

Minutes – PENDING COMMITTEE APPROVAL
Housing Committee
Bronx Community Board 8
10/26/2020

Contained herein are the minutes for the October 26, 2020 meeting of the Bronx Community Board 8 Housing Committee. The following memorandum was prepared by Margaret Della, CB8 Member.

Meeting called to order: 7:05 PM, via Zoom.

Committee Member Attendance: J. Townes, D. Jackson, T. Morris, M. Della, J. Reyes

Committee Member Absence: R. Kaplan, T. Pardo

Board Member Attendance: D. Gellman, O. Murray

Community Member Attendance: Jessica Heller, Alma C, Chris Arriaga, Brendan Cheney, West Bronx Housing, Winnie Campbell, Kelly B, Lyna Saad, Mariana Miller D'Alessandro

Agenda

Chair Jackson started meeting with introducing existing and new members.

Minutes (from previous meeting): Motion Chair. None opposed.

Remarks from Brendan Cheney, Director of Policy, NYC Housing Conference, advocacy organization on affordable housing and financing. Organization works at federal, state and city levels for good housing options. Shared United for Housing campaign (holding conference and report forthcoming) guiding principles and getting support from Mayoral candidates and hopefully commitments from next Mayor:

1. Confront and undo a legacy of systemic racial discrimination in housing and homeownership
2. Prioritize preservation of public housing in a citywide affordable housing plan
3. Expand affordable housing supply through preservation and development
4. Improve housing affordability for the lowest income New Yorkers
5. Reduce homelessness through coordinated housing and homeless policy

Questions:

I We began looking at guidance and data, homeownership rates, data broken down by race and ethnicity. We examined what history has done: much lower homeownership rates by black new yorkers vs white; homelessness higher in black/latinx than % of population; neighborhood segregation; and landuse - making access more fair addressing disparity.

Is Mental health a part of campaign or where does it fit? We look broadly at homelessness and housing poverty and then at what are the policies that people believe will help. We look at homelessness in terms of needs being unmet. How are people interacting with other systems? How to prevent people from becoming homeless? What already exists?

Considering that come January, many people may be on the streets, mayoral election is a long way off for what people will be suffering through - What are you doing in terms of advocacy now? We are still working on recommendations for what officials can do right now. At the State level, we had been engaged on HEROS act at federal level, rental assistance and reverse housing budget cuts at City level. We are bringing a coalition together for “both” issues (future and present). Chair clarified that Brendan specifically brought here to discuss conference and leaves space for follow up and connections on all the work being done throughout the year.

CB8 Landuse committee considering rezoning and landmarking buildings in Kingsbridge area of the Bronx - could you provide recommendations and/or resources on these issues to help inform the committee? We'd like to learn more. Yes, however, if too local specific, we would make a recommendation to you on a contact for someone/another entity that would be more helpful. We'd like to engage on these issues.

Report will also include budget impact.

Chair report

Committee moved our September meeting to ensure we could properly discuss Census and provide additional information to the community. Thank you for flexibility in having meeting so early in the year.

Chair Jackson attended September meeting at Marble Hill during which he spoke with new manager, Ms. Frye, and hopefully she will present at CB8 Housing in November. Marble Hill Residents Association has minutes available if we wish to review. Captain Melendez spoke to public safety concerns. Marble Hill community center awaiting big capital projects - new roof among other things. Could work with CB8 Youth and Aging Chairs to support community center.

Ms. Miller sent an email to CB8 to discuss tenant protections. Chair welcomed her to speak. She was present on the line, but did not speak. Her email has been shared with the Committee for their review. Chair invited NYC Housing reps to November meeting to follow up as well. J. Reyes directed all to Hcr.gov.rent for more information on renter specific laws and guidelines.

Chair inquired about any outdoor dining implications on homes and housing issues. He encouraged committee members to discuss with others about being collaborative should this be a concern.

Chair reminded the Committee that SCRE released a draft report and encouraged members to review and submit feedback.

Old Business

Housing Committee needs vice chair.

New Business

Next meeting scheduled for November 23rd.

Josh new Executive Director of West Bronx Housing and Neighborhood Resource Center introduced himself.

Motion to adjourn J. Townes, Second M. Della. Meeting Adjourned 8:15pm