Russell Squire
Chair

Will Brightbill
District Manager

505 Park Avenue, Suite 620
New York, N.Y. 10022-1106
(212) 758-4340
(212) 758-4616 (Fax)
www.cb8m.com – Website
info@cb8m.com – E-Mail

The City of New York
Community Board 8 Manhattan
Housing Committee
January 6, 2022
This meeting was conducted via Zoom

Board Members Present: Billy Freeland, Ed Hartzog, May Malik, Greg Morris, Rita Popper, Margaret Price, Yma Thoma-Rodriguez, Kim Selway (Public Member), Russell Squire, Marco Tamayo, Sharon Weiner

Item 1: Discussion- Establishing Housing Committee Priorities for 2022.

Co-chairs Hartzog and Morris introduced everyone to the meeting. Mr. Morris shared some points from Governor Hochul's State of the State briefing. **See Appendix A.**

As a follow up to the presentation, Ms. Popper wondered *'how much say does the state have over the city as far as housing goes?'*

Ms. Price shared that she continued to grapple with the idea of what affordable means. She challenged us to estimate the need that we can take to the Governor's Office or other elected officials and say, *"OK, there's the pot of money, and here's what we need of that share of that money in support of affordable housing in the district."*

Mr. Freeland highlighted the Governor's briefing book referencing transitional housing for justice involved individuals. He also noted that the policy book and the speech did not mention anything about the eviction moratorium or public housing funding.

Ms. Weiner encouraged the committee to make a list of priorities that it can use to lobby elected officials.

Mr. Ravaschiere prompted a conversation about preservation of units and the environmental issues associated with building. He also referenced decarbonization.

Ms. Popper encouraged us to continue to focus on AMI.

Mr. Freeland reminded us to focus on zoning.

Mr. Tamayo directed members who have thoughts about building height to refer to building code.

Mr. Morris provided a brief presentation about the committee's business last year. **See Appendix B.** And then, suggested the following working groups. **See Appendix C.**

Mr. Hartzog emphasized for the working groups to *1) define what affordable housing is, 2) focus on zoning, and 3) support efforts to create specialized housing (421-a).*

Mr. Squire encouraged the committee to think about its connection to resiliency and sustainability efforts as well as its connection to the Environment and Sanitation committee.

Mr. Freeland expressed is interest in seeing the committee support Safe Havens and permanent supportive housing in the district.

Mr. Tamayo pointed to how very little $25B is in the budget in support of housing and clarified the significant density levels in the community.

Ms. Price called on the committee to act now and create a resolution. *This would put the working groups on pause.*

Mr. Popper expressed a desire to produce a letter that would call upon the Governor to direct the resources to restore 14,000 units of affordable housing in the district. The amount of resources would be estimated. The letter would be drafted and submitted to our elected officials.

Ms. Thoma raised the alarm that if the committee and the board did not draw attention to the need for this affordable housing the district would likely end up filled with luxury towers/high rises.

Mr. Squire expressed his comfort with the committee drafting a letter.

As there were no more reflections or questions, Mr. Hartzog and Mr. Morris thanked the committee attendees.

Ed Hartzog and Gregory Morris, Co-Chairs

Appendix A – State of the State Briefing Book Housing Proposal (Abbreviated)

State of the State Address

The pandemic laid bare the connection between housing and health, as well as the structural inequities baked into housing across New York State.

To advance the recovery in an equitable way and improve housing security for all New Yorkers, Governor Hochul will initiate a new, $25 billion, five-year Housing Plan to create and preserve 100,000 affordable homes in both urban and rural communities, including 10,000 homes with support services for vulnerable populations.

Governor Hochul's Housing Plan will be designed using a four-part framework of economic recovery, social justice, climate action, and digital connectivity

State of the State Address

- Create and Preserve **100,000 Low-Income Rental and Co-Operative Housing Units** in Both Urban and Rural Communities
- Create and Preserve **10,000 Supportive Housing Units**
- Governor Hochul's housing plan will **invest $300 million in the new construction and preservation of senior housing** across the state by making significant capital improvements in the buildings and extending affordability to maintain this important supply of housing.

State of the State Address

- There are three primary goals of community-controlled housing: insulating housing from market forces, promoting equality and cohesion among neighbors, and enabling residents to exercise shared control over their housing.
- **Pilot programs** will solicit projects through a competitive Request for Proposals process and will allow for a variety of ownership models including, but not limited to: limited equity coops (Mitchell-Lama model), shared equity housing, and community land trusts.
- All applications will need projects to be permanently affordable

State of the State Address

- **Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) –** which include backyard cottages, attics, garages, and basements – can provide an affordable multi-generational housing option that helps families live closer together.
- But current land use restrictions prevent homeowners in some communities from building ADUs.
- To permit these vital options and help reduce housing costs, Governor Hochul will propose legislation to require municipalities to allow a minimum of one ADU on owneroccupied residentially zoned lots.

State of the State Address

- Governor Hochul will propose legislation to facilitate conversions in the following manner:
  - ***Hotel Conversions:*** Any Class B hotel located within (or within 800 feet of) a residential zoning district can use the existing certificate of occupancy for permanent residences, as long as the units are subject to applicable rent stabilization laws and agreements.
  - ***Office Conversions:*** As noted above, Governor Hochul will remove the 12.0 maximum residential FAR in New York City, facilitating the conversion office buildings to residential use (while also supporting housing production).

State of the State Address

- Existing New York State law limits the maximum density of residential **floor area ratio (FAR)** in New York City to 12.0, even though it does not limit the overall allowable floor area that may comprise other uses.
- Governor Hochul will propose a repeal of this antiquated limitation on the City's authority, and give the City the autonomy it should have to allow for denser residential development where appropriate.

State of the State Address

With **421a** set to expire in 2022, Governor Hochul will propose a new tax abatement that aims to achieve these goals:

- Create deeper affordability that services lower income households than 421a.
- Create longer-term affordability to provide more stability for low-income households.
- Ensure long-term availability of affordable rental units in neighborhoods across the city.
- Restructure the tax abatement to ensure maximum efficiency of taxpayer dollars.

State of the State Address

Governor Hochul will propose two pieces of legislation designed to protect New Yorkers at risk of discrimination based on conviction or credit status.

- ***A Credit to New York:*** This legislation will prohibit residential landlords from automatically denying applicants on the basis of credit history or
- ***Fair Chance Housing:*** This legislation will eliminate a private landlord's ability to automatically reject individuals with justice involvement and will require housing providers to conduct individualized assessments that account for the circumstances of a conviction.

State of the State Address

The Governor's Executive Budget is expected to be released on January 18th.

Budget analysis will follow.

Final budget on April 1.

Appendix B – Old Business

Old Business

What We Covered in 2021

- What is affordable?
- How do we support current residents of affordable housing in CB8? Middle income housing?
- What are the important density issues in the community?
- What are the important zoning issues in the community?
- How do we change AMI?
- How do we change developer mindset about affordable housing?
- How do we help secure more Mitchell-Lama housing?
- What are the current bills pending at the local/state/federal level?

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Parking Lot

Empty lots, warehousing
- What's happening? Taxing? Fines?

What happens when a developer does not want to rent? How is the developer held accountable?

More middle-income housing needing – recognize who the constituents are.

Who are the (non-profit) developers that do affordable housing?

Appendix C – New Business (Working Groups)

New Business – Suggested Strategies for 2022

- Supporting residents of public housing in CB8 to hold city accountable to their needs
- Partnering with zoning committee to propose zoning changes to accommodate more affordable housing
- Completing an analysis of development in the district, and considering locations (lots, etc.) to encourage development.
- Connecting with Housing Committees or Housing advocates at other CBs for the sake of developing legislation recommendations
- Seeking opportunities engage with developers to bring more affordable housing to district
- Working to elected officials to support the development of affordable and specialized housing opportunities in CB8

Looking to break into Working Group to support the above.