

Brooklyn Community Board 9
890 Nostrand Avenue
Brooklyn, New York 11225

ULURP/Land Use Committee Meeting Minutes
Jun 16, 2025

Attendance (Board Members): Suwen Cheong, Joshua Thomas Serrano, Theresa Westerdahl,

Attendance (Community Resident Members) Nichola Cox, Cheryl Bernard, John Craver, Hector Robertson, Esteban Giron

Absent (Board Members): Max Davidson

Absent (Committee Resident Members): None

CB9 Staff: Khalid Jemmott, Community Associate

1. Discussion of Nichola's proposed changes to CB9 Charter Revision statement
 - a. Proposal to add language requiring developers to meet with communities earlier in the ULURP process when our recommendations have a better chance of making a difference – right now some developers do and some don't.
 - b. Proposal to align our focus with City Council's Fair Housing Framework which directs HPD to set 5-year housing targets by community district starting in 2026
 - i. In past discussions Association of Neighborhood Housing Developers had a fair share formula that lowered required contributions for denser neighborhoods and neighborhoods that had produced a lot of housing units in the past. (Esteban)
 - ii. It might be difficult to put exact formulas for fair share into the charter, where the focus is powers and process of different agencies and elected officials (Suki)
2. Discussion of Max's proposed addition to the CB9 Charter Revision Statement
 - a. HPD database shows number of affordable units built and preserved by community district since 2014 – this is more consistent with our other language and fair housing framework than data by council district (Suki)
 - b. Data highlights disparities in affordable housing production between those districts which have done the least and where we are (in the middle) to explain why we have concerns about being pressured to accept more than our fair share of development.
3. Discussion of Hectors proposed additions advocating community board members to be added to the city planning commission and reducing Mayor's influence
4. Discussion of Suki's proposed addition to the CR statement advocating for community boards and borough boards to have powers to override a city planning commission veto, a power currently held only by the Mayor

5. Discussion of Binny's proposal to give property owners veto power over upzonings
 - a. We could give this power to all residents, so tenants aren't left out
 - b. It would actually be infeasible to get signatures of a majority, or even 25% of all residents in a certain radius.
6. Discussion of proposals to curtail member deference/local community nimbyism
 - a. If the proposals would comply with a comprehensive plan, doesn't this address concerns about lack of oversight? While there may always be drawbacks to development for local communities, if we believe these housing units are desperately needed, we shouldn't allow a single council member to block (Joshua)
 - b. There have never been any housing proposals that were actually voted down at the city council level; although there are a few well-publicized proposals that were withdrawn by developers prior to completing ULURP due to a local electeds opposition, we don't actually know what would happen if the project was pushed to a vote before the full council (Suki)
 - c. I can see the need for member deference because council members from Manhattan have said in hearings they don't know anything about Brooklyn, so they rely on the judgment of the local member (Nichola)
 - d. The comprehensive plans proposed by the city and the Fair Housing framework wouldn't consider what are good or bad locations or sizes for a particular housing project, only whether or not the targets for numbers of units had been met. It wouldn't consider the fiscal soundness of the project either. Not every affordable housing project is the right one. These proposals substitute developer-based planning for community-based planning and city planning. (Suki)
 - e. Not willing to give up our powers of negotiation to force the hands of a few districts that aren't producing housing today (Nichola)
 - f. With the fair housing framework, the "status quo" on member deference culture would change without changes to ULURP because every council member would understand what the targets are and who isn't meeting them (Theresa)
 - g. Proposals to centralize judgment about local actions are never ideal; the Mayor already has a lot of influence over rezonings by choosing the majority of city planning commission and controls agencies like HPD, which would set fair housing targets and city planning which formulates rezoning plans (Binny)
7. Discussion of CB9 opposition to proposals to combine the borough president and community board review periods
 - a. It seems innocuous (Joshua)
 - b. Nothing proposed in a charter revision is inconsequential or innocuous; the extra 30 days have been crucial to us in the past for filing objections (Esteban)
 - c. Borough presidents and community boards don't always have the same opinions; combining the review period dilutes the community influence and doesn't encourage BP's to take our views into account (Nichola)
 - d. Borough boards (consisting of the heads of all the community boards and reps of the relevant council members) should use the extra period to vote on individual

rezoning applications as a way of centering a borough wide perspective and curbing unjustified local opposition, instead of the borough president alone giving an opinion. (Suki)

Vote: All in favor of the resolution as amended, 0 abstentions, 0 opposed