



Housing, Land Use, and Zoning Minutes

8 October 2024 at 6:30pm

Attendees

Committee members present: Hon. Signe Mortensen (co-chair), Hon. Liz Waytkus (co-chair), Hon. Barry Weinberg (virtual), Hon. Juan Colmenares, Hon. Ilana Mercado, Hon. Clayton Sanford (virtual), Hon. Annette Robinson

Committee members absent: Hon. Divine Essence White

Public members present: Tanya Gallo (virtual), Jared Knowles (virtual)

Other community board members present: Hon. Heather Jason (virtual), Hon. Joshua Christopher (virtual)

1 Call to Order

Chair Signe Mortensen (SM) called the meeting to attention at 6:40 pm, with the meeting officially called to order at 6:45 pm.

2 Adopt Agenda

Carolyn Manley raised a request to add a discussion on NYCHA rat issues during New Business. The agenda was moved to adopt by Liz Waytkus (LW) and seconded by Ilana Mercado (IM).

3 Adopt Minutes

The September minutes were not adopted, as committee members did not have the opportunity to review them.

4 Introductions

All attendees introduced themselves.

5 Presentations / Announcements

5.1 J. Max Bond – Symposium on the 60th anniversary of the founding of the Architects' Renewal Committee in Harlem (ARCH)

Lizzie MacWillie presented information on the upcoming ARCH [symposium](#), scheduled for November 15-16 at CCNY. ARCH's mission centers on residential advocacy in relation to housing. The symposium will include a keynote address by Dr. Seumalu Elora Lee Raymond and three panels focused on ARCH's legacy, housing and vacancy, and the evolution of 125th Street.

LW inquired about the construction of EV charging stations at the parking lot on 135th and Convent, and LM confirmed the presence of EV infrastructure but was not aware of specific details. SM expressed interest in a broader discussion on CCNY's and Columbia University's plans for community electrification.

5.2 Other topics

Yuien Chin (YC) inquired about the city council vote on the [135th Street ULURP](#). Barry Weinberg (BW) shared that the vote was referred back to the CPC with modifications, which could affect the 50-day timeline. Jose Trucios ([NYC Department of City Planning \(DCP\)](#) representative) noted that the modifications would require action from DCP, with an update expected within a week.

6 New Business Discussions

6.1 Dan McSweeney – Affordable Housing Idea

Dan McSweeney (DM) presented a conceptual idea to rehabilitate the [SS United States](#) ship as a mixed-use site on the Harlem waterfront, potentially offering affordable housing, economic development, and a bridge for community integration. LW asked if similar projects exist, and DM cited the Queen Mary hotel in Long Beach as an example.

Discussion followed on logistical and safety concerns, funding, and affordability. DM noted that substantial planning and feasibility studies (totaling \$6 million) have been conducted. BW emphasized that prior plans for the Fairway site, such as Harlem on the River, exist and CB9 and WE ACT had previously opposed waterfront development there. Heather Jason (HJ) raised concerns about potential emissions from the vessel.

6.2 Carolyn Manley – NYCHA

Carolyn Manley raised concerns over increased rat infestations in NYCHA buildings and surrounding vehicles. BW remarked that West and Central Harlem are designated rat mitigation zones, receiving specific resources like containerized waste disposal.

6.3 FY 2025-2026 Budget Discussion

SM announced the start of the budget request process, noting the importance of linking requests to appropriate agencies. BW recommended referencing the district statement of needs as a foundation. Key focus areas include rental burdens, pressure on TIL and HDFC programs, and the impact of privatization.

LW expressed a need to highlight the high concentration of shelters around Convent Avenue. CS suggested advocating for a city-wide “fair share” study on shelter distribution, noting the importance of balanced development across neighborhoods.

The committee plans to finalize a draft by October 16.

7 Old Business; Subcommittee/Taskforce Reports

7.1 Legislation We Are Watching

Tanya Gallo (TG) highlighted a new [NYC industrial plan](#) from the Adams administration, currently in an analysis phase without rezoning plans, that will soon undergo CB reviews.

7.2 Developments We Are Watching

BW reported ongoing development at several sites, including transitional housing at 478 W 130th and an affordable housing project at 487 W 129th.

7.3 Public Members Updates

TG suggested a community land trust workshop in partnership with WE ACT. SM noted available funds for outreach efforts, including possible postcard distribution. IM suggested that this could be an effective forum for providing resources for basic housing needs (e.g. mitigating rental overcharges).

7.4 MHCC Updates

SM and LW reported responding to a recent MHCC request for approval.

7.5 NYCHA

The committee is still seeking a CB representative to attend RAD PACT meetings held on the third Wednesday of each month.

7.6 RKO Hamilton Theater Taskforce Update

The committee is still looking for a CB member to spearhead efforts on the theater site.

IM proposed a collaborative taskforce between HLUZ and the Arts& Culture committee. SM provided background on CB9's visioning work for the theater, now owned by developer Ashkenazi, with the goal of repurposing it for community arts or affordable housing. Interest in revitalization has waned since the passing of the company's owner. YC offered to assist with advocacy for the project.

7.7 TIL

No Updates.

7.8 HDFC Updates

No Updates.

7.9 Film and TV Taskforce Updates

No Updates.

8 Action Items

None.

9 Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00 pm, moved by LW and seconded by IM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Clayton Sanford.