



**CICELY HARRIS**  
Chairperson

**SHATIC MITCHELL**  
District Manager

**CITY OF NEW YORK**  
**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 10**  
215 West 125th Street, 4th Floor  
New York, NY 10027  
T: 212-749-3105 F: 212-662-4215

## **HOUSING**

### **Committee Meeting Minutes**

Monday, September 27, 2021 – 6:30 PM

Hon. Charles Powell, Chair

Hon. Donna Gill, Vice Chair

Members in Attendance: Hon. Charles Powell; Hon. Donna Gill; Hon. Genisha Metcalf; Hon. Katherine Giscombe; Hon. Kathy James; Hon. Shamier Settle; Hon. Dominick Boyce; Hon. Shawn Brannon; Hon. Terri Wisdom; Hon. Delsenia Glover; Hon. Staci Ramos.

1. Welcome by Housing Committee Chair Charles Powell

- a. The Chair called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM
- b. The Chair asked each Housing Committee Board member to introduce themselves;
- c. The Chair introduced and acknowledged other Board members in attendance;
- d. The Chair acknowledged a number of community members in attendance.

2. Remarks by Elected Official or their Representatives:

- a. Minah Whyte of NYS Assemblyman Al Taylor offered remarks;
- b. Ysabel Abreu of MBP Gale Brewer offered remarks.

3. Presentations:

**a. Harlem River Houses Rehabilitation Project**

- i. The Chair welcomed Donald Notice, Executive Director of West Harlem Group Assistance Organization who then introduced members of the team of developers who are engaged in the comprehensive planning of the renovation and rehabilitation of the external and internal of the Historic Harlem River Houses located within our District;
- ii. The Chair reminded the presenters that many of the Housing Committee members; other CB 10 Board members and community participants had already had the opportunity to see and hear the full presentation made by the developers at the CB 10 Executive Committee meeting on Wednesday, September 22, 2021, and to therefore provide a brief overview of the project (which the team graciously did);
- iii. The Chair further noted that Mr. Notice and his developer partners and team will also be presenting to the General Board at its scheduled meeting of Wednesday, October 6 the portions of the development plan that requires approval by the New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission (which entails most of the planned renovations to the exterior

areas of the housing development along with lighting fixtures, doors, playground areas etc. The Board will consider a Resolution passed in the Executive Committee for a Resolution supporting the LPC application as put forth by the CB 10 Landmarks/Transportation Committee

- iv. Mr. Notice and his team has agreed to return to the Housing Committee in the future to discuss in detail the planned renovation of interior spaces and residential units as the project moves into those areas;
- v. The team patiently fielded questions and comments on their presentation from members of the Committee, the Board as well as members of the community;

4. Housing Committee Updates:

- a. The Committee received brief updates from the Chair and Vice-Chair on the following subjects:

- i. The New York State Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP) – Key questions were raised regarding the status of the program and how much money has actually been approved and given to resident applicants. Minah Whyte was extremely helpful in providing answers to questions from the Chair and members of the Committee and promised to provide a more detailed response as to the amount of funds (and the percentage) expended to date. Ms. Whyte also informed the Committee as to an additional 100 Million dollars that the State will be making available to small landlords who have suffered economically from the pandemic;

- ii. Esplanade Gardens – A very lengthy discussion was held on the subject of the on-going renovation and rehabilitation of the 1800 residential units of this historic housing development within our District. Shareholders of Esplanade shared what can only be fairly described as “horror” stories of unsafe and unhealthy conditions within units being renovated including, but not limited to significant water leaks destroying personal possessions and creating mold spores; walls being opened but work within not being done in a timely fashion leading to pest infestation; schedules to perform work not be planned, established or adhered to; Covid-19 protocols not being adhered to by workers for resident protection and safety; etc. Ms. Whyte referenced letters written by Assemblyman Al Taylor addressing many of these concerns which have not been properly and adequately addressed by the development or by representatives of NYC Housing Preservation and Development (HPD). The Committee members and Board members also expressed an array of concerns and it was agreed that this matter would be vigorously pursued with the Esplanade Gardens Shareholder’s Board of Directors, HPD and others and that a special meeting would be convened before the next Housing Committee meeting with all concerned and responsible parties to address these issues and hopefully allow the shareholders to feel confident that their situations and circumstances will improve;

- iii. Dunbar Apartments – There was no one present from the Dunbar Tenant’s Association although they were invited to attend by our District office;
- iv. 95 Lenox Avenue – The Chair and Shatic Mitchell provided brief updates on this entire Section 8 residential property in our District which is also engaged in renovations of kitchens and bathrooms of all units. Lisa Harris, President of the 95 Lenox Avenue Tenants Association reported that to date the work being performed in kitchens and bathrooms are of a quality nature and that there are no significant or noteworthy complaints.

b. New Business:

- i. 206 West 120th Street Letter of Support – The Housing Committee has received a request from Jason Wu, Esq., of the Legal Aid Society to support their efforts to prevent HPD from removing this HDFC development from its TIL program. The Housing Committee has provided a similar letter of support to Legal Aid in its efforts to prevent another HDFC from being removed from the program. As the Housing Committee meeting is following the Executive Committee meeting this month, we were given the authority to vote on this item so that it can be presented to the full Board for approval. Before voting, Gregory Baggett, with extensive TIL experience indicated that the Letter of Support should contain language expressing caution and concern about this HDFC now having to go into another program which will either prevent full conversion or significantly delay it. It was agreed that Mr. Baggett would provide such language to be included in the Letter of Support. A motion was made in support; duly seconded and approved unanimously by the Committee;
- ii. NYCHA – Vice-Chair Donna Gill gave an update on the work being done by the NYCHA Coalition with respect to overall conditions within NYCHA developments and the perceived threats of privatization. The Committee expressed the importance of supporting such work and Ms. Gill mentioned the possibility of the creation of a NYCHA Sub-committee (an idea supported by the Chair).

c. Old Business

- i. There was no old business reported at the meeting

d. Adjournment

- i. Meeting was adjourned at 8:30PM.