



*Donovan Richards*  
*Queens Borough President*

# Community Board No. 2

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*Anatole Ashraf*

*Chairperson*

*Debra Markell Kleinert*

*District Manager*

**February 19, 2025**

## **Land Use & Housing Committee Meeting Minutes**

***This meeting was held in person and teleconferenced on Zoom***

### **Land Use & Housing Committee Members – Present**

*Anatole Ashraf (PV), Christine Hunter, Prameet Kumar, Ann Marie Baranowski (PV, Nick Berkowitz (PV), Danielle Brecker (PV), Tannia Chavez (PV), Lisa Deller, Morry Galonoy, Kenneth Greenberg, Diana Kichler, Sheila Lewandowski (PV), Lauren Springer, Michael Zoorob (PV)*

### **Land Use & Housing Committee Members – Absent**

*Karesia Batan, Stephen Cooper*

### **Community Board 2 Board Members - Present**

*Eric Narburgh (PV)*

### **Land Use & Housing Public Members – Present**

*Stephanie Carr*

### **Community Board 2 Staff**

*Debra Markell Kleinert, District Manager, MaryAnn Gurrado*

### **Elected Officials/Representatives**

*Lily Zaballos, Representing Council Member Julie Won (PV)*

### **Department of City Planning**

*Hye-Kyung Yang, Lara Merida, Feigele Lechtchiner*

### **Guests**

*Christopher Penafort , Alexander Hempel, Kellan Stanner*

Christine Hunter welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Matthew Sooknanan from the Chhaya Community Development Corporation

Provided a presentation on the future of Basement Legalization in Queens CB2 and reported on the following:

- He is an organizer for the Base Coalition.
- There is legislation that has been passed recently related to basement units.
- The Base Coalition is the main driving force in advocating for this in last 15 years. This past year there were a lot of legislative victories. In assessing these legislations, they found a lot of gaps in which things may have seemed rushed.
- Provided an update on where the legislation is and the unique position that Queens Community Board 2 is in.
- There is a state pilot which legalizes basement units across 15 districts in the City. They lifted MDL requirements that were otherwise overbearing and prevented homeowners from actually doing conversions.
- State legislation says that a city program has to be in place which the city program is now in place. They have been speaking to the Mayor's Office about this program.
- Queens CB 2 is the only district out of the 15 districts included in the pilot program.
- City implementation was discussed.
- The Base Coalition's goal is to increase community engagement in the process.
- The legislation and local law for NYC Basement and Cellar Legalization Pilot was discussed.
- Q & A

The committee discussed their recommendations and concerns regarding the implementation of the basement apartment legalization pilot program in the district. The committee discussed community engagement, accessibility, tenant protections, safety concerns, infrastructure impact, transparency, financial assistance and enforcement. A letter will be drafted to HPD and DOB concerning basement apartments.

Katie Crawford provided the OneLIC Neighborhood Plan presentation.

- Discussed the changes made to City of Yes for Housing Opportunity (CHO) and described the environmental review process. A copy of the presentation is attached (Attachment #1 OneLIC Neighborhood Plan).
- City of Yes for Housing Opportunity was adopted back in December, marking the approval of the last of the City of Yes Text Amendments. The pro-housing zoning change will enable the creation of up to 82,000 new homes over the next 15 years paired with the approval. The City Council also committed five billion in investments to infrastructure and housing in response to public feedback.
- There have been some modifications since this was last presented.

Katie Crawford provided an update on the Environmental Quality Review Act (CEQR) by which city agencies review proposed discretionary actions to identify the effects those actions may have on the environment.

- The City's environmental regulations lay out the specifics of what to analyze and also provide instruction on how to conduct the review, which includes establishing a lead agency, and the steps they must go through.
- This technical manual is a guidance document. The document has been updated several times. The analysis for OneLIC will be based off of the most recent edition which was updated in 2021.
- The lead agency conducts the environmental review.
- The lead agency coordinates the review process with other agencies.
- DCP acts as lead agency on behalf of CPC for most actions subject to CPC approval including the OneLIC Plan.
- DCP assumed lead agency, July 12, 2024.

The Committee discussed the neighborhood planning process.

Christine Hunter reported there is so much that has been abstract to date. We have not seen the new waterfront requirements or any specific proposals for the actual public spaces that may or may not be part of the waterfront development, apart from the walkway. We want to see the new WAP. The zoning doesn't say anything about what is going to happen on the waterfront. It just shows these lots with a paired zone.

## Q & A

Anatole Ashraf announced that the demapping of 49-39 Van Dam Street is dead and thanked everyone for working together. He thanked Council Member Won for pushing for this and getting it to this process that let us preserve public land.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted by:  
MA Gurrado

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