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Housing Committee Tuesday, April 7, 2015, 6:00 p.m. Board Office

Mission: The Housing Committee seeks to review, monitor, initiate and/or report on the implementation of all current and new housing initiatives and homeownership programs, and to advocate for the preservation of quality affordable housing for all East Harlem residents.

*** Minutes ***

Present: Adem Brija, Myra Colon, John Green, Wendy Hewlett, Alvin Johnson, Nilsa Orama, Angel Mescain (staff)

Excused: George Gallego, Maria Nieves, Eudora Ortiz, William Smith, Candy Vives-Vasquez

Absent: Keith Massey, Andre Vital

Guests: Mirta Feliciano, DC 37; Yu Fang Li; Siyi Wen; Hector Gerardo, We Act; Diana Ayala, Speaker's office; Vincent Vann; Mahfuzur Rahman

1. Call to Order – Adoption of Agenda

The meeting was called to order by committee vice-chair Wendy Hewlett at 6:05 p.m. Motion made by Myra Colon to adopt the agenda it was seconded by Adem Brija.

2. Discussions & Presentations

- a. Committee discussion to assess community district needs and to develop recommendations for inclusion in the CB11 Statement of District Needs for Fiscal Year 2017. Committee discussion on Neighborhood Planning

Wendy Hewlett vice chair introduced the write up on the district needs and how important it is to our community and therefore requires the committee to have a true dialogue on conditions that we the committee would like to see addressed by the mayor's office. When one includes items to be a part of the district needs we must not just include a description of the issue but we the committee must also offer a resolution. Miss. Hewlett along with Angel Mescain went through what the District Needs Statement is and how effective it is to CB11. Alvin Johnson made remarks to the committee as well and mentioned that he and Wendy had discussed previously some issues that should be looked at when discussing the district needs statement. Alvin also stressed the importance of the Statement. Alvin touched upon some of the issues that were currently mentioned in the District Needs such as NYCHA open repair issues – elevator, lighting, doors, and camera's. The other issue was the 80/20 use and how of a disadvantage it is to

the East Harlem given that there is an influx of development. The community board has taken the position that 50/30/20 is more affective for our community and it should be explored. This represents market, middle and low. RPA did a study that we will lose 12,000 units of affordable housing between now and 2040. Wendy mentioned that Land use also mentions the 50/30/20 within their write up. Wendy also mentioned that she asked Angel if it was at all possible to obtain how many units were lost and gain between 2010 & 2014. Mr. Mescain said that it is difficult to quantify and HPD may not have up to date info to provide. Mr. Mescain mentioned also mentioned what the RPA shows us the number of units that we were face deregulation. It will require a bit of research that will be somewhat difficult but worth a try. Why we go through this exercise of the Statement of District Needs and what the purpose is. The document we are working on is a planning document and it shows the developer that wants to come into our community it tells the story of what our communities needs are. We will issue a report of what we are looking for our community long term. Mr. Mescain also said we as a committee have to understand that this is a long term issue and not just a two months gathering. This must be discussed throughout the year. The connection to the Neighborhood Planning is that the Mayor has a Housing Plan which as tasked many of the city agencies to become involved one agency is City Planning which has been assigned by the Mayor to look at the possibility of being re-zoned. With this a neighborhood study will be done, this study will look at the neighborhood in its entirety and see what the needs are. What may come out of that is some policy recommendations and with that may come re-zoning. So our exercise will help inform that conversation. We must equipped ourselves and become engage when the conversations start. Mr. Johnson asked about the submission of the Park Ave, rezoning that was submitted to City Planning. Mr. Mescain explained that a couple of years ago the Community Board hired a few consultants to confirm with local residents and prepared a set planning recommendations for the Park Avenue Corridor. The plans were submitted and have not issued a formal recommendation however city planning likes what CB11 has recommended. Density is being looked at and the city is possibly looking on how to add to that. 80,000 units city wide is looking to added.

Alvin asked what the committee's role should be when discussing the Statement and the Neighborhood Planning. It was mentioned that Harlem has gone through two major rezoning phases already one 2003 (3rd Avenue) and 2007 (125th Street). The role of the committee should focus revising and looking more comprehensive and trying to connect it to the Neighborhood Planning phase. Miss. Hewlett mentioned a few issues that could be a part of the District Needs, she stressed that these are just ideas:

- The lottery process - I see that land use mentions this within their district needs as well
- Housing for Disabled and Seniors- this should be monitored more closely
- Housing for veterans within CB11- several issues have of inhabitable living conditions, there should be some form of monitoring system
- Committee would like HPD to work with Picture The Homeless as they seek to acquire buildings to redevelop into affordable housing/East Harlem Community Land Trust
- Angel can you tell us how many units of affordable housing were lost in 2014 and how many were gain. Can you also tell us how many were lost and gain from 2010-2014

- The committee also feels 80/20 does not work for our communities we need a housing structure system of 50/30/20. I notice that land use mentions this in their statement as well
- Committee would like to continue to work closely and continue to build a relationship with NYCHA- repair issues and future repair items in the pipeline
- There are a few buildings in our community that appeared on the public advocates worst landlord list-housing committee should monitor these issues
- Issues that remain with HPD and the TILL/ANCP program
- Educating tenants on how to practice and conserve energy as well as educating the committee on LEED practices- Tenant /Housing Forum
- Zoning issues- were housing is effected
- DHS and Homeless issue within East Harlem
- Issus of illegal hotels/bed and breakfast within East Harlem

These are just items that I thought of joined in along with having conversations with Alvin.

Mr. Mescaïn encourages the committee to exchange ideas and not to wait to make it easier on ourselves. We don't have to keep to just the housing section each section relates to other committees. Any ideas we have please make a note of that and discuss. Miss. Hewlett made reference to page 13 paragraph 4 and how the idea that the committee was taken and the action was to sell off the property to a private developer. Ms. Hewlett also mentioned City Society, which owns several properties including church properties. City Society is making some changes to the properties in which they own, this change may include dealings with NYCHA.

Mr. Brija made mention of the parks that are being underutilize. Diana Ayala from the Speaker's office, acknowledge the use and underutilization of the parks. Ms. Ayala, said that during the summer months some of the parks are used but used for private functions. Mr. Mescaïn mentioned the RFQ that was released by HPD a few months ago where they identified 10 community gardens sites and how the site can be used to build affordable housing. The response rate is unknown to us at this time.

The list of lots included the following sites in East Harlem: Harlem Valley, Jackie Robinson Community Garden- 4 lots, Harlem Grown – Greenhouse, Electric Ladybug Community Garden, Pleasant Village Community Garden

“The New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) is inviting developers to submit qualifications for the design and construction of high-quality, new construction, affordable housing development projects on public sites located in neighborhoods across the City of New York that will be available for disposition:

(1) one- to four-family affordable homes and up to approximately 14-unit condominiums/cooperatives. The homeownership developments may be eligible for financing through the New Infill Homeownership Opportunities Program (NIHOP).

(2) Small (approximately 15- to 30-unit) affordable multifamily rental developments. Small rental projects may be eligible for financing through the Neighborhood Construction Program (NCP).”

Mr. Brija, mentioned a “community give back” were if you take away the community garden if you lean towards green sustainability one could create a green garden roof. Housing would be developed along with the presence of a “community garden”

One of the committee members her concern is the rezoning and what happened under the Bloomberg era. What does it mean when rezoning happened, what does the committee lose. So far the committee has not lost anything. Mr. Mescaïn, the neighborhood study process/ rezoning creates an opportunity for the committee to give input. Folks have their eyes here, the big developers are looking at this community on top of the current mayor has his ideas. We as the committee must remain engage and focused because it will get boring. Ms. Hewlett mentioned on top of all we must understand the funding. Funding is not connected to the rezoning but property owners can obtain more dollars for their property. Funding is tied into the preservation of housing. The issue of 421-a and that policy up for review.

Couple of months ago HPD provided information on the lottery process and East Harlem will co-sponsor a forum on May 6th. Rezoning can be a scary thing but it’s not all bad. Communities are always somewhat scared of change but if we remain well informed and educated this community can prevail. The forum is where we the CB can here the complaints and start to connect tenants in the right direction on how to resolve and hold landlord accountable. Ms. Hewlett stresses to committee that there is so much that this committee can do. Lately we have been so focused on TILL and HDFC’s less focused on folks living in unsanitary conditions within our neighborhood. Diana Ayala stressed the issue of education and how that is key to the community. Ms. Ayala mentioned that the problem comes when the concern is money and not really the community. Alvin mentioned 421A and how we want this community to look. 2007 is when we really started to see the housing crises and all of the land agreements expire. 1968 we had the Urban Development plan. Now we need to make sure that we get the affordability tied to the land. 421A originally started out as a great idea, but somewhere things got off track. 421-A- Is define as: The issue of triple dipping of bonuses – City, State & Federal. The community should get 20% of affordable housing for every bonus.

New construction of MULTIPLE DWELLINGS on lots which were vacant, predominantly vacant or improved with a non-conforming use three years prior to the start of construction. Buildings in the EXCLUSION AREA are not eligible unless they receive governmental assistance, contain 20% affordable units, or the owner participates in the 421-a Affordable Housing Production Program.

EXCLUSION AREAS

Generally, buildings within these areas must meet additional affordable housing requirements.

BENEFITS GRANTED

Construction period exemption (up to 3 years) plus 10-year (2 years full + 8 years phase out), 15-year (11 years full + 4 years phase out), 20-year (12 years full + 8 years phase out), or 25-year (21 years full + 4 years phase out) post-construction exemption from the increase in real estate taxes resulting from the work.

The longer exemption periods apply in northern Manhattan, the other boroughs, other designated areas, and to projects that receive governmental assistance or contain 20%

affordable units. All rental units become subject to rent stabilization for the duration of the benefits, with initial rents set by the Tax Incentive Programs (TIP).

PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS

The developer applies to TIP and receives a Certificate of Eligibility. The Department of Finance implements the benefits. Benefits may be applied for once construction begins.

Housing Committee must remain knowledgeable of all housing issues, we must not get information at the tail end. Ms. Hewlett reminded the committee that this is due written up and submitted by August. We will continue to discuss the issues and they all somewhat mesh together. It was requested to please bring all your ideas to next month's meeting and be prepared to identify at least 5 issues.

3. Old Business

None

4. New Business

None

5. Informational Updates

None

6. Announcements

- a. The next Housing Committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 5, 2015 at 6:00 pm.
- b. WeAct's Community Organizer & Outreach Coordinator Hector Gerardo invited the committee to a forum on Climate Change and what the Mayor's plan is regarding this. Saturday, April 11th @ the Henry J. Carter Specialty Hospital located at 1752 Park Avenue at 121st Street from 9:30a-2:30p. The forum is necessary for the sole purpose of educating the community.

7. Adjournment

Motion was made by Alvin Johnson to adjourn seconded by John Green. Meeting adjourned at 7:22pm