

**FULL BOARD MEETING**  
**BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD #1**  
3024 Third Avenue  
Bronx, New York 10455  
October 29, 2015

**AGENDA**

1. Introductions
2. Public Session

**None**

3. Call to Order
4. Approval of Agenda
5. Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes
6. Chairman and District Manager's Report

- Presentation:
  - Mr. Paul Philps – Senior Planner  
Bronx District Office  
New York City Planning
  - Ms. Laura Smith – Planner  
Bronx District Office  
New York City Planning

Re: (1) Mandatory Inclusionary Housing Text Amendment  
(2) Zoning for Quality and Affordability Text Amendment

## 7. Elected Officials

- Mayor of the City of New York : Honorable Bill DeBlasio
- President of the Borough of the Bronx : Honorable Ruben Diaz, Jr.
- United States Congress : Honorable Jose E. Serrano
- New York State Senate : Honorable Rev. Ruben Diaz  
: Honorable Jose M. Serrano
- New York Assembly : Honorable Carmen E. Arroyo  
: Honorable Michael Blake
- New York City Comptroller : Honorable Scott M. Stringer
- New York City Public Advocate : Honorable Letitia James
- New York City Council : Honorable Maria del Carmen Arroyo  
: Honorable Speaker Melissa Mark Viverito

## 8. Committee Reports

- Economic Development-Land Use & Housing
- Health-Human Services & Seniors
- Municipal Services

## 9. Old Business

## 10. New Business

## 11. Adjournment

## **FULL BOARD MEETING**

October 29, 2015

Mr. George Rodriguez – Chairperson

### **MINUTES**

**Attendance:** George Rodriguez, Clarisa Alayeto, Barbara Alvarez, Maria Garcia-Baltazar, Daniel Barber, Steven Benedith, Carol Boddie, Josephine Fernandez-Byrne, Maura Cosme, Linda Duke, Isabel Figueroa, Linda D. Gaines, Brenda Goodwin, Lucas Henriquez, Richard Iyasere, John Johnson, John Lemon, Mohammed Mutawakil, Arline Parks, Johnny Rivera, Brenda Rodriguez, Carmen Santos, Sandra Stone, Betty Wessley, Tracy Alecia Woodall, Delores Waller-Worrell, Hakiem A. Yahmadi, Cesar Yoc.

**Absent:** Ngande Ambroise, Carmen Aquino, Betty Bryant-Brown, Passyna Bula-Bula, Carolyn Chamorro, Angel Lopez, Aracelis Lucero, Jewels Marshall, Nellie McKay, Evelyn Munoz, Walter C. Nash, Jason Ortiz, Freddy Perez, Jr., Justino Rodriguez, Alice Simmons.

#### **No Public Session**

#### **The Chairman called for the roll.**

The roll was called and there were twenty-three members present constituting a quorum.

#### **The Chairman called for a motion on the Agenda.**

Motion made to approve the Agenda as presented. Motion duly seconded. Motion called and passed unanimously.

#### **The Chairman called for a motion on the Prior Meeting Minutes.**

Motion made to approve the Prior Meeting Minutes as presented. Motion duly seconded. Motion called and passed unanimously with seven abstentions.

#### **Chairman and District Manager's Report**

**The District Manager** said that we have a presentation tonight from the Department of City Planning on two Text Amendments of the Mandatory Inclusionary Housing and Zoning for Quality and Affordability. These items have come before the entire City of New York. They are voting items for all fifty-nine Citywide Community Boards. There are twelve Boards in the Bronx and we are required to vote under the City Charter.

We started this process previously during the last 6 months and have had three presentations by Mr. Paul Philps Planner for the Department of City Planning. Everyone should have received a copy of these Text Amendment items by email. The Board Members should now be receiving a copy of the two items which

are HPD tools being passed out in both English and Spanish. Mr. Philps has been our Planner for awhile and he is one of the top.

**Mr. Paul Philps, Senior Planner for the Department of City Planning** said that there are two Citywide Text Amendments that you will be voting on tonight. The first one is Mandatory Inclusionary Housing and the other Zoning for Quality and Affordability. I know that the Committee Members have heard this several times. It is important to note that these are two separate Text Amendments.

The first Text Amendment is for Mandatory Inclusionary Housing a Citywide action. It is important to know that these Text Amendments will be part of the Zoning Resolution. So if a private Developer comes to the Board for an up zoning it has to be more than the 12,500 square foot increase or more than 10 units of housing that would be required and mandatory. That means that there are three options the first is 23 percent of the units at an average of 60 percent AMI; and the other is an average of 30 percent at 80 percent AMI. So it would be one of those two options and the third option which is the Workforce option. It is important to note that there is no subsidy with the Workforce option. The Workforce option would always be paired with option one or two so this would be mandatory. Right now the program is Voluntary. Also important is that these units are permanently affordable. It is also important to note that previously you could provide units on one site and then you could also preserve units off site at another building to meet your affordable housing requirements but with this program you have to build new units so preservation is being taken care of through the New York City Housing Preservation and Development (HPD). This Text Amendment requires that you build new units. The other important component of the Mandatory Inclusionary Housings this is an option for example if you have between ten to twenty-five units and not able to provide affordable housing you'd pay into a fund which HPD would manage and would be used to provide affordable housing in your community district. Another option is that they could go to the BSA and get variances for hardship and prove through a hardship that you would not be able to provide affordable housing on your site. Those are the basic components of the Text Amendment.

The second one is Zoning for Quality and Affordability. There are three basic components to the Zoning for Quality and Affordability. One is willing to increase production for senior housing we know that seniors are going to grow tremendously in the City of New York. Overall there's going to be an increase in the City of New York of over 400 thousand people and seniors are going to make a very large portion of those. We're not creating enough housing to keep up with the seniors that need housing. One of the things we want to do in the Text is that we put in a level playing field for all types there's independent living, assisted living, and continuing care. So this Text Amendment would allow all of these uses to be in the same building. For example you come in independent living and a few years down the line you may need an attendant or something you could stay in that same building and get the kind of care that you need. So that's really important to be able to give seniors more options. Another thing that we found as part of this proposal is the envelopes that in a zoning district you can build to a certain height and you have to prescribe to the certain requirements of the zoning. What we're doing is adjusting the heights in most districts for the most part it's anywhere from 5 to 10 feet. What this is allowing is being able to maximize floor to ceiling areas. A couple of other things we're doing in terms of the height back in the early 1900's we had more generous floor to ceiling heights anywhere from 10 feet to maybe 12 feet. As you've seen over time there have been much smaller floor to ceiling heights 8 feet is about the average right now. What we want to do with the Text Amendment is mandate that at a minimum that it be 10 feet floor to ceiling heights. We want to mandate on the ground floors it be at least 15 feet. This is important because as you've seen and I know that there's actually some buildings around here that the ground floor is not easy to tenant and one of the issues is that the floor to ceiling heights are not really being built to accommodate good retail spaces so we want improve the quality of the retail creating a minimum of 15

feet on the ground floor. Also want to improve the quality of the housing being built by having a minimum standard of 10 feet from floor to ceiling for residential use. We're trying to create the maximum number of affordable units.

### **Questions and Answers**

**Ms. Arline Parks, Chairperson of the Economic Development-Land Use & Housing Committee** said that with these Text Amendments developers will not be able to include parking spaces in their project plans and that the money being saved will not be put into increasing the building units but into their pockets. Therefore we couldn't support this in its present form.

### **The Chairman called for a motion on the Mandatory Inclusionary Housing and Zoning for Quality and Affordability Text Amendments.**

Motion made for a vote on the Mandatory Inclusionary Housing and Zoning for Quality and Affordability Text Amendments as presented. Motion duly seconded. Motion called and passed unanimously.

A roll call vote of the Board Members was taken on the Text Amendments of Mandatory Inclusionary Housing and Zoning for Quality and Affordability with twenty-four votes against both Text Amendments and two abstentions.

### **The Chairman called for a motion to approve his and the District Manager's Report.**

Motion made to approve the Chairman and District Manager's Report. Motion duly seconded. Motion called and passed unanimously.

### **Elected Officials**

**Mr. Andy Toledo representative of the Bronx Borough President** said that your vote has been duly noted and will be presented to the Borough President and we will vote as a collective unit in the borough on the 19<sup>th</sup> and it will be presented to the Mayor's Office. I want to draw everybody attention on this very good report that was produced by the Department of Labor and our office played a small role in that. It discusses the unemployment numbers here in the Bronx and the dramatic reduction in numbers. Just to give you a quick synopsis for January 2010 the unemployment rate in the Bronx was 14.1 percent and we are currently standing as of last month at 6.6 percent unemployment rate. So there's a lot of dramatic reduction, a lot of investment, a lot of jobs produced in the borough in our education facilities, hospitals and health, and manufacturing that hire many of our Bronx residents. The fourth engine that is really starting to make a dent here in the Bronx happens to be the Tech Industry. There are a lot of startup Tech Companies that are calling the Bronx home in Hunts Point and Port Morris they've taken up shop there. The Tech Industry is hiring a lot of our Bronx residents. There's a lot of talent in this borough and jobs available in coding and data processing if this is something that you're interested in. The last industry that's making a dent is in construction that is starting to pick up again in major projects that are coming to this borough in particular this Community Board. There are construction jobs starting to ramp up in this borough. So if you're interested in reading the entire report you could look into the Borough President's of the Department of Labor websites for the full report.

Just want to share with you guys several program events we're having our Halloween event at the Classic Community Center 286 East 156<sup>th</sup> Street from 4:00 PM to 7:00 PM on Saturday, October 31<sup>st</sup>. I also want

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to share with everybody we have our Savor the Bronx Restaurant Week on November 2<sup>nd</sup> through November 13<sup>th</sup>. It's an event we put together every year through our Tourism Council to promote tourism in the borough. So during that week there are about 40 restaurants participating here in the Bronx. You can get a lunch or a meal at a discount price. You can visit I Love the Bronx.com it has the full list of all the restaurants participating and you can also download the discount vouchers that can present at the end of your meal. This is really a great opportunity to promote the restaurants and our borough. So definitely support our restaurants here in the borough. Lastly on Thursday, November 19<sup>th</sup> the Puerto Rican Heritage Month celebration will be held from 12:00 PM to 3:00 PM at the Salsa Con Fuego Restaurant. Flyers on all events are in the back.

**Ms. Minerva Medina the representative of State Senator Rev. Ruben Diaz** said good evening and I'm here representing the Senator. We're located on 900 Rogers Place on East 163<sup>rd</sup> Street. If you have any questions or concerns I have my business cards you can contact our office. We will be having a Veterans Parade on November 7<sup>th</sup>.

**Ms. Farhana Hassan the representative of State Senator Jose M. Serrano** said I'm the Community Liaison for State Senator Serrano. Tonight I wanted to share with you guys our November Constituent Hours. It's going to be in joint with the Legal Aid Society and Arriva. Tonight there's been great discussion around affordable housing, tenant's rights and with that the Senator wanted to invite Legal Aid and Arriva to provide legal resources for our folks in the Community. Constituents can meet with Legal Aid on harassment from their landlords, unsanitary living situations or just rent stabilized issues with apartments. In terms of Arriva they are a non-profit and they have a Financial Counseling program that is actually funded through the City to help residents or constituents to apply for these new affordable housing units. So you hear about all these buildings popping up now how do you qualify? A lot of people in our community especially don't know how to go through the process, don't have great credit or just are not up on their finances. This program through Arriva helps people get their credit in check, and their finances together and helps them apply for these affordable housing units. The counseling sessions with Legal Aid and Arriva are free. So definitely come to our off-site Constituent Hours if you guys don't know we're at the Libraries and Senior Centers so you don't have to come to our office in Harlem.

#### **Questions and Answers**

**Ms. Rayna Taylor the representative of Assemblyman Michael Blake** said I'm the Community Liaison for Assemblyman Michael Blake and we have an event going on right now tonight it ends at 9:00 PM and it's called Liquid Tech. It's an organization to connect Bronxites with tech jobs. After that we're going to have a celebration at Charlie's on Lincoln Avenue. Then on Friday the 30<sup>th</sup> we're going to have an African Community Listening session with African Leaders from the community hearing concerns and that's going to be at our office 780 Concourse Village West, Bronx, New York. You can RSVP by calling the number or email on the flyer in the back. We're also going to be having a veterans event I November I don't have the details on that when I do I will definitely let all you guys know.

**Ms. Mariel de la Cruz representative of the New York City Comptroller Scott Stringer** said how's everyone doing I'm very excited to hear folks concerns about the zoning because that's really important for the community. So nearly 1.5 million New Yorkers are living in overcrowded homes. So the number of 3 or more people living in a Studio jumped by 39 percent. So you just think about those things when thinking about affordability. The medium rent paid by people living in crowded apartments grew nearly 5

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times faster than their medium income. So those are concerns and most of the overcrowded are 1 and 1 eighth Studio apartments and it's significantly higher than every other borough. Folks here have the highest eviction rate in the City. So we have to consider that when we're thinking about making decisions about our future for young people and also the seniors.

I talked about Take it to the Bank and one of the concerns last month was that a lot of the Banks don't provide the services that we need. So it's something that I'm looking into and it might take me awhile but I didn't forget so that everyone knows. Another thing that I wanted to mention is we're having an African Immigrant Heritage event on November 10<sup>th</sup> at 8:30 AM at New Settlement Community Center 1501 Jerome Avenue. It's a breakfast and what that is, is just an opportunity for people to speak to their local Elected Officials about concerns in the African community. It's a fast growing population and we want to make sure that people are getting services that they need. So if anyone's interested in going or have any idea of who I can invite to this event feel free to let me know.

**Questions and Answers**

**Ms. Jessica Reynoso representative of the New York City Public Advocate** said just to give you an update of what Tish has done so far I've mentioned before that she had some issues with the Nail Salons. So she is going to lodge a pilot program with some advisors to check out the Nail Salon environment to make sure that everything is okay and it will be launched in January. Another thing that she has worked on is that the Public Advocate has announced her support in divesting New York City Pension dollars from fossil fuels. She also is calling upon Congress to restore the Zadroga Act which provides needed health benefits for 9/11 first responders. Something that's not on the updated Newsletter that recently Tish had a lawsuit against ACS and OCFS thank God for her and with help from Governor Cuomo we had a settlement which means that OCFS and ACS make a commitment to reform, has an appointment of a monitor, an appointment of a New York City Research Expert and implementation of a correction action plan. So everything came out positive. Hopefully OCFS and ACS will be doing their job.

**Ms. Gloria Cruz representative of Council Speaker Melissa Mark Viverito** said good evening everyone. We finally passed the law for the K2 drug that has been hurting a lot of people in our community. So the law has been passed and people that are caught selling K2 will be fined up to \$5,000 dollars. Then she has her event in the Marqueta. We didn't have anything printed up but you could always go to the City Council website and you can find all that information there. Her Follow Me Friday's is there. I urge everyone in the community to utilize 311 because Commissioners hate the 311 complaints and if they don't answer you then you can come to us and we can advocate on your behalf.

**The Chairman called for a motion on the Elected Officials Reports**

Motion made to approve the Elected Officials Reports as presented. Motion duly seconded. Motion called and passed unanimously.

**Committee Reports**

**The Economic Development-Land Use & Housing Committee submitted a written Report on the following presentation.**

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- The New York City Economic Development Corporation on the Lower Grand Concourse
- The New York City Department of City Planning on the two Text Amendments of Mandatory Inclusionary Housing and Zoning for Quality and Affordability.

**The Health-Human Services & Seniors Committee submitted a written Report.**

- Forever Young a Social Adult Daycare Center.

**The Municipal Services Committee**

- New York City Transit Authority (MTA) Access-A-Ride Program.

**The Chairman called for a motion on the Committee Reports.**

Motion made to accept the Committee Reports as presented. Motion duly seconded. Motion called and passed unanimously.

**Old Business**

None

**New Business**

Board Member Tracy Woodall provided an update on C-Ball and notification of the next event.

**The Chairman called for a motion to adjourn.**

Motion made to adjourn. Motion duly seconded. Motion called and passed unanimously.

**Meeting adjourned.**