



CITY OF NEW YORK

MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 10

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CICELY HARRIS
Chairperson

SHATIC MITCHELL
District Manager

HOUSING COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes

Monday, February 27, 2020 - 6:30 PM

Attendees: Hon. Charles Powell; Hon. Shanelle Washington; Hon. Deborah Yates; Hon. Pastor Staci Ramos; Hon. Derek Perkins; Hon. Delsenia Glover; Hon. Mari Moss (Board member not Committee member)

Excused: Hon. Donna Gill

1. Welcome/Introductions

The Chair welcomed all Board members and members of the community in attendance and called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM.

2. Discussions

A. Department of Finance Workshops & Assessments

- Committee member Shanelle Washington made a brief presentation on property assessments and the importance of gaining information as to how to understand them and have them reviewed.
- The NYC Department of Finance holds workshops throughout the City to help property owners understand the process of assessments and how to challenge them. Flyers were handed out for the last workshop to be held in late February and it was pointed out that next year, the Housing Committee would be more proactive in alerting out community to these workshops and other means of them gaining assistance regarding their real estate tax assessments.

B. NYCHA Privatization; RAD & More

- The Housing Committee was pleased to welcome to our meeting Isaiah Jenkins, Manhattan Borough Director, Community Affairs Unit of the Office of the Mayor of the City of New York. Mr. Jenkins contributed significantly to this discuss and other items on the Agenda to follow.
- Board member Deborah Yates asked for the definition of RAD which stands for Rental Assistance Demonstration and it should be noted that this program derives from the Obama Administration which allows private operators to tap into federal subsidies to address the need for the more than 31 billion dollars in funding the NYCHA needs to properly maintain its buildings but does not have.
- It was noted that this past November 2019, NYCHA announced that it is seeking to transfer the operation of 62,000 of its apartments to private operators. As Committee members Yates and Staci Ramos pointed out, these units would then be transferred to Section 8 (the federal housing voucher program) and questions were raised by them regarding “rent caps (30% of income) and whether Section 9 subsidies would come into play. Board members Yates and Ramos agreed to review all elements of RAD (past and present) and report back to the Committee in our March meeting.
- Mr. Jenkins indicated that RAD conversions have already occurred in some NYCHA properties and that the current plans to have RAD conversions in NYCHA developments (such as the Harlem River Houses) are still in the very early phases of planning.
- The Committee agreed that it is important for Board 10 to weigh in on, and provide a position on, RAD overall and plans for its implementation in particular.

C. 135th Street Block Association Presentation

- The Committee welcomed members of the 135th Street Block Association to allow them the opportunity to discuss a pressing issue confronting the homeowners, commercial tenants and residents of this block (especially those who own and reside in the block from St. Nicholas Avenue (west to Adam C. Powell, Jr. Boulevard (east).
- The Association focused on the long-term issues associated with the conditions of their sidewalks which were part of an overall “street scaping” project done in the mid 1990’s. The bottom line is that these special diamond shaped sidewalks have deteriorated to the point that they represent a hazard to pedestrians and residents and have become a

significant economic detriment to owners who have the responsibility to repair and maintain.

- The sidewalks in question also contain (between Frederick Douglass and Adam C. Powell, Jr. Boulevards, the “Walk of Fame” (a group of in ground plaques commemorating political and cultural iconic Harlem figures.
- Homeowners presented situations where they have sought to repair these sidewalks (at great cost to them) only to have to redo them months later. The President of the Association indicated that the sidewalks were not placed correctly in the original design and placement and were laid on sand (versus a concrete base) which has caused them to become loose creating trip factors that are dangerous to the health and well being of pedestrians and residents alike.
- In addition to the monies spent by owners for repairs, the NYC Department of Transportation has fined owners for these conditions. CB 10 District Manager Shatic Mitchell has been proactive in requesting that DOT suspend their fining efforts.
- The Committee agreed to work on a resolution that would require (among other things) the City of New York (at its own cost and expense) to replace all sidewalks from St. Nicholas Avenue to Adam C. Powell, Jr. Boulevard (north and south sides of the streets); to permanently cease and desist from fining owners for the conditions of those sidewalks and to reimburse owners for the monies expended over the years in sidewalk repair and fines.
- The Committee will have a Resolution ready for the March Executive Committee meeting and the April meeting of the full Board.

D. Potential Installation of Undesign the Redline in CD10

- Committee member Delsenia Glover gave a presentation regarding the possibility of having an “Undesign the Redline” exhibit in Central Harlem. She noted that these exhibits have been created at locations throughout the Country and that they have been considered as “life changing.”
- The Chair recommended that we move forward with the planning of the exhibit and made a motion to make this recommendation to the Executive Committee. The Chair also noted locations of the exhibit in other sections of the City (most recently the Bronx).
- In discussion on the motion, it was suggested that a Resolution was premature and that some investigations as to costs and locations

should occur first. In response, the Chair and others on the Committee thought it a good idea at least for the Housing Committee to bring the matter for discussion before the Executive Committee for feedback and recommended next steps. The motion passed by a vote of 3 to 2.

3. Old Business - None

4. New Business - None

5. Announcements

6. Adjournment – Meeting adjourned at 8:00 PM