

Housing and Human Services of Community Board 12 of Manhattan

Community Board Present Members: Ayisha Oglive, Barbara, Fern Hertzberg, Bianca Guerrero, Jay Mazur, Waldys Cruz, Ariel Miranda

Public Member: Marshall Vanderpool

Opening/Update, Chair, Ayisha Oglive

- CB 12 renewal deadline is tomorrow at 5 PM.
- Our board would like to recruiting public members – four for HHS. Sometimes they can come to fill a void for certain representation or talent. Public members vote and participate at a committee level but not a general, and are appointed by the chair. Youth are encouraged to apply.
- State of the Borough is on Feb. 24 at 1-2 pm.
- Chair has put together new evaluation forms for all committees.
- Monday: Five hour review of all things housing. Microsoft and Envision, a block chain company, put out an RFP for a use-case for block chain in NYC. 80 data points related to all things housing. Block chain is based on consensus and decentralizing information. In finance, it's decentralizing money from banks. The benefit for something like housing, institutional memory, trends, and push notifications to alert us about what is happening in our district.
- **Jay:** Thirteen years ago when I was a committee chair there was a resolution template.
- **Fern:** Would this be something that would enable residents to track what's happening around fraud with stabilized rent?
 - **Ayisha:** Yes.
 - **Barbara:** That's a DHCR data problem – it should be an open data system.
- Carrot Top was supposed to close this week because they were without gas for a year and a half. Residents in the building also lack housing. CM Rodriguez said they were not aware.
 - **Waldys:** 25 and 35 Hillside (a double building) are also out of gas.
 - **Fern:** there are 6 buildings in the community without gas.
 - **Jay:** How is providing a hot plate a safe accommodation if they are not supposed to be used for cooking, just heating up food? This is not a minor question.
 - **Ayisha:** How can the board get immediate notification of these problems? While Facebook is a useful tool it's not an official process of reporting things.
 - **Bianca:** Can Ebenezer get a report out of 311 complaints?
 - **Ayisha: Good idea.**
 - **Barbara: 311 report out** – 311 website allows you to sign up for weekly reports for the reports. We can also get it from BoardStat.
 - **Ariel:** AM De la Rosa wants to set up two taskforces to address the issue of buildings without gas. She wants to start with Dyckman Houses and Marble Hill NYCHA complexes, with people talking to those tenants in buildings without gas.
 - **Jay:** What can we do beyond collecting information? What we
 - **Ayisha:** Goal is to create more awareness and hold elected accountable.
- Al Taylor event on Predatory Lending
- Scott Stringer has a new report on housing. The amount we are spending on homeless beds is insane and it doesn't make sense to not be building more deeply affordable housing.
 - **Barbara:** Spend money from hotels on rental assistance or vouchers.
- Chris Nichols reported that Albany, Saturday Feb. 16 for Black, Latino, and Asian caucus: people can participate in voices lobbying for legislative changes. Fully paid for trips to Albany. One bus leaves at 6 and one at 6:30.
 - **Barbara:** Talk to the Ulster, Rochester, and Kingston Republicans – they are facing the first wave of a housing crisis so you should talk to them about the importance of rent control and stabilization. Emphasize senior services.

- GDS timeline: Dec. 15 – NY1 story. Dec 17 – eviction notice. It was also a coverage page story of the Manhattan Times and a follow up article on the website. Passed resolution saying that at very least GDS should get an extended amount of time for eviction.

1) 2019 Rent Reform Part 2

- Robust conversation last month that lasted until 11 PM. Chair put some information in writing which include:
 - **Barbara:** (1) Democrats are not likely to say get rid of MCIs. Landlords need to be incentivized for making major capital improvements, though it should not fall on the tenant. (2) A landlord self-reports honesty on MCI charges is a very large loophole. We need a governance unit. (3) MCIs should be very clearly defined, like it is for Mitchell-Lama developments.
 - “Whereas”-es should include: great lack of affordable housing, we have lost the [insert # of] rent controlled apartments in the last few years, lack of building in affordable housing in NYC augmenting this crisis, vacancy decontrol has exacerbated this problem, ___% of NYC residents are rent burdened, be it that we support the following principles for state legislation, [insert one about preferential rent]
 - **Ayisha:** Goal right now is to formulate a resolution to what we want to see the legislature reaction. Whereas should include
 - **Bianca:** (1) We should ask for MCIs – that state can consider PACE loans to put the financing on the building itself and not the tenants. (2) We need to end the vacancy bonus – it’s different from vacancy decontrol.
 - **Fern:** Things that the committee has consensus around: vacancy decontrol, no sunsets on rent regulations.
 - **Ariel:** For the record, S3482 sponsored by Andrea Stewart-Cousins deals with vacancy decontrol.
 - **Jay:** There is no consensus on MCI. Are they legitimate? They are not beneficial to tenants. It is Jay’s strong impression that MCIs prevents normal repairs from being made, it incentivizes landlords to. Via the housing code, landlords are guaranteed 6% return on their investments – if they are not getting it, they can apply to the Rent Guidelines Board to a hardship rent increase. No one currently does this.
 - Majority of the committee is in favor of eliminating MCIs. We support retroactive refunds to tenants in excess payments to the cost of the improvement. We do not support any double- or triple-dipping in taxes.
 - There is consensus that the only increase that a landlord is entitled to with a new lease is the increased established for the Rent Guidelines Board that year.
 - There is consensus about ending MBR and ending fuel cost adjustments.
 - RGB set up per state law, given authority to the City, and Mayor appoints members to it. The proposal regarding increase base on zip-codes or community board districts means that the increases will not be appointed by the Mayor’s appointees.
 - There is no consensus about increasing by zip code.
 - There is consensus about mandating release of information on all LLCs and corporations involved in the ownership and management of buildings and real estate (including the building owners and all corporate officers’ name, contact information, including corporate office address as per Assembly Bill A10042).
 - There is consensus around affording rights similar to those of rent-stabilized tenants for tenants renting under proprietary leases in condos; requiring non-profit-owned buildings to adhere to the rent rates established by rent stabilization; and regional affordable housing to relieve housing pressures on NYC.
 - We will table NYCHA repairs and giving DHCR repairs In the future, we would like to discuss reforms for DHCR that would give it teeth for next month.
 - There is consensus about creating a bill that establishes preferential rent as the current rent for the duration of the tenancy.

- There is consensus about eliminating the statute of limitations on overcharges and establish treble damages in all overcharge cases.
- We will investigate buyout offers and their relation to these issues in off hours.

2) Postponed – Fort Washington Armory Governance Part II

- Lack of use and misuse of space in the building and impact in the district. Ayisha spoke to DHS and re-invited them – they declined, they prefer a meeting that is not in front of the public.
 - **Jay:** Have an initial meeting to discuss what will happen at the subsequent. Use it to set agenda for public meeting. Another option is to put everything in writing.
 - **Ariel:** Does City law require us to have public meetings?
 - **Barbara:** GDS situation is not one in which any party can be neutral. DHS has to come to the board meeting.
 - **Ayisha:** The goal of future conversations is regarding the governance of the Armory.
 - **Public Question:** Can it be recorded?
 - **Ariel:** It is illegal to record in a government building.
 - **Fern:** This is a one way dialogue, invitation to Ayisha, making it clear that they will not come to the committee.
 - **Ayisha:** They are scheduled to come in March but they will not talk about the Armory governance. Our liaison is Lelani Ervin. We need DHS to present to the board on the state of homeless populations in NYC.
 - **Fern:** Who oversees this issue?
 - **Ayisha:** We can go to a Council committee that oversees contracting or procurement, or the Comptroller. She spoke to Mari de la Cruz. Should DHS continue in their governance of that building? Maybe they get limited to just the shelter, not the whole building?
 - **Jay:** The housing at the Armory is more long-term than a shelter. At point the average term of residency was 14 months. It was supposed to be for pre-transitional housing for people with mental use or chemical abuse going to assisted living.
 - **Public Member:** He has pictures/documentation of the gentleman living in the Armory during the track season. Are any nonprofits getting Ayisha their licensing for review?
 - **Ayisha:** Next steps are to insist that DHS appears at this meeting.
 - **Marshall:** After the general meeting, GDS was given an extension. The Armory Foundation received a mail package for Dr. Gary and held it at the desk. Ayisha requested an extension – DHS granted an extension to March 31st. It wasn't related to the resolution – Ayisha received a call asking what the result of the resolution was.