



## **MINUTES FOR THE FEBRUARY 24, 2025 HEARING OF THE NEW YORK CITY CHARTER REVISION COMMISSION**

A duly noticed meeting of the New York City Charter Revision Commission was held at the offices of the New York City Department of Design and Construction, 30-30 Thomson Avenue, Queens, New York at 5 p.m. on February 24, 2025.

Chair Richard Buery presided at the meeting. The Chair called the meeting to order at approximately 5:17 p.m. Also present were the following members of the Commission:

- Sharon Greenberger, Vice Chair
- Leila Bozorg, Secretary
- Grace Bonilla
- Shams DaBaron
- Anita Laremont
- Dr. Lisette Nieves
- Julie Samuels
- Diane Savino
- Carl Weisbrod
- Valerie White
- Kathryn Wylde

The Chair provided introductions and an overview of the Charter Revision Commission's role and explained ways for the public to provide testimony in-person or virtually at public hearings and by submitting written testimony online.

The Chair acknowledged the presence of a quorum. Vice Chair Greenberger made a motion to approve minutes from the meeting of the Commission held February 11, 2025. The motion was seconded by Secretary Bozorg, and thereafter adopted unanimously by all Commissioners present.

The Chair welcomed experts and elected officials to provide testimony to the Commission.

- Louisa Chafee, Director of the Independent Budget Office, testified in support of strengthening the City's budgetary framework, addressing contracting issues, and increasing budget transparency.
- Michelle Jackson, Executive Director of Human Services Council, testified in support of Charter revisions to address the timeliness of nonprofit payments.
- Fred Schack, Chief Executive Officer of Urban Pathways, testified on the impact of late contract payments, identifying the lack of City accountability as a central issue and suggesting increased transparency.
- Lauren Siciliano, Chief Operating Officer of the Legal Aid Society, testified on the negative impact of late contract payments and advocated in favor of granting greater authority to the Mayor's Office of Contract Services (MOCS).

- Council Member Julie Won (26<sup>th</sup> Council District), Chair of the City Council's Committee on Contracts, testified on the impact of late contract payments and how technological constraints affect transparency in contracting. Council Member Won further testified in support of a fair share framework for new housing, shelters, and supportive housing, as well as in favor of comprehensive planning, neighborhood rezonings, and maintaining "member deference."
- Rachel Fauss, of Reinvent Albany, testified in support of creating an independent ethics commission, making ethics guidance more transparent, and studying a new city-controlled removal mechanism for the mayor.
- Ben Weinberg, of Citizens Union, testified in support of reforms needed to strengthen City democracy, ethics, and checks and balances.
- Susan Lerner, of Common Cause, testified in support of electoral reforms, recall elections for citywide elected officials, and changing the Charter revision process through the establishment of a citizens' assembly.

The Chair opened the floor for public testimony, limited to three minutes per speaker.

- Jennifer Geiling, who worked in human services procurement and helped establish the Mayor's Nonprofit Resiliency Committee, provided testimony in support of funding human services work at the true cost of living.
- Eric Kober, former Director of Housing, Economic and Infrastructure Planning at the New York City Department of City Planning and current Senior Fellow at the Manhattan Institute, advocated for streamlining the land use process and allowing

certain small projects to get approved without going through the City's Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP).

- Bernard O'Brien, a Brooklyn resident, advocated for unified, open, nonpartisan primaries.
- Alicia Boyd, a political activist, testified on the negative impacts of community planning and rezonings on marginalized communities and maintained that ULURP has not served as a barrier to creating more housing.
- Richard Ronner, an Astoria resident, provided testimony in support of open, nonpartisan primaries.
- Kimberly Cruz, a Flushing resident, raised several concerns about the impact of federal government actions on New York City.
- Joshua Cajas, a private citizen, advocated in favor of open primaries to increase ideological variety and voter participation.
- Cormac Slade Byrd, a private citizen, suggested several reforms to streamline the ULURP process.
- Shane Moynihan, a Jamaica resident, testified in support of open primaries.
- Edward M. Brady, a Manhattan resident and veteran who grew up in the South Bronx, advocated for open primaries.
- Harsha Hanumaiah, a private citizen, testified in support of open primaries.
- Alex Hackworth, a Williamsburg resident, advocated for open primaries.

- Hope Cohen, a private citizen, suggested streamlining the City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) process, arguing city environmental review is too onerous in its current state.
- Jenny Dubnau, a private citizen, raised concerns about reforms to ULURP creating too much market-rate housing and taking away community input.
- Sarah Prinsloo, a private citizen, testified in support of open primaries as a way to make candidates more responsive to constituents.
- Dean Rosow, a Manhattan resident, advocated for open primaries to ensure elected officials are responsive to constituents, have candidates represent broader coalitions, and incentivize elected officials to get stuff done.
- Maria Danzilo, Executive Director of One City Rising and former City Council candidate, testified in support of open primaries, citing low turnout in Council elections and partisan primaries' disproportionate impact on veterans.
- Yiatin Chu, President of Asian Wave Alliance, testified in support of open primaries, arguing exclusion limits and discourages voter participation and that many people in the Asian community are not registered with a party.
- Theodore Kronby, a sophomore at Hunter College High School, advocated for open primaries to increase young voter turnout and cited that California saw increased turnout among minorities after switching to open primaries.
- Jeffrey Aron, a Manhattan resident, advocated in favor of open primaries.

- Linda DiGusta, a Manhattan resident, testified in favor of open primaries to increase dialogue and decrease polarization.
- Alex Protopapas, a private citizen, advocated in favor of open primaries and opposed the requirement to change party affiliation so far in advance, saying it is unfair to new Americans and veterans who are largely registered as independent.
- Frank Morano, a Staten Island resident and City Council candidate, advocated for nonpartisan elections, sharing his experience participating in nonpartisan elections as a voter and candidate.
- Howard Levy, a private citizen, testified in favor of open primaries.

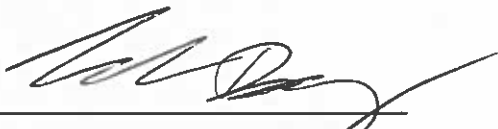
After hearing from all those members of the public in attendance who wished to speak, the Chair closed the public hearing portion of the meeting. The meeting was adjourned on motion by the Chair.

The meeting adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Genni Bogdanowicz  
New York City Charter Revision Commission

**Adopted:**



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**Leila Bozorg, Secretary**  
**New York City Charter Revision Commission**

**March 4, 2025**