildings on a complete security camera system and is estimated at \$100,000 per building which is \$400,000 under budget to complete Marble Hill Houses. In addition, another \$200,000 is needed to install the system in Ft. Independence Houses which has 2 buildings. The Housing Committee agreed that CB8 should reach out to Councilmen Koppell and Rodriguez whose electoral district covers small portions of the Marble Hill Houses. A portion of Marble Hill and all of Ft. Independence Houses are within Councilman Cabrera's district.
  4. NYCHA is testing a key pod building entry system in the Mitchel Houses in the south Bronx as a pilot program. Key pods are digital magnetic device that substitutes for the standard door key. The pods can be programmed to open an assigned door and dedicated to a specific owner. If the pilot program proves to be successful, NYCHA will install this system throughout all 21 NYCHA complexes city wide.
  5. Regarding public safety on the grounds, ideas of satellite police stations, (since the merging of the three police agencies, City, Housing and Transit), NYCHA felt that their grounds were not being patrolled as efficiently as when they had an in-house police department. Mr. Sandler, from Councilman Koppell's office noted that there is funding set aside to cover the cost of additional policing promised by the city to insure that policing of NYCHA grounds will not be lost because of the merger. We recommended that NYCHA hold the city to this agreement.
  6. Mr. O'Hagen asked the Housing Committee to keep the security cameras and the key pod security entry system in NYCHA's buildings as committee budget priorities.
- B. Capital/Expense Budget Priorities FY 2014
  - a. Buildings Department (DOB) Mr. Donald Ranshte graced us with a visit and their agency priority budget. Mr. Ranshte had two expense items, the

first: a Computer Integration System. This upgrade will allow all DOB web programs and users to interface with one another. DOB estimated \$1,000,000 he needed to introduce this system. The second DOB priority budget request is a new computer program system they are calling the Developer's Hub. This program will allow all web users to examine all architectural drawing by all who access this program. It will also allow all to know the status of each plan and the person (s) who signed off on the approval of plan. This will give transparency and accountability for plans and permits issued by DOB. The cost of the Developer's Hub Computer program is estimated at \$2,500,000.

- b. Mr. Ranshte said that DOB's overall annual budget is \$50,000,000, with the agency taking in \$60,000,000 in fees and permits. On average, in better financial times, fees and permits were around \$90,000,000. Since the city's hiring freeze, DOB will be hiring 25 new employees. Twenty four men and 1 woman who will take positions throughout the five boroughs. Some people will be trained as field inspectors, while others will fill the voids in administration. The chairman asked if DOB included funding of not-for-profits in either of their budgets. Mr. Ranshte responded that DOB does not provide funding for any organizations.
  
- c. The Department of Housing Preservation & Development (HPD) budget administration office will try to have their budget priorities to the committee before the May meeting.
- d. No response was received from the Department of Homeless Services (DHS).

#### 5. New Business

- A. May agenda item will be on the topic of foreclosures. Due to the Memorial Day holiday, our May meeting will be on the last TUESDAY night of the Month, May 29, 2012.

#### 6. Adjourn

- A. Meeting adjourned at 9 PM.

Submitted by

Thomas C. Durham  
Chair