

## February 3, 2021 SoHo/NoHo Neighborhood Housing Information Session

### Post-event Follow-up Notes

This document contains the **full list of verbatim questions submitted via the Zoom Q&A feature** during the SoHo/NoHo Housing Information Session held on February 3, 2021.

Please note that the questions were directly exported from the Zoom platform and have not been altered in any way except for the removal of individuals' identifying information.

For questions that were answered during the event, you can watch the event's recording. Answers to commonly asked questions regarding the planning process and the neighborhood plan will continue to be updated as part of our SoHo/NoHo FAQ as we move forward.

The event's recording and FAQ can be found on our website at [www.nyc.gov/sohonohoplan](http://www.nyc.gov/sohonohoplan).

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Number	Question	Asker Name
1	I would like to hear more specifically, from Gale Brewer ,how the AIR status of loft buildings will be changed under the rezoning. IT was highlighted during our many community based exploratory meetings.. but the language in the proposal could not be more vague.	Susan B.
2	How many people are in attendance?	Anonymous Attendee
3	important NYC neighborhood while we increase affordable housing. How can we work with developers and the city to enforce this?	Josh M.
4	Will there be a dedicated session on historic preservation as well?	Todd F.
5	As 40 year certified artist owner of my space, the property real estate taxes for our building rose from \$59,000 a year 12 years ago to \$250,00.00. We are responsible for maintenance and restoration of vaulted sidewalks and local law 11 every 5 years. This is our senior forever home..what can the city do to assist us seniors to stay in our homes, not forcing us to sell because The City has become too expensive for us to live here? while talking about affordable housing please don't leave us behi	Anonymous Attendee
6	Question for Margaret Chin: Doesn't the fact that there are, and will be hundreds of thousands of square feet of unused office space in Midtwon, the upper east side, SoHo and elsewhere in the City, as well as an enormous amount of retail space available....doesn't that change the equatiton for affordable housing? Many SoHo residents, and many developers I've spoken with find the high rise proposals, with 80% market rate apartments, to be a profit play by developers under the guise of affordable housing. Wouldn't more units be made availabe for low income housing if we simply converted a significant portion the unused space in SoHo and through the City to affordalbe housing? If the Council members present really believe in affordable housing, and not the commercial market rate infusipon into a unique neighborhood, wouldn't you support this clear alternative plan?	Frederick D.

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7	<p>What percentage of new housing will be affordable. What percentage of affordable housing will be allocated to which different levels of AMI.</p> <p>What makes DCP think that the developers won't do everything they can to avoid construction of affordable housing while maximizing higher priced units</p>	Alida C.
8	<p>I would like to discuss the motivations behind this effort, especailly concerning Human, Creative and Social Capital vs. "land value" and finaciall considerations as outlined by Sylvia LI</p>	Sante S.
9	<p>Which zoning rules are impediments to businesses and arts and culture</p>	Alida C.
10	<p>THIS IS A TOTAL LIE. SOHO IS FILLED WITH ARTISTS TORTS AND RENT Stabilized Housing. This entire rezoning is based on a pack of lies.</p> <p>Nobody is buying this abortion. There are a dozen loft buildings unaccounted for and 400 Loft units before the Loft Board for a decade. Green light every single and put them into RSL.</p> <p>This Rezoning is based on fraud. We are not interested in this ridiculous banter. When live/ work space is now more important than ever given advent of Hollywood East.</p>	Victoria H.
11	<p>what about adaptive reuse of hotels, commercial spaces for truly deeply affordable housing</p>	Adrienne S.
12	<p>Why is Soho, a historic district with a fairly small landmass, being targeted to increase its density, while other neighborhoods with similar profiles (such as greenwich, west village, tribeca) not be expected to increase density in a similar manner. There seems to be a greater need in surrounding areas (lower east side, hudson square, fidi and across most of manhattan) that could support development and would welcome greater density as already zoned.</p>	Anonymous Attendee
13	<p>Please give information on demographics pertaining to artists &amp; their families living and working in SoHo and NoHo. Please give your sources for the data you give. Total number of artists and artist families. What type of units do they live in (IMD, rental, rent stabilized, low-cost coops, etc. What is their average income? How many of them are unincorporated businesses in the neighborhood, filing Schedule C's. If you do not know the answers, please explain how you are working on getting them, or if you consider them irrelevant to the "Neighborhood" Plan.</p>	Lora T.

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14	Note: I am asking this question in writing because I have a critical business dinner scheduled this evening that conflicts with thi important event (yes, during Covid...safely distanced). I will check in with others attending this meeting to learn of your response. And will follow up at the next meeting. Thank you.	Frederick D.
15	Housing loss on the Upper East Side is often due to the demolition of walk-ups to allow construcion of market rate towers. There have been very little affordable housing constructed despite much new construction.	Anonymous Attendee
16	It seems like a correlation between affordable housing and opportunity in a specific area is being drawn. Has DCP identified the jobs that would be available to people in affordable housing in the target area? Are there any? Please provide data support for the assertion that locating affordable housing in any specific area results in jobs acquired in that area. Thanks.	Coral D.
17	what is the exact amount of rent-stabilized/controlled units in SoHo/NoHo?	L F
18	Can the HPD share how many rent-stabilized / Rent Controlled residential units there are in SoHo and NoHo?	Marna L.
19	<p>There are so many vacancies landlords can't pay the taxes. M I H is a luxury housing plan. Its sitting vacant. We are not approving altering zoning for housing nobody wants under Bill DeBlasio. The market spoke.</p> <p>If he is saying we need Affordable Housing. Make a plan to. This isn't it. This is a luxury housing plan to attract companies from out of state. Why should we let the city force us from our homes to accommodate people who don't even live here?</p> <p>This is not an Affordable Housing Plan.</p>	Anonymous Attendee
20	Why is the city not looking to develop afforable housing in more affordable areas that need more development? Not force development through rezoning in high cost historic areas fully developed. It seems like a lot of effort and money for little impact by overall units. Relative to other part of the city soho doesnt seem like it wants or need development at higher density but has welcomed new development where permitted to be more affordable, nor should it be required to rezone to make up for the city's failure over decades to diversify its housing options across the 5 boroughs.	Anonymous Attendee

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21	Please explain, in detail, the rich amenities of both Noho and Soho	Darlene L.
22	I certainly hope you are not thinking that Noho/SoHo is the best location for this housing crush; there are so many other locations to distribute affordable [un]lic housing. The argument for transit “convenience” also exists at the Atlantic Ave. stop in Brooklyn and the 74th St.-Roosevelt Ave in Jackson Heights. Restricting and aiming at these enghborhoods is still short sighted and not clear since you do NOT know the impact of COVID over the next 10 years let alone the next 20. Shelve rezoning for now.	Anonymous Attendee
23	Did Mr. Sandler state that there only 311 Rent Stabilized units in SoHo & NoHo that were formerly IMD units?	Pete D.
24	Many artists and their families in SoHo are senior citizens, living in affordable artist coops, and affordable rental loft law units. They are aging in place and have no intention of selling their homes. What accomodation is being done for them?	Lora T.
25	To be more accurate, shouldn't the Rent & Sales comparisons be per sf instead?	Anonymous Attendee
26	lofts. Its Rent Stabilized Housing. Now every other building is being warehoused. This is our Affordable Housing stock. Rezoning will deregulate. In buildings that are Rent Stabilized as a matter of law.  Why hasn't DCP put every unit into Rent Stabilization? Over buildings landlord failed to register with the city to defraud the city and state.  We have the units. Why hasnt DCP put every unit into RSL? This is scandalous.	Anonymous Attendee
27	1. In its latest District Needs Statement, CB2 asked DCP to do a detailed inventory of the types of housing in CB2. The reply was that this was outside DCP's purview. Which agency should we turn to?	Frederica S.
28	2. In the HPD presentation, I understood that there were 311 former IMD units. Is that over the last 30+ years? And if so, where did that number come from? The Loft Board itself could not provide CB2 with that number.	Frederica S.
29	Can you explain how the Council chooses these options? Does the developer not get to choose? What criteria would the council use in choosing the specific MIH option?	Michael S.
30	on?	Ralph L.

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31	<p>But he isn't finishing the sentence. By displacing its residents, deepening the Housing Crisis.</p> <p>You're insane kid! We don't have \$6,000 a month to displace every resident to rezone to build 75% more luxury housing.</p> <p>SoHo /Noho has the Affordable Housing. Legalize every unit and stop the displacement. Tribeca is sitting vacant from Rezoning. You must be kidding!</p>	Victoria H.
32	Do the sponsors of this meeting seriously think that what was just presented by HPD was digestible by the bulk of the attendees?	Pete D.
33	How many people in attendance could actually follow that presentation?	Renee M.
34	Will affordable senior housing be considered as part of this plan?	Leigh B.
35	What are your plans to support the many, many senior residents of SoHo, for whom affordability is a terrible challenge. I'm not recognizing this bastion of affluence you paint. We are strained beyond breaking by city taxes. How will you help us? What supports will you put in place as you envision a better SoHo where no one in need is left behind?	Jane F.
36	EB i see an answer to several questions. Not mind specifically re Alr .. are you saying this will not be addressed this evening and will be at a future meeting. PLS answer me	Susan B.
37	We cannot see the questions being asked by other attendees! This does not make this a more transparent and open process. How will you address this failure?	Renee M.
38	will landmarking be preserved in soho/noho?	Susan W.
39	Would there be caps on how many developers can choose to be in each of the 3 or 4 categories that you showed before in terms of distribution of affordability? If so how would that be determined? If not, why? What will happen if all developers choose one of the categories	Eliana C.
40	stabilized units: Is there not overlap in JLWQA and rent stabilized units?	Zella J.
41	Is upzoning an integral part of this planning proposal?	Susan W.

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42	The proposed rezoning would allow developers to pay into a housing opportunity fund if the new building is less than 12,500 sq. ft. How does HPD calculate the amount of the payment into the fund? A city like Boston requires a payment of \$380,000 per low income unit in wealthy zones. What does NYC require in SoHo/NoHo?	Steven H.
43	The presentation stated that the plan would “Increase density where appropriate.” What is considered “appropriate.”?	Marna L.
44	Regarding concerns having to do with “density”, are you willing to stay consistent with the zoning in SoHo and NoHo in place today, by placing restrictions to the amount of and type of eating and drinking establishments?	Marna L.
45	What are the options to coordinate with DOE to ensure there is school integration alongside residential integration, especially given community education district 2’s excellent and well-funded schools?	Casey B.
46	How about correcting this in real time like while this presentation is going on?	Anonymous Attendee
47	MY QUESTION WAS NUMBER 2 AND I WANT TO SPEAK. WHAT "CONVENIENT ORDER" ARE YOU SCHEDULING QUESTIONS WITH?	Sante S.
48	Actually please cancel this question!	Eliana C.
49	Would there be caps on how many developers can choose to be in each of the 3 or 4 categories that you showed before in terms of distribution of affordability? If so how would that be determined? If not, why? What will happen if all developers choose one of the categories	Anonymous Attendee
50	Please clarify how “naturally occurring affordable housing” is not present in SoHo in light of the fact we have numerous artist coops, some of which, like mine, only allow certified artists to buy in and are therefore not “market rate.”	Anonymous Attendee
51	Extremely informative presentation! I'm happy to see DCP so dedicated to bringing more housing to central areas of New York City. SoHo and NoHo are also in high demand for commercial development, so I'm wondering if DCP has any thoughts on how to prevent this badly-needed housing from being crowded out by offices. I don't mind offices in general, but will the residential and office FAR limits in the plan be designed so that this rezoning results in sufficient new housing?	Jake S.

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52	ensure that empty unused spaces within SoHo and NoHo are also used for Affordable Housing? If so, what is the plan: i.e., what kind of empty spaces, how will it be determined whether or not the spaces are appropriate for living quarters and where will the money come from to renovate the space for residential use?	Marna L.
53	We need to see them in the moment!	Anonymous Attendee
54	Actually please cancel this question!	Anonymous Attendee
55	Cancel the question that says: Would there be caps on how many developers can choose to be in each of the 3 or 4 categories that you showed before in terms of distribution of affordability? If so how would that be determined? If not, why? What will happen if all developers choose one of the categories—I figured it out myself! Thank you!	Anonymous Attendee
56	<p>My questions relate to process.</p> <p>1) The Draft Agenda, still on the landing page lists “existing housing in SoHo and NoHo” but there was very little discussion tonight on this topic. For future meetings, can you share more realistic agendas? Will this topic be covered in future meetings?</p> <p>2) Will there be meetings on retail uses, one of the original stated purposes for pursuing a rezoning?</p> <p>3) For the dozens of previous meetings, DCP collected email addresses. For future meetings, can DCP email previous participants in addition to posting online?</p> <p>4) Can DCP change its webinar format so the public can see who is participating?</p> <p>Thank you.</p>	Jeannine K.
57	With the City Council trying to get a comprehensive city plan, what impact would such a plan have on affordable housing and market rate housing	Anonymous Attendee
58	Will there be any restrictions and/or regulations placed on a Real Estate Developer who plans to construct a residential building that includes affordable housing units: for example: 1) are there minimum size limitations — will the affordable renters have the same access to general buiding amenities?	Marna L.

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59	For those of us who currently live in rent-stabilized apartments in the SoHo West zone, are we in danger of being displaced when the city mandates higher density affordable buildings?	Bruce L.
60	In Gowan us the court has recently ruled against this process via Zoom is unfair. Why are we going forward during the pandemic ? The process is very unfriendly to the community and cumbersome	Anonymous Attendee
61	Is the process of converting commercial to residential any more complex than upzoning and development?	Anonymous Attendee
62	How do you balance the interest of residents from having a flood of units on the market creating oversupply and drop in values for existing residents? There seems to be a glut of inventory and a market correction occurring. How do you avoid soho becoming like many areas with a glut of supply? There should be a requirement for a greater percentage of affordable housing and not a significant amount of market rate or luxury units to help developers profit, if the goal is really to create more affordable housing and not more high end units.	Anonymous Attendee
63	This feels like a gift to developers at the expense of the City. Affordable housing is critical but there are vital parts of the City that attract residents and tourists which build businesses	Anonymous Attendee
64	Do you know How many city owned properties in all NYC have vacant buildings that can be updated...and used for affordable housing?	Anonymous Attendee
65	Does your plan retain the Artist nature of the area or are you trying to remove Artist residency requirements? Or are you claiming to do both? Please explain.	Ralph L.
66	ONY has commandeered your chat. They arrive in groups, read from scripts, and try to ride over everyone. This is a sham. And what makes these online meetings unacceptable. Residents are unable to have a voice. We need in-person meetings.	Anonymous Attendee
67	What about the city making a deal with owners so owners can provide more affordable rents thereby not needing to convert keep thee neighborhood? We def do not want tall glass buildings. If you change the look and feel of the area too much you will hurt the economy of our city that soho/noho greatly contributes too due to its unique vibe and look.	Josh M.

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68	Excellent presentation. Regarding HPD's current residential statistics within the study area (e.g., # of units, rents, owned v leased) was residential defined as only those UG2 residential units on a CofO or were nonresidential lofts and JLWQA also counted as residential?	shelly f.
69	How will the Special SoHo NoHo Mixed-Use District address the transfer of development or air rights?	Jeannine K.
70	I am writing on behalf of the American Institute of Architects New York. Our offices are just outside the proposed rezoned area and we strongly support the rezoning. During its revisions, is the city considering how and where to add additional housing beyond what was initially proposed, particularly affordable and supportive housing?	Adam R.
71	How much does it cost to run one of these meetings? Is there ever a point where there is too much outreach and holding these meetings is just burning time and money; time and money that could go to affordable housing development.	Anonymous Attendee
72	Why propose a non-residential floor area retention requirement that disincentivizes adaptive reuse of office space for residential use and adds more bureaucracy, not less, despite the plan that seeks to replace zoning that relies "on individual land use applications and ad hoc approvals" and reduce special permits?	Jeannine K.
73	Can the answers be sensitive to the time taken to answer as well ?	jan h.
74	towers? By definition, R9X zoning permits building heights of 170 ft on wide streets and R10 zoning permits building heights up to 210 ft on wide streets, as allowed under Tower Regulations.	Jeannine K.
75	This type of forum allows ONY to control the discussion. We need community meetings in-person so that residents and businesses of SoHo and NoHo can be allowed a larger voice.	Anonymous Attendee
76	Let me rephrase that statement to compose a question: Will you take time to speak with residents of SoHo/NoHo? Not one of these "open meetings" where ONY members from out-of-neighborhood and even out-of -state dominate the Q&A and chat and are aggressive and offensive in painting residents with a broad, black, elitist brush. What about us? Do you plan to engage with us directly and listen?	Anonymous Attendee
77	Please When will my first question be asked and answered. I sent it in in the start of zoom..	Ronnie W.

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78	To Sylvia Li: Why the rush to rezone? Why not take the time to look closely at conversion of commercial vacant space? The profiling of building cost is not the only reason to consider. Density is clearly a relevant question. Lots of legal means are available for conversion. Please don't dismiss it so casually in favor of new building.	Anonymous Attendee
79	The proposed upzoning will create a lot of soft sites outside of the historic districts, and could lead to potential demolition of buildings to assemble larger sites, and displacement of residential tenants as well as small businesses. Is DCP planning to include SoHo/NoHo in the Certificate of No Harassment program, and will HPD provide any funding to any tenant rights organizations such as CAAAV and AAFE to educate rent regulated tenants about their rights so they aren't harassed out of their apartments?	Steven H.
80	We need to see/hear them while the meeting is in process that's what happens in an in person meeting.	Renee M.
81	Thank you for your excellent presentation, and I especially appreciate you pointing out that our housing shortage is a citywide issue. Are there any efforts to reach out beyond the immediate neighborhood and invite a wider range of voices to these meetings--especially people who might be able to move into the new affordable units?	Dan M.
82	What I meant was to have city subsidized housing to avoid the great percentage of market rate this will bring	Alida C.
83	Is there a school in Soho/ Noho?	jan h.
84	How did the city select the 27 projected sites out of approximately 850 lots in the study area? Do the 27 projected sites underestimate the impact of the proposed zoning change?	Jeannine K.
85	I was the first person to post a question. Please read and answer it. Thank you	Ronnie W.
86	St?	Jessica K.
87	I was not called on to speak tonight, but I wished to say that I first moved to Soho in 1977 and that I fully support rezoning for more housing. I am excited at the prospect of new neighbors. What can be done to further incentivize building new apartments instead of office buildings?	Christopher G.

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88	How many affordable housing units were created among the thousands of new apartments built on West Street in the West Village and Tribeca and in Hudson Yards? Do the professionals consider it a success?	Thomas G.
89	Can DCP add an option on the zoom registration for Attendees to receive notice for future meetings? Should all city-funded hosts (not volunteer organizations) be required to send out emails notices to their existing mailing lists?	Jeannine K.
90	will the chat be posted on your website?	michele c.