

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD NO. 8

**MINUTES OF THE HOUSING COMMITTEE MEETING
HELD ON NOVEMBER 23RD, 2009
AT THE BOARD OFFICE, 5676 RIVERDALE AVENUE**

PRESENT

Thomas Durham
Steven Balicer
Anthony Creaney
Philip Friedman
Sergio Marquez
Karen Armstrong
Edward Diaz
Candice M. Giove
Robert Gorman
Kevin Johns
Howard Kamiel
Howard Leventhal
Howard Levinger
Michael C. Lugo
Andrew Sandler
Rafaela Santos
Lynn Schwarz
Sarah Shaikl
Denise A. Snyder
Jerzy Warmen
Paul Waylonis
Ed Yaker

AFFILIATION

Committee Chair, CB 8
CB 8
CB 8
CB 8
Amalgamated Houses
NYS Dept. of Housing Community Renewal
Riverdale Review
Amalgamated Houses

Amalgamated Houses
Park Reservoir Pres

Housing Preservation Development
Rep. Councilman G. Oliver Koppell
U.S. Census
F.I.P.N.A
Schervier
NYS Dept. of Housing Community Renewal
Amalgamated Houses
Amalgamated Houses
Amalgamated Houses

1. Introductions

- A. Meeting started at 7:30 PM.
- B. Introduced Housing Committee members and guest speakers.
- C. Approve the October Housing meeting minutes.

2. Chair's report:

- A. The Chairman attended Ground Breaking Ceremony at 2701 Kingsbridge Terrace for the construction of a residential supportive apartment building that will give permanent homes for 90 homeless Bronx veterans both men and women. This building was sponsored by the Jericho Project, an organization that went out of its way to respond to all community concerns and requests. The open house is scheduled to take place in the spring/summer of 2010.
- B. Meeting with Bronx Community leaders in regards to speaking with Department of Homeless Services (DHS) Commissioner Hess on the issue of cluster homeless shelters without community notification. The primary agenda of this meeting was

that the Bronx speaks with united voices on this issue. The meeting with the Commissioner was originally scheduled for today but was cancelled until a date the commissioner can attend.

- C. New Property tax increase will take effect 1/1/2010. Homeowners will get an increase of 8.8%. Average increase \$3,233 to \$3,519, just under \$300. Co-op and Condo owners increase will be 10.3%. Co-ops average increase \$4,467 to \$4,930. Condos average \$6,442 to \$6,874.
- D. Fatal Fires exposes illegal homes. The Chair received an article over the weekend from CB8, Vice Chair, Brad Trebach in regards to the weekend's fatal fires that occurred in illegal and partition apartments. Other committee members brought similar articles. The chair has targeted this as a troublesome trend at the September meeting and the committee discussed this issue at length with Department of Buildings (DOB) Mr. Donald Ranshte during the October meeting. There are limitations for housing inspectors, they can only enter properties and homes with permission of residents or with open or unlock gates. This is even when complaints are filed or when one can plainly see that the house is over occupied.

In CB8 a R4 zone house (two-family) at 3404 Giles Place is being sold and advertised as a four family house. This house under the current laws, cannot be entered unless the inspector has completed a review.

The chair suggested a meeting with DOB, HPD and FDNY and a future committee resolution on giving these agencies powers to investigate when these homes are known.

3. Agenda

- A. 2010 Census - Informational presentation by guest, Ms. Raphaela Santos – Senior Partnership Specialist
 - a. The chairman stated that, “no matter how we feel about the living conditions of the residents in CB8, it is very important to each and every one of us that all of the people are counted!” The Chair turned the floor over to Ms. Santos.
 - b. Ms. Santos gave a very informative and educational presentation of the importance of the census to the Bronx The highlights of the census presentation;
 - 1. 4 billion dollars lost by under count since Census 2000
 - 2. Stimulus monies were based on the 2000 Census count
 - 3. Electoral districts sizes are determined by the Census
 - 4. Federal money allocations for every program
 - c. Ms. Santos explained that the main changes of this years Census will be, 10 questions, a larger number of different Languages and a new system to check and double check for an accurate count. The censor taker will be better trained

and will be wearing a new ID clearly representing themselves from other federal agencies.

- B. Division of Housing & Community Renewal (DHCR) – guest speakers, Denise A. C. Snyder manager, Ed Diaz, Specialist
 - a. DHCR was invited to CB8 due to grievances brought to our October general board meeting by some residents, claiming that they are being priced out of the Amalgamated, houses which are a part of the NYS affordable housing program. DHRC oversees the Amalgamated Houses.
 - b. DHRC oversight functions are the following:
 - 1. Checking the physical maintenance needs of the property.
 - 2. Help negotiate contracts with vendors, unions, contractors, etc.
 - 3. Advise management and the board of directors on key housing issues.
 - 4. Fare equity pricing of shares for each building. For clarification, the Amalgamated Houses consist of 11 buildings with the oldest dated back to 1927 and the last built in 1970. Each building carrying its own mortgage so share prices vary from building to building. DHCR did not have that information available. However, the base numbers per average apartment is lower than if the apartment would be on the open market.
 - c. DHRC claimed that all financial documents are available to all of the Amalgamated shareholders. Document packages are too large for standard mailboxes and are available at the management offices. DHCR also informed the Housing Committee that grievances can be filed at their website or by mail.
 - d. The management and board of director's representatives left an informational package for the committee too.
- C. Housing Preservation & Development (HPD) role in Mayor Bloomberg/City Council Speaker Quinn's \$20 million Pilot Plan to rescue failing developments.

Guest speaker Mr. Mike Lugo, Director, Bronx Borough Neighborhood. Mr. Lugo informed the Housing Committee that the Bloomberg/Quinn plan is now called HARP, Housing Asset Renewal Plan (HARP). The \$20 million is spread city wide. The full details of HARP are attached to the minutes. Mr. Lugo had some bad news for CB8, not one of the developers in our community signed on to the program. Applications for this program will expire on December 30, 2009. There is a possibility of extending the application period.

The chairman expressed concern of whether the lack of response was due to lack of advertisement. A quick survey of the public in attendance at the committee meeting indicated that they were not aware of the program. Mr. Sandler (rep of

Councilman Koppell) asked if HPD would reach out to developers. Mr. Lugo responded that this option could be explored.

Mr. Lugo was gracious enough to field other housing related questions from the committee and the public. Paragraph four of the Chairman's report was an issue that was discussed in detail. Mr. Lugo was pleased to hear that the public and this Committee would be willing to help resolve the dangerous housing conditions in this and all of the city communities.

D. New Business

Questions arose regarding the Con Edison project on Sedgwick Avenue during and the Holidays and their need to take up the entire street with no parking, including the overnight hours. The Chairman responded he would discuss this with the chair of the Traffic and Transportation committee.

4. Adjourn Meeting

Next schedule meeting date is 12/28/2009. Meeting ended at 9:00 PM.

Submitted by,

Thomas C. Durham
Chairman
Housing Committee

TCD:db (December 2, 2009)
HARP Attachment below:

Abstract Program: Housing**Asset Renewal Program (HARP)**

Description: HPD & HDC are inviting development teams to submit applications/proposals for the funding of affordable housing units in completed or partially constructed unoccupied residential buildings in NYC where, due to market or construction conditions, the owner is unable to complete construction or to sell or rent a sufficient number of units to meet private lending requirements and therefore construction completion has stalled.

Purpose: The funding is intended to convert market-rate units to affordable units and enable the owner to complete construction and/or rent or sell units. Applicants can apply to convert the developments into either affordable rental housing or affordable homeownership housing. HPD and HDC will make HARP loans which may not be combined with other subsidies. The maximum subsidy for homeownership projects is \$50,000. For rental projects it is \$75,000.

Eligibility: All projects located in the 5 boroughs of NYC. A minimum of 50% of the units must be made affordable. For homeownership projects, affordable units are defined as units that are affordable to households whose incomes are at or below 165% of HUD income limits adjusted for family size. For rental projects, affordable units are defined as units affordable to households whose incomes are at or below 130% of HUD income limits adjusted for family size. This subsidy will be provided only for affordable units; market rate units are not eligible for the subsidy. For projects that propose affordable homeownership, a preference will be given proposals that require a HARP subsidy of less than \$50,000 per affordable dwelling unit. For projects that propose affordable rental housing, a preference will be given to proposals that require a subsidy of less than \$75,000 per affordable dwelling unit. All projects funded with HARP subsidies will be subject to a minimum 30-year HPD or HDC Regulatory Agreement. Rents and sales prices must remain affordable to the targeted income group for the term of the HARP loan even if it is repaid. Developments with effectuated condominium plans are not eligible. New construction developments that have received prior government subsidies are not eligible. Proposals are being accepted on a rolling basis until 12/30/2009.

Income Limits:

| HH Size | Median Income | 130% | 165% |
|----------|---------------|-----------|-----------|
| 1 | \$53,800 | \$69,940 | \$88,770 |
| 2 | \$61,400 | \$79,820 | \$101,310 |
| 3 | \$69,100 | \$89,830 | \$114,015 |
| 4 | \$76,800 | \$99,840 | \$126,720 |
| 5 | \$82,900 | \$107,770 | \$136,785 |
| 6 | \$89,100 | \$115,830 | \$147,015 |

Questions/Additional Information: HARP@hpd.nyc.gov. Please refer to the Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for additional information/requirements. A copy is available on HPD's website at www.nyc.gov/hpd.