



**Districting
Commission**

www.nyc.gov/districting

Commissioners

Benito Romano, *Chair*

Jamila Ponton Bragg

Scott Cerullo

Kamillah M. Hanks

Robert W. Hart

Linda Lin

Oscar Odom III

Thomas Ognibene

Frank Padavan

Roxanne J. Persaud

Madeline Provenzano

John Robert

Gloria Carvajal Wolfe

Marc Wurzel

Justin Yu

Staff

Carl Hum

Executive Director

Office

253 Broadway, 7th Fl
New York, NY 10007

tel: (212) 442-6940

fax: (212) 788-9470

info@districting.nyc.gov

BENITO ROMANO

Chair of the Commission

OFFICE OF DISTRICTING

2012 NOV 19 P 3:00

November 16, 2012

BY HAND

Speaker Christine C. Quinn
Council of the City of New York
City Hall
New York, NY 10007

Dear Speaker Quinn and City Council members,

The City of New York 2012-2013 Districting Commission (“the Commission”), hereby submits, for the Council’s review, its plan for dividing New York City into fifty-one districts for the election of members of the New York City Council. As the Council considers the plan adopted by this Commission, the Commission encourages Council members to review the testimony and submissions provided by the public during the districting process. All of these submissions, and substantial additional information, is available on our website at <http://www.nyc.gov/districting>.

Of particular interest, the Commission wishes to draw your attention to the submissions of several organizations, including the Council’s own Black, Latino and Asian Caucus, calling for additional opportunities for public comment. Numerous mechanisms have been made available for the provision of public comment, including among others: the ability to submit testimony or comment online through the Commission’s website or by email; the use of free online mapping software to create and submit alternative plans; the opportunity to speak at any of the public hearings held throughout the five boroughs between August and October; and the traditional methods of mailing and faxing public comment to the Commission’s office.

By all accounts, the public has offered considerable input for the Commission’s consideration, including oral testimony of 235 individuals at public hearings and hundreds of written submissions, including both hard copies and electronic submissions, received at the Commission’s office and made available to the Commission members for their consideration. In addition, the Commission received and reviewed almost 20 districting plans proposed by members of the public. Most importantly, the Commission believes that the public’s valuable input, which has been offered through these numerous mechanisms made available by the Commission, has been incorporated to the extent practicable in the plan the Commission now submits to the Council.

Nevertheless, the fact remains that the plan submitted herewith in its current form has not been circulated for public comment, and notwithstanding the Commission’s confidence that it reflects the concerns and desires expressed by the public since the Commission began its work, the Commission would welcome such additional public input. However, under the provisions of the New York City Charter that govern the districting process, the Commission must now submit its plan to the City Council for its consideration, and is not empowered to conduct additional hearings or make any changes to the plan unless “the council by the vote of a majority of all its members adopts a resolution objecting to such plan and returns the plan to the commission with such resolutions and a statement of its objections,” as the plan is otherwise “deemed adopted.” NYC Charter § 51(d). Thus, the decision as to whether the plan is adopted in its current form, or whether the process of review and public comment will continue, is entirely within the hands of the Council.

City Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn

November 16, 2012

Page 2

Again, this Commission believes that the plan in its current form complies with all applicable law, and incorporates many of the desires expressed by the public, within the limitations set forth by the Charter. If, however, the Council determines that the process would be better served by additional public comment as set forth in the Charter, and adopts a resolution to that effect, the Commission would gladly undertake to solicit public input in its effort to further ensure that the districting plan fairly represents the voters of this diverse and vibrant City.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Benito Romano". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Benito Romano
Chair of the Commission

cc: Michael McSweeney
Clerk of the Council
141 Worth Street
New York, NY 10013

Elizabeth R. Fine
General Council
New York City Council, Office of the General Council
250 Broadway, 15th Floor
New York, NY 10007