

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING

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April 9, 2013  
Start: 9:57 a.m.  
Recess: 10:07 a.m.

HELD AT: Council Chambers  
City Hall

B E F O R E:  
Rosie Mendez  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:  
Maria del Carmen Arroyo  
Erik Martin Dilan  
Melissa Mark-Viverito  
Margaret S. Chin  
James G. Van Bramer

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2 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Good morning  
3 and welcome. My name is Rosie Mendez and I am the  
4 Chair of the Committee on Public Housing. I'd  
5 like to add that I haven't chaired anything in  
6 this room since it's been renovated. So it's  
7 certainly nice to be sitting here.

8 Today the Committee will be voting  
9 on a pre-considered resolution calling upon the  
10 New York City Housing Authority to 1) meaningfully  
11 engage residents on proposed leasing plans, 2) to  
12 provide predominately and permanently affordable  
13 units and 3) to include certain requirements and  
14 any ground leases for NYCHA land. The Committee  
15 considered this pre-considered resolution at its  
16 April 5<sup>th</sup> hearing. Based on that hearing the text  
17 and title of the resolution has been updated. To  
18 recognize that housing created on public housing  
19 properties should be predominately and permanently  
20 affordable.

21 The resolution has also been  
22 updated to recognize the NYCHA should factor  
23 stakeholder feedback into its leasing plans before  
24 releasing any RFP's. Although the Committee  
25 reviewed NYCHA's leasing plan at its last hearing

1 will briefly summarize the plans again today.  
2 NYCHA recently announced plans to lease land at 8  
3 of its Manhattan developments. The land will be  
4 leased to private developers who will then build  
5 predominately market rate apartments with some  
6 affordable units. NYCHA expects these leases to  
7 generate 30 million to 50 million annually and  
8 says it will spend that money on needed repairs  
9 and capital improvements at its developments. The  
10 land to be leased currently hold parking spaces,  
11 compactor yards, basketball and handball courts, a  
12 paved baseball field, an outdoor plaza with  
13 seating area, a community center and at least one  
14 landscaped area.  
15

16 At our last hearing, the committee,  
17 NYCHA residents, and members of the public  
18 expressed several concerns about NYCHA's leasing  
19 plan. I will highlight some of those concerns  
20 now. First, it is not for NYCHA to just get  
21 feedback from residents and stakeholders about the  
22 leasing plan. NYCHA must use that feedback to  
23 ensure that what happened- I missed something  
24 here. Let's move on, to ensure that happens we  
25 are calling on NYCHA to voluntarily opt into the

1 city's uniform land use review process.

2 We are also calling on NYCHA to  
3 gather and address every comment it receives about  
4 the leasing plan and post those comments and  
5 responses online and we are calling on NYCHA to  
6 form an advisory committee of residents at each  
7 development where land will be leased and to allow  
8 those committees to propose parameters for RFP's  
9 and participate in developer selection.

10 Second, under NYCHA's current  
11 leasing plan, 80% of the apartments built on lease  
12 land would be market rate and only 20% would be  
13 affordable. But 80/20 isn't good enough. We need  
14 more affordable housing. Half of all New Yorkers  
15 today are spending more for housing than they can  
16 reasonably afford. NYCHA land should serve the  
17 same purpose NYCHA does, to ensure that low and  
18 middle-income families have a permanently  
19 affordable place to live.

20 So we are calling on NYCHA to  
21 provide predominantly affordable housing units on  
22 any land it leases. We are also calling NYCHA to  
23 give residents and affected developments priority  
24 for newly built affordable housing.  
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2 Third, residents are going to need  
3 independent technical assistance to meaningfully  
4 review and help craft leasing plans. So we are  
5 calling on NYCHA to establish an independent not  
6 profit organization staffed by legal,  
7 architectural, engineering, environmental, land  
8 use and community organizing professionals to  
9 provide that assistance.

10 Fourth, losing parking,  
11 playgrounds, community centers, or other  
12 facilities is not an option. We are calling on  
13 NYCHA to replace or relocate facilities on lease  
14 sites before leasing land in order to avoid  
15 service interruptions.

16 Fifth, NYCHA says that it will  
17 spend the proceeds of its current leasing plan on  
18 repairs and capital improvements. It says some of  
19 the money will go to the affected developments and  
20 some will go to the rest of the NYCHA portfolio.  
21 We are calling on NYCHA to dedicate a significant  
22 portion of the proceeds from this and any future  
23 leasing plan to the capital needs of the affected  
24 developments. We are also calling on NYCHA to  
25 allow residents to determine what their own

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capital needs are.

Sixth, and lastly, this leasing plan is moving forward too fast. Residents, elected officials and other stakeholders need more time to fully consider the plan, to form an opinion and to give NYCHA feedback. NYCHA should not release any RFP's until it has ensured that all stakeholders particularly affected residents have had this opportunity and NYCHA should not release any RFP's until it has incorporated stakeholder recommendations onto its leasing plan.

I want to apologize for my opening being quite long. However this is going to be one of the most singular important things that will happen in our city and that will happen on public housing land and that's why this resolution is also very important because how we move forward, if we move forward needs to be determined now because it will be impacting generations for decades and decades to come. With that, I'd like to invite one of the other co-sponsors that is here right now to say a few words on the resolution. If you'd like, Council member Chin.

COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Chair Mendez,

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2 I just want to thank you for your leadership on  
3 this and I urge my colleagues to support it  
4 because as you heard from Chair Mendez this is  
5 going to have a tremendous impact in the city and  
6 in our community. In my developments I have heard  
7 from residents and tenant leaders and they are so  
8 frustrated with the process. And NYCHA really  
9 needs to step back and do it slower and really do  
10 it comprehensively and allow residents, community  
11 and elected officials to really work together on  
12 this. So thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Thank you  
14 Council member Chin. I would like to thank my  
15 colleagues who are here today and the ones who are  
16 on their way. Once we call the roll, we will keep  
17 it open. And particularly the public housing  
18 staff, my counsel Ed Atkins, policy analyst, Amy  
19 Stokes and Guillermo Pattino. I just like saying  
20 Guillermo, Guillermo Pattino. This has been many  
21 weeks of work and the long hearing last Friday.  
22 Council member Melissa Mark-Viverito is also co-  
23 sponsor on this bill and she's on her way and once  
24 she gets here she will be able to say her, make  
25 some comments as well on the record. So at this

1  
2 time I would like to ask the clerk to please call  
3 the roll and I urge all my colleagues to vote yes  
4 on this item today.

5 COMMITTEE CLERK: William Martin,  
6 Committee Clerk. Roll call vote on the Committee  
7 of Public Housing. Council member Rosie Mendez.

8 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: I vote aye.

9 COMMITTEE CLERK: Arroyo.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Aye.

11 COMMITTEE CLERK: Chin.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Aye.

13 COMMITTEE CLERK: Van Bramer.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER VAN BRAMER: Aye.

15 COMMITTEE CLERK: By a vote of 4 in  
16 the affirmative, 0 in the negative and no  
17 abstentions, item has been adopted. Members  
18 please sing the committee report.

19 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And we will  
20 keep the roll open for another half hour. We will  
21 keep the roll open. Thank you.

22 COMMITTEE CLERK: Council member  
23 Mark-Viverito.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO: I  
25 vote aye.



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COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING

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COMMITTEE CLERK: Vote on Public  
Housing now stands at 5 in the affirmative.  
Council member Dilan.


COUNCIL MEMBER DILAN: I vote aye.

COMMITTEE CLERK: Final vote on the  
Committee of Public Housing is now 6 in the  
affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions.

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Sung Bin Park certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. I further certify that I am not related to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of this matter.

Signature

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sung Bin Park", written over a horizontal line.

Date \_\_April 13, 2013