

Community Board 12, Manhattan
Minutes for the Housing and Human Services Community Meeting
March 3, 2016 – CB12 Conference Room
530 West 166th Street – 6th Floor
New York, NY 10032

Committee Members Present (5):

Ayisha Ogilvie (Chair), Felipe Wityk Sanchez, Katherine Diaz, Jay Mazur, and Estevan Nembhard

Committee Members Absent (1):

Barbara Frazier

CB12 Member (0):

Public Member (0): Christina Burgess (Absent).

Public (3): Joel Yoffie, Lydia Bassett Tyner, Priscilla Bassett, _____ Bassett, Ramon Caba, Marcial Cordon

Welcome, Opening Remarks and the Agenda. Ayisha Ogilvie, HHS Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:15 pm. Recording was initiated. Board members introduced themselves, as did members of the Public present. A quorum was present for the meeting. Topics for the evening's agenda were outlined.

HHS Committee Chair's Report

- Ayisha recapped the previous HHS Feb 3, 2016 meeting for committee and attendees
- The following documents were made available to the committee and attendees and discussed:
 - **4 BILLS THAT COULD REPLACE 421-A 421a Expiration**
<http://cityandstatenyc.com/articles/politics/new-york-city/replacing-421-a.html#.Vti8llsrL9g>
 - **Audit Faults New York City for Not Using Vacant Lots for Affordable Housing**
http://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/18/nyregion/audit-proposes-using-vacant-lots-owned-by-new-york-city-for-affordable-housing.html?_r=0
 - Lander and Torres to introduce 'land bank' bill for affordable housing (2014)
<http://bradlander.nyc/print/news/press/lander-and-torres-to-introduce-land-bank-bill-for-affordable-housing>
 - New York City Council black latino and asian caucus statement of principles on mandatory inclusionary housing
<http://www.scribd.com/doc/301745187/New-York-City-Council-Black-Latino-Asian-Caucus-MIH-Principles#scribd>

Public Hearing (Continuation due to lack of Quorum at previous meeting): Lantern Organization

- Ayisha recapped the timeline of Lantern Organization's engagement with CB12 regarding their application to build and establish a residential facility at "444-446 West 163rd Street, New York, NY 10032" aka "Savanna Hall".
- Ayisha recapped the meeting between Executive Chair Shahabudeen and herself at Lantern Organization's Harlem facility "Prospero Hall" at 110 East 118th Street which has similar design & layout to the planned "Savanna Hall" facility.
- Concerns shared by community members included: oversaturation of supportive housing units in the area, criminal activity, lack of housing for families instead of single individuals, and need for precinct input.

- Based on previous meetings with Lantern, they committed to: improving lighting on both their properties (the HHS committee was made aware of the exact specifications of the lighting which is being ordered for installation), heightened security measures, participate in a block association per the suggestion of the HHS committee to build rapport and keep an open dialogue with other community members, and participation in the NYPD Operation Clean Hall program.
- The following findings were considered:
 - Lantern Organization owns the property and is entitled to build the building as-of-right without discretionary consideration
 - The 2 populations (transition from homelessness/age out foster care) which will be served have very similar service needs.
 - There is no oversaturation issue within the district
- Guidance was sought from previous Chair Richard Lewis on ensuring committee complied with proper oversight on the matter
- A vote was taken and the results were as follows:
 - Committee members (5): (4) Yes, (1) No
 - Public Members (0)
 - Community Members (5): (2) No, (3) Abstained

Land Bank/Land Trust

- **The following videos and slides were shown:**

Land Bank Proposal from Scott Stringer

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T-vUNikA2U4>

Community establishes land trust in East Harlem

<https://vimeo.com/123621835>

Municipal Land Banks vs. Land Trusts

http://www.shelterforce.org/images/uploads/THE_ANSWER.pdf

Land Banking vs. Land Trusting A Comparison of Complementary Strategies

http://www.burlingtonassociates.com/files/8513/4463/0249/1-Land_Banking_vs._Land_Trusting.pdf

- Ayisha spoke on having attended Comptroller Scott Stringers press conference regarding a vacant lot study which was done which discovered over 1,100 properties that could yield over 57,000 units of affordable housing.
- Per Mariel De La Cruz in the Comptroller's Office there was only one vacant lot found in the CB12 district at 543 West 156th Street. This finding seems to conflict with current data gathered by CB12's own vacant lot study.
- Comptroller's office has advised that a FOIL request must be done in order to obtain the full list of vacant lots found
- Comptroller Scott Stringer has proposed to create Land Banks as a solution for Affordable Housing
- Both reports and the press release given at the Comptroller's press conference were presented for review by the committee:

Building An Affordable Future: The Promise of a New York City Land Bank

http://comptroller.nyc.gov/wp-content/uploads/documents/The_Case_for_A_New_York_City_Land_Bank.pdf

Audit and Special Reports: Audit Report of the Development of City-Owned Vacant Lots by the NYC Dept of HPD

http://comptroller.nyc.gov/wp-content/uploads/documents/FM14_112A.pdf

Press Release:

<http://comptroller.nyc.gov/newsroom/comptroller-stringer-audit-reveals-city-owns-more-than-1100-vacant-lots-that-could-be-used-to-build-affordable-housing/>

- 2 videos as mentioned above were watched and discussed along with two slides comparing the differences between Land Banks/Land Trusts and how they can benefit the CB12 district
- Ayisha spoke on conversations being had with Picture the Homeless and representatives from the East Harlem Land Trust to participate in future CB12 meetings to gain a further understanding of the benefits/disadvantages of Land Trust

HHS Digital Resource Library

- Discussion was had about the benefits and pooling data for the committee and community to access regarding housing matters inclusive of current events, historical data, glossary, links to organizations working in the Housing and Human Services arena, tools and laws.
- Discussion was had about the need for improvements on the CB12 website where the HHS Committee is concerned to make resolutions/minutes readily accessible, indexed and searchable.
- Discussion was had about moving forward with using a tool such as Google Plus to keep committee members abreast of new developments in the Housing and Human Services arena as it provides a more robust/organized experience than email. All committee members present were in agreement.
- Committee spoke on the need to use digital data to gain a better understanding of where CB12 entities like NYCHA, Supportive Services Housing are located throughout the district.

Community Crisis Management

- Discussion was had about the need to do outreach and build communication networks within the district - specifically within resident housing organizations - so that in the event of crisis (such as recent incident of water in majority of district being affected with brown water) information can be quickly disseminated to entities such as Block Associations, Tenant Organizers, Landlords, NYCHA, etc, as well as, via email and social media.

New Business and Announcements

- Esteban presented an announcement - "Real Affordability for All", a rally expected to take place Wednesday, March 9, beginning at Zuccotti Park at 11 am and marching to City Hall. At issue is the Mayor's Housing Plan and its potential to displace poor families.
- Ayisha spoke on a CB12 resident who contacted her about peculiar increases to his annual rent on his new proposed lease. After reviewing his lease she learned he lived in a rent stabilized apartment and was receiving a preferential rent. After advising him to request a rent history it was discovered that in a prior year the rent in his apartment had been raised \$1270.74 in 2008 leading to many questions. Committee discussed for residents in the CB12 district to have a better understanding of their leases, inclusive of; what it entitles them to, what it prevents them from doing, how rents can/can't be raised over time, as well as, preferential rents, succession, vacancy increases. Also discussed was the impact that lack of knowledge on the part of tenants and the possibility for landlords to prey on that ignorance has on affordability in our district as the result is rents being improperly raised and loss of more legally rent stabilized or rent controlled housing than would be legally allowable. The committee agreed that a project to raise awareness and assist tenants in assessing whether the rent is in fact the legal rent would be beneficial.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:30PM.