

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON SANITATION AND SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING

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May 23, 2013
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HELD AT: Council Chambers
City Hall

B E F O R E:

LETITIA JAMES
ROSIE MENDEZ
Chairpersons

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Maria del Carmen Arroyo
James F. Gennaro
Robert Jackson
Michael C. Nelson
Maria del Carmen Arroyo
Erik Martin Dilan
Melissa Mark-Viverito
Margaret S. Chin
James G. Van Bramer

A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Carlos Laboy-Diaz
New York City Housing Authority

Mario Merlino
New York City Department of Health

Fernando Montego
New York City Housing Authority

Louis Ponce
New York City Housing Authority

Felipe Ventegeat
President
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Lily Kelly
Global Green USA

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George Sarkissian
District Manager
Community Board 11

Susan Stetser
District Manager
Community Board 3

Bridget Vincente
Resident
Mott Haven Houses

Nova Stratchon
Mothers on the Move

A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Inez Robinson Turpin
Member
Good Old Lower East Side

Theresa Pedroza
Member
Good Old Lower East Side

Jeanette Tumor
Member
Good Old Lower East Side

2 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Good afternoon
3 and welcome everyone. I am Councilwoman Rosie
4 Mendez, and I chair the Committee on Public
5 Housing. Today we are joined by the Committee on
6 Sanitation and Solid Waste Management, which is
7 chaired by my colleague and friend, Council Member
8 Letitia James. This joint hearing has been
9 convened to examine the New York City Housing
10 Authority's sanitation and recycling practices as
11 well as its rodent and pest control efforts.
12 Keeping NYCHA clean is a team effort. The
13 responsibility falls on residents, management, and
14 the city. Residents are responsible for keeping
15 their apartments clean and for making sure that
16 household garbage gets into the garbage chutes.
17 Management is responsible for storing that garbage
18 until it can be collected by the city and for
19 keeping the common areas of NYCHA developments
20 clean. The city, specifically the Department of
21 Sanitation is responsible for collecting the
22 garbage generated at NYCHA developments. When
23 that team effort breaks down, we have problems.
24 Sometimes little furry problems. To some extent
25 this is unavoidable. New York City has a sizeable

1 rat population and with the summer season there
2 usually is an increase in this problem area, but
3 there are some signs that rat issues are on the
4 rise in public housing. For example, in my
5 district rat complaints were up by 148 percent in
6 Baruch Houses and 49 percent at Lillian Wald. It
7 isn't fair to say that this is the case at every
8 NYCHA development because that it isn't true, but
9 it still warrants a closer look, and that is part
10 of why we are here today. For several years now,
11 NYCHA has had a unit dedicated to dealing with
12 rodents, cockroaches, bedbugs and other pests.
13 The members of this unit, which we understand
14 undergo training at a place colorfully called the
15 rodent academy, and they are responsible for both
16 routine inspections and responding to resident
17 complaints. Today we hope to learn more about
18 this unit, and how it operates. We also hope to
19 learn more about the steps NYCHA takes to not only
20 combat existing rat and pest problems, but also to
21 prevent news ones. For instance, in addition to
22 NYCHA's usage of rat baits and traps, NYCHA has
23 also been installing new rodent proof compactors
24 at many developments, and while we have heard that
25

2 in some cases these compactors may not be cleaned
3 as often as they should, we are nevertheless very
4 interested to hear more about them. With that
5 said, I am going to turn things over to my co-
6 chair, Council Member James, for her opening
7 statement.

8 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you.

9 Good afternoon, and welcome to this joint
10 oversight hearing on sanitation and recycling
11 practices of New York City Housing Authority
12 developments. My name is Letitia James, and I am
13 chair of the Council Sanitation Committee. I'd
14 like to thank my co-chair for today's hearing and
15 my very good friend, Council Member Rosie Mendez
16 of Manhattan, Chair of the Council's Public
17 Housing Committee. I'd also like to thank the
18 staff that has assembled all of the documentation
19 and all of the questions here today. Since our
20 residential recycling law passed in 1989, we have
21 learned that building a sustainable thriving
22 recycling program in New York City is not as
23 simple as snapping one's finger. Our city with
24 its dense, diverse and transient populations
25 presents a host of challenges to ensure that

1 recycling can thrive. One challenge in New York
2 City is the city's significant amount of high
3 density housing. In such housing, residents place
4 their garbage and recyclables in storage rooms
5 where there is generally no oversight and any
6 ticket issued for failure to recycle is given to
7 the building and not the tenants who fail to
8 recycle. By contrast in a neighborhood with only
9 single family homes, residents are responsible for
10 their own trash and recycling and the Department
11 of Sanitation can issue tickets directly to any
12 resident that fails to recycle properly. In NYCHA
13 facilities this dynamic is even more complicated.
14 Most NYCHA buildings are equipped with garbage
15 chutes that lead waste to huge compactors. This
16 creates several significant problems including a
17 lack of indoor storage for recyclables and the
18 inability of building managers to remove
19 recyclables from waste bins. Although concrete
20 numbers do not exist, the general consensus is
21 that recycling in NYCHA facilities is far below
22 average. Today recycling should be treated with
23 an even greater sense of importance in addition to
24 the environmental benefits with which we are all
25

2 familiar. The Department of Sanitation recently
3 noted thanks to the opening of the Sims recycling
4 facility in southwest Brooklyn, that it is now
5 cheaper for the city to recycle a ton of material
6 than to dispose of it as waste. Finally our
7 economic interests line up with our environmental
8 interests. It has been noted by this chair and by
9 others that we currently spent over \$300 million
10 to dispose of our waste in the city of New York--
11 money that could be used obviously to address more
12 pressing issues in the city of New York. \$300
13 million to export our garbage to states unknown.
14 With this backdrop, I hope to use today's hearing
15 to learn more about what actions NYCHA has taken
16 to improve recycling at its facilities. I also
17 understand that we have some NYCHA residents here
18 with us today who will testify about their efforts
19 to educate their neighbors about proper recycling.
20 We look forward to hearing from you. In the end,
21 I hope that today's hearing will allow us to
22 better understand the root of recycling issues and
23 to identify solutions to ensure that our public
24 housing residents are afforded the ability and
25 provided an appropriate education to share in this

2 environmentally and economically important
3 practice of recycling. Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON DICKENS: Thank you,
5 Council Member James. For the public, I just want
6 to remind you that if you want to give testimony--
7 Tish, hold that up--you need to fill out one of
8 these with the sergeant of arms at the back.
9 Also, a little housekeeping, we have been joined
10 by Council Member Mike Nelson from Brooklyn, who
11 sits on the Committee on Sanitation, and we have
12 been joined by Council Member Maria del Carmen
13 Arroyo from the Bronx, who sits on the Committee
14 on Public Housing. You sit on both? Wow, this is
15 a two-fer for you. Okay. Walking through the
16 door is Council Member Chin from Manhattan, who
17 sits on the Committee on Public Housing only.
18 Right? Only. So there we go. At this time, we
19 will hear from our first panel. NYCHA will be
20 giving testimony, and then I understand that there
21 is a representative from the Department of Health
22 and Mental Hygiene who will be available to answer
23 questions after NYCHA's testimony. Thank you all
24 for coming, and if you can start with your
25 testimony. I just want to remind you to introduce

2 yourselves for the record.

3 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: Good afternoon,
4 Carlos Laboy-Diaz for the record, - - sponsor from
5 NYCHA.

6 MARIO MERLINO: Mario Merlino
7 [phonetic] from the Department of Health.

8 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: Good afternoon
9 again, Chairwoman Rosie Mendez and Chairwoman
10 Letitia James, members of the Committee on Public
11 Housing and Sanitation and Solid Waste Management
12 and other distinguished members of City Council.
13 Thank you for the opportunity to discuss with you
14 the New York City Housing Authority's recycling
15 practices, which are part of our commitment to
16 identify and implement the most cost effective
17 solution to help reduce NYCHA environmental
18 impact. I'm Carlos Laboy Diaz, executive vice
19 president for operations for the Housing
20 Authority. Since 2007, NYCHA has undertaken a
21 number of ambitious efforts as part of our green
22 agenda to build a progressive and more sustainable
23 future for our residents and the city. That year
24 Mayor Michael Bloomberg - - board member Margarita
25 Lopez [phonetic] with spearheading environmental

2 initiative at NYCHA. As the authority
3 environmental coordinator, NYCHA total energy
4 costs typically exceeds \$400 million each year.
5 Our measures to significantly lower energy
6 consumption will reduce our carbon footprint,
7 enhance staff efficiency and improve the quality
8 of life for public housing families. Home to over
9 400,000 New Yorkers or five percent of the city
10 population, NYCHA is a critical partner in
11 fulfilling the mayor's PlaNYC, a bold, innovative
12 and long term strategy to position New York City
13 as a worldwide model of sustainability in the 21st
14 century. I am proud to say that we reduced total
15 carbon emissions by about 140,000 tons from 2005
16 to 2010. This is the equivalent of taking over
17 29,000 cars off the road; however, while our
18 energy consumption has decreased energy prices,
19 which are clearly beyond NYCHA control have
20 increased, raising our energy expenditure overall.
21 In fact, our cost nearly doubled from 2002 to 2012
22 going from \$268 million to over 530 million.
23 Imagine what they will be if we have not
24 implemented energy saving measures. NYCHA indeed
25 a model for public housing agencies across the

2 nation. With green achievement ranging from
3 resident education to significant upgrades to our
4 infrastructure. Our recycling efforts and
5 evolving and incremental program that requires
6 partnership, participation - - choices to succeed.
7 It is but just one piece of NYCHA's larger green
8 agenda. I would like to begin this afternoon by
9 sharing with you some of our most notable
10 initiatives in this arena. Over the past several
11 years, NYCHA has proactively engaged multiple
12 partners from the public, nonprofit and private
13 sector to make our efforts successful. For
14 example, with the New York City Department of
15 Environmental Protection we installed a blue roof,
16 permeable pavement and other improvements to
17 reduce runoff at the Bronx River Houses in the
18 Bronx. DEP is also investing in similar projects
19 at - - and Hope Gardens in Brooklyn and - - Houses
20 in the Bronx. Our partnership with the city and
21 the Clinton Climate Initiative have enabled us to
22 purchase energy efficient technology at the
23 reduced prices. Our work with AmeriCorps green
24 city - - program has - - NYCHA use for - - jobs
25 providing with a stipend and educational awards.

2 Con Ed expertise and resources such as energy
3 efficient shower heads and surge protectors help
4 us lower consumption, resulting in this decrease
5 utility costs and more reliable electrical system
6 and real benefit for NYCHA families. Together we
7 have installed over 200,000 compact fluorescent
8 light bulbs that are reducing greenhouse gases by
9 about 8,000 tons per year. With the support of
10 residents and partner associates in New York
11 Restoration Project, we have planted over 12,000
12 trees citywide. Together with the New York City
13 Department of Health and Mental Hygiene we have
14 been tackling a number of rodent issues. The
15 Department of Health has provided NYCHA with
16 recommendations and guidance on eradicating the
17 rodent population at - - developments. Our
18 participation in the mayor's interagency rodent
19 taskforce would also help to improve sanitation
20 and recycling efforts. NYCHA - - recovered an
21 investment - - funds together with city funding to
22 install a highly efficient - - for heating water
23 at 344 East 28th Street, one of our Manhattan
24 developments. For the past several years, we have
25 installed more than 795 energy efficient - - hot

2 water heaters in over 81 developments, reducing
3 natural gas consumption by over 3.4 million - - ,
4 which is equivalent to 17,000 metric tons of
5 carbon dioxide or over 3500 cars. - - NYCHA
6 computerized heated automated system allow us to
7 optimize heating facility containing energy costs
8 and reducing carbon emission. NYCHA is proud to
9 be the first public housing authority ever to win
10 the energy project of the year award from the
11 association of energy engineers for energy
12 efficient lighting and -- upgrades as Castle Hill
13 Houses that reduced natural gas consumption by
14 nearly 800,000 - - in three years. This is the
15 equivalent of about 4,000 metric tons of carbon
16 dioxide or 800 cars. Resident engagement and
17 education has been central to our efforts to lead
18 the way in sustainability. NYCHA - - with
19 resident members from developments city wide such
20 as Baruch, Smith, Whitman-Ingersoll [phonetic],
21 Ravenswood and Wood Houses contribute and further
22 our initiative by planning projects, organizing
23 events and educating neighbors about environmental
24 and energy issues. With assistance from the New
25 York Service Civic Corp [phonetic] volunteers to

2 engage and support residents, NYCHA developed a
3 variety of tools such as the green NYCHA website,
4 a social media platform, and the green guide,
5 which we give a copy to all of the council members
6 today, which illustrates various ways to achieve
7 an eco-friendly lifestyle. In addition to provide
8 information on energy and water conservation, we
9 also focus on the benefits of recycling. Just as
10 resident engagement is responsible for the
11 successful - - initiative I have described so will
12 be the case for recycle. As you have heard, our
13 commitment to the mayor's PlaNYC on sustainability
14 is critical priority of NYCHA; however, we
15 acknowledge that recycling has always been a
16 challenge for the Authority. It has been from any
17 landlord a multi-family dwelling, especially
18 considering our scope of 400,000 residents in 2600
19 buildings across 334 developments. When New York
20 City recycle law was enacted in 1989, NYCHA
21 instituted protocols and invested in some
22 infrastructure. For instance, NYCHA distributed
23 containers, developed signage and disseminated
24 educational material to provide the Department of
25 Sanitation at a number of developments. As the

2 city's recycle program expanded throughout the
3 1990s and new recyclable materials were added
4 citywide, NYCHA worked with the Department of
5 Sanitation personnel to serve the recycle needs
6 for our developments and identify any specific
7 problem. During this period, the Department of
8 Sanitation added recycle truck routes - - new
9 collection trucks to accommodate NYCHA needs.

10 Despite our efforts over the years to install bins
11 and post signage - - all of our developments, it
12 became evident that we face many challenges.

13 Primary among those we have identified is the cost
14 of sufficient infrastructure. As we shared with
15 City Council, severe funding shortfalls and a
16 deficit require us to constantly make tough
17 choices about - - our limited resources. As the
18 city's largest landlord, we must use our scarce
19 funds wisely to first meet our basic obligations
20 such as the safety and security of our family,
21 maintenance and repair and the integrity of our
22 building. Just to illustrate that, it costs NYCHA
23 over \$60 million each year to remove 445 tons of
24 trash generated every single day, require more
25 than 2300 caretakers and these figures does not

2 include the extra personnel needed to work
3 Saturdays and Sundays. Another obstacle is NYCHA
4 aging infrastructure. Our buildings were not
5 designed with recycling in mind. For instance,
6 trash cutes do not promote the sorting of
7 recyclables from trash. The different
8 configurations precludes us of using a one size
9 fits all solution, and identifying space to
10 securely store recyclables for sanitation - - is
11 costly and challenging, yet we maintain a good
12 working relationship with the Department of
13 Sanitation and our exterior trash compactors and
14 our staff effort make waste collection easier and
15 more efficient. NYCHA concentrated efforts have
16 yielded success in some developments. At Smith
17 Houses for example, a be proud of where you live
18 campaign helped make recycling a part of the
19 development culture. The property manager in
20 collaboration with NYCHA recycle team and the
21 resident association introduced recycle practices
22 at the development, conducting staff training and
23 resident education workshops. They worked with
24 the Department of Sanitation to ensure timely
25 pickup and the distribution of their signage. The

1
2 property manager report an increasing recycling
3 rate. Teamwork and consistent involvement, but
4 all stakeholders was the key to the success here.
5 NYCHA leadership believe recycling is important,
6 and is committed to creating a holistic strategy
7 approach that will be developed in stages. That
8 is why my department formed a recycle team to
9 reorganize the - - recycle program and create a
10 recycle model that will institute uniform policy,
11 procedures and practices. As part of this
12 process, the recycle team review all NYCHA policy
13 and procures and work closely with several
14 developments to address the recycle's challenges
15 and improve the process of collection, storage and
16 pickup. Regular reporting was established at
17 select developments to monitor the progress of
18 recycle activities, and the team has been working
19 closely to develop an effective recycle program.
20 NYCHA knows that the residents and staff must be
21 engaged in order to achieve our shared goals. To
22 that end, the recycle team held four recycle
23 sessions in January with staff from - -
24 developments citywide that have recycle bins
25 throughout their campuses. Representatives on all

2 levels of the organization participated including
3 deputy directors, borough director, property
4 managers, caretakers. The group discussed prior
5 recycle efforts and the challenges presented by
6 them as well as ideas, recommendations for a
7 sustainable recycle program. Three similar
8 sessions were held with residents in February.
9 Residents from 24 developments across all five
10 boroughs including Smith, - - , Mott Haven, - -
11 participated. Many of these residents represented
12 groups such as resident associations, resident
13 green committees, resident watch and the garden
14 and greening program. We held a third forum with
15 members of the green city force to get the input
16 of younger residents. Staff discussions centered
17 on the size, the sign and placement of recycle
18 bins as well as the areas and manner in which the
19 recyclables should be stored pending collection.
20 Staff also discussed the strategy to engage
21 residents and enhance communication with the
22 Department of Sanitation. The resident group
23 discussed the appropriate disposal of trash in the
24 recycle bins, the need for conspicuous posting of
25 recycle signage and - - and effective strategies

2 to increase resident compliance with recycle
3 mandates. Residents also offered suggestions of
4 the design and placement of recycle bins, the
5 storage of recyclables on development grounds and
6 how to enhance communication with the sanitation
7 department. For example, residents shared that
8 six metal bins should be installed throughout the
9 development grounds and - - plastic bins should be
10 placed at smaller satellite sites, both of which
11 should be identified clearly with decals and
12 serviced frequently by staff. Some of the
13 information that we gathered from these meetings
14 are to create a volunteer resident recycle
15 ambassador that should be in every building to
16 encourage residents' participation, create three
17 types of clearly labeled and frequently services
18 bins, six bins should be placed near, but not
19 immediately within the building entrance, and
20 within CCTV surveillance areas if applicable. - -
21 should be placed in the waste disposal areas.
22 Specific day and location should be set for bulk
23 and - - waste disposal, and due to the once weekly
24 pickup by Sanitation, the department recyclables
25 should be stored securely in a designated area

2 within the development, using a padlock storage
3 unit suitable for the configuration of the grounds
4 and - - . NYCHA's next step are to pilot this
5 initiative - - size once we evaluate success and
6 incorporate lessons learned, we will roll out the
7 recycle program in stages for an effective
8 implementation. The recycle team is currently
9 working closely with the NYCHA new director of
10 resident engagement to develop effective outreach
11 strategies and educational campaigns. I will be
12 happy to report progress to the City Council at a
13 later date. As I stated earlier our plan is
14 driven [phonetic] by commitment to benefit the
15 necessity of recycle and is based on a total
16 assessment of past effort and the - - of those who
17 know the needs best, our residents and staff.
18 NYCHA recognizes that the most critical component
19 of a successful recycle program is the involvement
20 of the residents. We discovered that for our
21 developments with containers, the more
22 availability of bins and signage was not enough to
23 ensure a successful program. For that reason, we
24 must implement a systematic ongoing resident
25 engagement model. In order to successfully engage

2 our residents, we need to invest substantially
3 personnel and financial resources for the
4 provision of education, outreach, workshops and
5 other key measures that will foster a culture of
6 recycle within our development; however, due to
7 today's challenging economy our fiscal situation
8 these resources are not currently fully available
9 to us. NYCHA is completely committed to provide
10 safe, affordable housing for our families in the
11 most cost effective and environmentally
12 conscientious way possible, yet our efforts to
13 reduce the Authority - - footprint, lower energy
14 and utility consumption, conserve resources,
15 engage resident adopting low carbon lifestyle and
16 preserving public housing for the future
17 generation would only be realized with the
18 partnership of our families and other key
19 stakeholders, such as our supporters in the public
20 and private sectors. We will continue working
21 with the Department of Sanitation to develop a
22 sustainable recycle program and increase recycle
23 participation in all of our developments. In
24 conclusion, we ask that our partners in City
25 Council to assist us in obtaining the funding

2 resources necessary to fully execute our recycle
3 plan. Thank you, and I am happy to answer any
4 questions you may have.

5 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: First want to
6 ask on page four of your testimony, you indicate
7 that NYCHA spends over 60 million each year for
8 the removal of trash. We understand and
9 previously in this Committee it has been stated
10 that NYCHA pays extra money to the city for
11 sanitation services, several million dollars. I
12 think it is like three. Is this included in this
13 60 million?

14 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: This only
15 includes the labor. This is only the salary and
16 benefits of the 2300 caretakers that I mentioned.
17 That does not include the overtime that we pay the
18 staff for Saturday and weekend services or
19 materials that we use like the gasoline and the
20 trucks that we use to remove garbage. - - the
21 property.

22 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay, and so
23 that is for the labor, and then you pay extra to
24 the city I am understanding now it is 745,000 for
25 extra pick up days.

2 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: Correct. We
3 have properties that require extra pickup. Let's
4 say the city goes through that neighborhood twice
5 because of the rodent problem that we have in some
6 areas, we will ask for additional pickup that will
7 keep the conditions of the property safer.

8 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And when did
9 NYCHA institute these extra pickups for the first
10 time?

11 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: My colleague
12 has a lot more years on me in NYCHA, and he says a
13 long time ago. I don't have the exact date.

14 MALE VOICE: That is a longtime
15 policy in the Housing Authority to institute the
16 additional pickups.

17 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: I think it was
18 2002, but you can go check it out and get back to
19 the committee on that. A couple of housekeeping,
20 we were joined by Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer
21 from Queens who is a member of the Committee on
22 Public Housing and Council Member Melissa Mark-
23 Viverito from Manhattan who is a member of the
24 Committee on Public Housing. One question I am
25 going to turn it over to my colleague, you did not

2 address your rat unit in your testimony. Can you
3 tell us a little bit about your rat unit, and what
4 is it comprised--you know, how many staff?

5 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: We have an
6 exterminator unit. Actually, that is one of our
7 biggest success--

8 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: [interposing]
9 The exterminator unit is for pests or...?

10 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: For pests, the
11 whole exterminating process throughout the Housing
12 Authority. Actually that is one of our biggest
13 success stories was Section 3 because this year
14 through the resident academy, we will have about
15 160 exterminators. Actually, we have them right
16 now on board, but they have to get their licenses.
17 They will be full exterminators sometime by the
18 end of the year, and half of those are residents
19 that we hired last year, and this team is
20 certified. They need to be licensed by the state
21 and they go to the Health Department academy to
22 get training. The whole purpose of hiring all of
23 these new exterminators was to expand our process
24 to instead of being reacting, taking - -
25 preventing maintenance like we used to have many

2 years ago, and as part of our commitment to fight
3 the rodent problem and exterminating issues - -
4 Housing Authority, they will be doing preventative
5 maintenance. We will be more aggressive than in
6 the past.

7 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: So the only
8 unit you have is the exterminator unit. Is that
9 correct?

10 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: To deal with
11 pests and rodents, yes.

12 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And so they
13 deal with everything including bedbugs or is that
14 a specialized unit within the unit?

15 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: That is
16 correct. They deal with bedbugs too.

17 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And your
18 exterminating unit deals with pest problems
19 whether it is in the apartment, in the building or
20 on the grounds?

21 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: Correct.

22 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: So it is not
23 the unit--it isn't split up with other units that
24 deals with grounds?

25 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: We are moving

2 away from those kinds of specializations because
3 we need to do preventive maintenance, and we need
4 to do that--when you do preventive maintenance you
5 reduce the number of work orders and you attack
6 the problem before it occurs. That is a
7 combination with education. For example, it is
8 funny, but in this month's journal of the Housing
9 Authority, we talk about how to manage garbage,
10 right. All of these factors when you look at all
11 of this, it helps us to eradicate rodent and deal
12 with some of the pest issues.

13 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: I had a
14 question, and then he was handing me a question.
15 Okay. I had a follow up to that. I can't
16 remember now. I am going to turn it over to
17 Council Member James.

18 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: So the law with
19 regards to recycling was enacted in 1989 and here
20 we are in 2013 almost 25 years since its enactment
21 and I recognize that NYCHA has its financial
22 challenges and physical space challenges and
23 infrastructure challenges, but the recommendations
24 that have been outlined on page 7 of your
25 testimony seem inadequate, and it is unfortunate

2 that NYCHA has not adopted a more aggressive list
3 of recommendations to ensure that residents are
4 recycling. What is the recycling rate of NYCHA
5 overall? And are there some developments that
6 recycle better than others, and if so--

7 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: [interposing]

8 We are looking into 20 developments where we have
9 the committees and those developments we found for
10 example, I use - - houses today as an example of
11 doing great in terms of recycle. I don't have a
12 recycle rate that I can share with you today.

13 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: How often do
14 you meet with the Department of Sanitation?

15 MALE VOICE: We meet with them as
16 part of the interagency, the rodent taskforce.
17 They are one of the agencies that sit on there, so
18 we meet with them every Tuesday.

19 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Every Tuesday?
20 And when did this begin?

21 MALE VOICE: That began I imagine...

22 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: That is the
23 rodent taskforce. Is there at the rodent
24 taskforce you have discussions with respect to
25 recycling? I mean, so is there--I understand

2 based upon your testimony that you have been
3 meeting since 2013. You met in January and you
4 met in February. Is Sanitation at those meetings,
5 the recycling team, you held four recycling
6 sessions in January 2013 with 30 developments
7 citywide and then you had another meeting in
8 February with residents. Was Sanitation at those
9 meetings?

10 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: We have
11 continuous communication with Sanitation. We have
12 a recycle coordinator that is the one that has
13 frequent conversations with them, and we go out
14 and we have meetings, we always invite them. I -
15 - to go to meetings; however, we use the material
16 from the sanitation department and whatever is
17 available from the Health Department for all of
18 our outreach efforts.

19 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: And based on
20 the question that was asked by my co-chair you
21 have asked to increase your weekly pickup with the
22 Department of Sanitation and if you have asked for
23 it to be increased, what will it be increased to,
24 and where?

25 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: Well, I can

2 provide you with the list of properties throughout
3 the city. In some instances, it is from two to
4 three - - in most instances it is from two to
5 three.

6 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: So in some
7 instances, but not across, not at all public
8 housing developments?

9 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: We use this
10 mostly in properties that you don't have outside
11 compactors. In the ones that you have the outside
12 compactors, we have the capacity to wait for the
13 regular pickup. It is in those areas and those
14 type of properties. Like I mentioned before no
15 properties are the same. In those properties in
16 which we don't have that capacity, we don't have
17 the space to install an outside compactor, we will
18 require - - , but I can provide you the list with
19 the details.

20 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: If you can
21 provide me with the list that would be greatly
22 appreciated.

23 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: Sure, and that
24 list includes the extra pickups - - .

25 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: But you asked

2 for the increased pickup primary because of the
3 rodent problem. Correct?

4 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: It is part of
5 the issues. It is part of the pest control. You
6 have rodents and you have roaches and you have
7 everything else.

8 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: But the request
9 was not as a result of because of the fact that we
10 really have a problem storing recyclables?

11 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: Well, these
12 properties in particular and once you see the
13 list, we can get into the details. They are
14 really small properties. You will not have a
15 place really to store recyclables.

16 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Can I just be
17 honest? It appears that it is just not a
18 priority--recycling is just not a priority of
19 NYCHA. That is the sense that I am getting that
20 there doesn't seem to be a full throated, full
21 fisted attempt to comply with the recycling law in
22 the city of New York. That is the sense that I am
23 getting based on the answers to a number of the
24 questions as well as the recommendations that have
25 been put forth, and so again as I stated earlier,

2 I recognize the financial challenges and the
3 physical space challenges by NYCHA, but I also
4 recognize that there is a law in the city of New
5 York, and it is unfortunate that NYCHA has been
6 out of compliance, and it continues to be out of
7 compliance in the city of New York. Going back to
8 the cost--well, let me just talk about the project
9 manager. Have you met with every project manager
10 in all NYCHA developments?

11 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: Yes, ma'am.

12 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: And do they
13 provide you with a report weekly, monthly,
14 semiannually?

15 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: Not about
16 recycling.

17 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Not about
18 recycling.

19 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: Like I
20 mentioned in my testimony, we recognize that we
21 need to improve, and I can talk about the last two
22 years I have been in this position. I cannot talk
23 about the past. I understand your frustration.
24 In the last two years, I created a committee. I
25 appointed staff to this. We made an effort to

1
2 begin understanding the priority since 2009, 2007
3 Commissioner Lopez and my team has been doing an
4 effort. You cannot implement a recycle program as
5 you well say in the beginning, this is a team
6 effort, and changing the culture is one of the
7 toughest challenges that you have in any process
8 to change, and simple things like for example we
9 might go to a park and we love to give food to the
10 pigeons, but when you do that from a window of our
11 properties, you are creating a problem, but if you
12 go to a park, it might not be a problem as is our
13 case, and we are working in those places that we
14 have worked in the last two years in those 20
15 properties. We have seen some progress. We have
16 been using the journal, communication and it's
17 about changing the culture, and we are doing a
18 great effort. I understand the frustration, but
19 as you all know in the last few years we have
20 limited resources, but this leadership makes an
21 effort to set aside to have the staff to begin the
22 process to the staff. Actually, in the last two
23 years, we have increased the number of caretakers
24 that we have on our properties because we
25 recognize having the property clean is crucial in

2 all of these efforts.

3 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Have you
4 identified space to secure these recyclables?

5 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: We will have to
6 talk property by property and the properties like
7 I keep mentioning, the 20, the community and the
8 green committees have identified locations that
9 they are doing that and we have some level of
10 success.

11 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: And the list of
12 20, can you identify them?

13 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: I can provide
14 them to you. Sure.

15 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: At this point
16 or at some point in the future you are going to
17 provide that? Do you have that with you now?

18 FEMALE VOICE: We will follow up
19 with that.

20 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: I don't have it
21 with me.

22 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: And exterior
23 trash compactors. Can you identify where those
24 exterior trash compactors are within your
25 footprint?

2 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: Sure.

3 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Can you
4 identify it now or--

5 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: [interposing]
6 We have 334 properties. All of the large what I
7 call traditional buildings like Smith Houses has
8 at least one and the small ones we call the rehab,
9 the small properties don't have it. I have to
10 provide you that list. I don't know all of them.

11 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: So again, I
12 understand that you have just joined NYCHA and I
13 am a little frustrated only because this hearing
14 has been postponed previously, so I am sure that
15 there could have been better planning and you
16 could have anticipated a number of the questions
17 that were going to be asked, but it seems like we
18 are not getting--I am not getting any answers to
19 the questions, and if anyone knows me, I try to
20 grill down on issues, and it seems that every
21 answer that I am going to get is we will get back
22 to you, and that is just unacceptable.

23 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: I apologize for
24 that. I wasn't aware that you would like the
25 details of where all of the compactors are, but I

2 will provide that information to you.

3 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Okay.

4 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: But I can tell
5 you every building, 2600 buildings have an
6 interior compactor that needs to be cleaned every
7 day by 2300 great people that are workers at
8 NYCHA, most of them residents, and we were able to
9 recruit almost 1,000 of them in the last two
10 years, and they are the ones that help us also--
11 they are what I call the unknown heroes--keep our
12 properties clean and handle this equipment.

13 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: I agree with
14 you. They should be saluted. I salute them each
15 and every day. I salute the workers. I
16 particularly salute the residents, but I also
17 understand that this law has been on the books for
18 25 years, and unfortunately we can't even get a
19 list of where the exterior compactors are within
20 your footprint. In any event--

21 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: [interposing]
22 Can I--I am going to turn it over to Council
23 Member Maria del Carmen Arroyo for questions, but
24 I remembered my question, and my question is
25 regarding your exterminating unit, do you have

2 individuals--is the unit dispatched to the
3 developments as needed or is there already
4 dedicated individuals at each development, and if
5 so, does that amount of individuals differ
6 depending on the development size?

7 MALE VOICE: Like Mr. Laboy
8 mentioned, that is part of all of our
9 exterminators. That is done through scheduling at
10 this moment, so the way we schedule is we allocate
11 certain days of the week to be at the development,
12 and that is based on the amount of calls we get.
13 We adjust that as needed, so if a development
14 needs extermination service to be four days a
15 week, we will allocate four days to schedule
16 exterminators there, and then the other day, they
17 will go to another development.

18 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: The
19 exterminating unit reports to somewhere down here
20 to 50 maybe 90 Church Street somewhere and then
21 you dispatch them?

22 MALE VOICE: So they are based by
23 borough, and there is a small amount that is
24 centrally located, a very small. There is like
25 five exterminators centrally located. If the

2 borough exterminators would need assistance, they
3 would go if there was a difficult process, they
4 would go and assist those.

5 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay. Council
6 Member Arroyo?

7 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Thank you,
8 Madam Chair. Good afternoon. On the reducing the
9 carbon footprint discussion, which is not
10 necessarily recycling, but it is an incredible
11 effort that I know that NYCHA has launched. The
12 upgrading of facilities throughout the
13 developments. Where has that happened? You list
14 344 East 28th Street, one of your Manhattan
15 developments and over the last few years 81
16 developments. Are they all experiencing the same
17 upgrades or are there different projects that are
18 being done?

19 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: They are
20 different projects. The one at 344 East 28 is
21 geothermal. That is the first one that we have.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Just assume
23 for a second that I know what that is.

24 MALE VOICE: The geothermal is
25 simply put we put pipes underground to get heat

2 from deep below and then we transfer that heat up
3 to transfer it to heat water.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Okay, and
5 there is only one such project throughout the 300
6 plus developments?

7 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: Yeah, this is a
8 pilot that we worked with HUD, and they allowed us
9 to use part of the - - funds - - a combination of
10 city funds. In 81 developments, we tried
11 instantaneous hot water heaters, and we have that
12 in 81 developments.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Can you
14 give us--you don't know where trash receptacles
15 are... 81 developments, do you know which
16 developments are doing what?

17 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: I want to
18 clarify. I know where they are. I have the list
19 in front of me - - the whole list.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: The Chair
21 already beat you up about that. Can you tell--

22 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: I have 81
23 developments. I have some in the Bronx. I can
24 provide you the list.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Please can

2 you let us know what you are doing in what
3 developments - - one of the issues that I always
4 bring up at these hearings is you are out there
5 doing stuff, good stuff most of the time, but our
6 residents are not clued in, we are not clued in,
7 and I think an open pipeline of information is
8 useful for all of us, so if you can make that
9 available, I would appreciate it in particular any
10 of the developments that are in the 17th Council
11 District. I have an interest in supporting
12 NYCHA's capital needs around these initiatives.
13 Mothers on the Move in my district is aggressively
14 pursuing opportunities for greening NYCHA and how
15 they can be a partner in that effort, but more
16 importantly for us the title 3 benefits that we
17 get from the capital funding that we put into
18 NYCHA, so this is a win, win all the way around.
19 My office is reaching out to the general manager's
20 office to get us on the calendar for a meeting
21 with Mothers on the Move so that we can have some
22 focused, targeted efforts in my district, and I am
23 willing to put my money where my mouth is. Okay.
24 On the next steps for the recycling efforts, there
25 is several bullets in your testimony. You want to

2 pilot these initiatives in certain sites, and once
3 evaluated, you will go system wide. When? Where?
4 And how is tenant engagement being done to get--
5 because I see that some developments participated
6 in the larger conversation, but I don't know if -
7 - Jackson Houses knows about this and would want
8 to participate, so how we are getting that
9 information out and how we are providing
10 developments and opportunity to be part of the
11 pilot, that is really, really important. I have
12 some very active tenant leaders in my district.
13 They have made sure that I have paid attention,
14 and a significant--numbers of millions--I lost
15 track. If we count what is going into fiscal year
16 '14 for capital funding to NYCHA is significant.
17 That is because the tenant leaders, the resident
18 associations actively working with my office to
19 make sure that we fund it. I want to make sure
20 that anyone who is interested, any development
21 that is interested in the pilot it has an
22 opportunity to participate.

23 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: I will
24 recognize - - two more hearings in which you
25 mentioned that to the staff of the Housing

2 Authority. I believe - - and his coordinating
3 meetings with every council member to discuss
4 capital needs - - .

5 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO:

6 [interposing] No, no. I am talking about your
7 next steps on the recycling.

8 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: I am getting
9 there.

10 [crosstalk]

11 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: I recognize
12 that in terms of this we have 20 properties and we
13 have green committees. I believe that in your
14 neighborhood--

15 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO:

16 [interposing] Mott Haven is the only one listed.

17 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: Mott Haven, but
18 I think we working in something in - - , and I
19 believe--

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO:

21 [interposing] Not my district.

22 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: No longer your
23 district. Sorry about that, but--

24 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: My

25 community, but not my district. I see that you

2 named 20 developments. My point here is that
3 there are developments not listed which might not
4 have participated that would want to be part of
5 the pilot, and my ask of you is make that
6 information available to provide all developments
7 an opportunity to participate in that active
8 engagement. I don't want little pockets in my
9 district to have one benefit the other one
10 doesn't.

11 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: I will work
12 with the team to ensure that we promote this
13 across the board--

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO:
15 [interposing] and I am going to encourage every
16 development in my district to do this.

17 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: I will
18 publicize this through the different - -
19 throughout the city to ensure that they have equal
20 participation.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Okay, and
22 finally, thank you very much. Cameras are
23 installed. We have Pattern started, Jackson
24 concluded. Mott Haven was done a long time ago.
25 Mitchell got started. Everyone is very, very

2 happy. I am so pleased that finally this issue of
3 the security systems installation has gotten off
4 the ground. We knew it that once you got it you
5 would roll it out quickly. The residents are
6 very, very happy. I drove by Jackson development
7 this morning, and I saw the camera. I was like
8 yay. It is done. Thank you.

9 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: On behalf of my
10 colleagues, I will share the message with the GM -
11 - secretary vice president for capital work.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: I have some
13 good stuff to say some of the time.

14 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Council Member
15 Chin followed by Council Member Nelson?

16 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you,
17 Madam Chair. I wanted to follow up on your
18 outreach because you are giving us some literature
19 here, so this is the booklet that everybody gets
20 when they first move into their development?

21 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: Correct.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: So this is I
23 assume translated in the language that the
24 resident uses?

25 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: Yes, ma'am.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: If somebody
3 has been there for a couple of years, how do you
4 continue to do the reminder about recycling or
5 other important responsibilities?

6 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: That is one of
7 the areas that we are using the journal and this
8 other booklet that we developed recently and that
9 was one of the challenges that we mentioned in my
10 testimony the fact that we have to have continuous
11 education and ensure that everybody get the
12 message. In these properties in which we have the
13 green committees the TAs and the committee has
14 been instrumental in the success of the outreach
15 effort because in many instances they go door by
16 door and distribute information.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: You were
18 saying that only 20 developments has a green
19 committee?

20 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: Mm-hmm.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: 20 out of 300
22 something?

23 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: 334.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: So that's not
25 even ten percent?

2 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: That's correct.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: So what is
4 your plan in terms of reaching out and starting
5 more green committees because I remember
6 Commissioner Lopez was talking about this maybe
7 two years ago, and so was there any goal set and
8 how do we push to get more green committees set
9 up?

10 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: Like I
11 mentioned, we hired two additional staff recently
12 within the last year. We have those meetings that
13 I mentioned in January and March, and we will
14 continue outreach effort. Our goal is to before
15 the end of the year expand to other areas in
16 traditional properties.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Do you have
18 any targeted number?

19 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: We have about
20 140 something active TAs. That is crucial for the
21 green committee to succeed because you have an
22 active community. I will venture to say that
23 usually those properties will an active resident
24 association will the goal, the target, because
25 those will be the ones that we can organize the

2 fastest.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: I think that
4 would be good, and I really urge you to reach out
5 to the council members. I mean reach out to us
6 that we can be helpful in terms of setting up
7 those committees and also work with some of the
8 residents on these programs, so in terms of the
9 finding places to store the recycle material,
10 right now are there any developments where you
11 have a separate facility on the floor itself that
12 residents can bring their recyclable material to?

13 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: Actually we
14 mentioned Smith Houses as the success story in
15 terms of the location that they have the best
16 recycle program at the moment.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: In Smith
18 Houses, they are in my development. The bins are
19 outside of the building.

20 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: You have two
21 things. You have the bins outside the buildings,
22 but in the back where you have the compactors, the
23 outside compactors, you have an area we use to
24 stage the recycle materials.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Are there any

2 plans in terms of really having it where the
3 residents are in the apartment building in the
4 floor where they have the garbage - - , is there a
5 way to also create some space there?

6 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: It depends
7 building by building. You have for example your
8 buildings in the Smith Houses and maybe Rutgers
9 [phonetic] has some space, but other properties
10 doesn't have the space in the basement, and that
11 is the reason I mentioned that the program has to
12 be location specific because some of the buildings
13 doesn't have the space.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: So have you
15 done an assessment in terms of which buildings--

16 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: [interposing]
17 We are working on that.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Okay, and the
19 last question is that how often do you do the rat
20 baits in each development? Do you have a schedule
21 that you do that?

22 MALE VOICE: For the public spaces,
23 the areas, the grounds, we try our best to do it
24 on a monthly basis, and if we get complaints, then
25 we go to those places more frequently. We have

2 done pretty much weekly with the most frequency
3 because you have to give the rodents a chance to
4 ingest the baits, to change their behavior, to go
5 to the bait stations to do that so pretty much
6 weekly is good. We also check the burrows to see
7 if there is indication if there has been a kill
8 and then we can fill the burrows, so the burrows
9 will stay open until after the rodents are killed.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: At least once
11 a month?

12 MALE VOICE: At least once month.
13 Yes.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Regularly on
15 all the developments.

16 MALE VOICE: Right. That is what
17 we endeavor to do. I can't tell you we did 100
18 percent. Definitely with the increase of the
19 exterminator staff that is going to pretty much
20 double this year from 82 to 162 we will definitely
21 have the facilities to do that.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER CHIN: Thank you,
23 Madam Chair.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER NELSON: I am ready.
25 Okay. Since this subject was brushed, I wanted to

2 just bring up to be provincial for a minute even
3 though I know it's off topic, but the status of
4 the cameras in Sheepshead/Nostrand projects or
5 housing development.

6 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: I have to
7 apologize, but I don't have it--

8 COUNCIL MEMBER NELSON: I won't
9 hold that because that is not your department so
10 to speak, but if you could bring back to NYCHA
11 this has been something that has been in my gut
12 for years.

13 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: We will send an
14 e-mail - -

15 COUNCIL MEMBER NELSON: I have got
16 to get it out of me.

17 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Council Member
18 Nelson, I will follow up and I will get you the
19 answers 'cause--

20 COUNCIL MEMBER NELSON:
21 [interposing] It is off topic.

22 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: But you have
23 given money, and it has been hanging for a long
24 time and you are leaving office at the end of the
25 year.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER NELSON: I'd like to
3 see it in my lifetime.

4 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Exactly, and
5 while you are in office.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER NELSON: I am glad
7 that getting it even if I died, I want them to
8 have those cameras because they deserve it and
9 people are getting shot. So I had a question. I
10 was heartened to hear that you have a certain
11 amount of residents who are in the extermination
12 program. Do you have an idea approximately what
13 that percentage might be?

14 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: Actually, it is
15 going to be 50 percent. Half of them will be
16 residents. That was a program that we started
17 last year. It is kind of a training ship
18 [phonetic]. Every month we have a group that gets
19 their license. By the end of the year, we should
20 have a full 160. Just for you to imagine, we have
21 334 properties that we manage out of 140
22 management offices. By the end of the year, we
23 are going to be able to have at least an
24 exterminator by management office will be closer
25 to what I call the - - ground. You are going to

2 be able to tackle the program almost immediately.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER NELSON: This is
4 great. You are almost making up for the cameras,
5 which again is not your department. This is
6 great. This is the city really working in a
7 correct vein. I am happy to hear. I had not
8 known this before. thank you very much. Thank
9 you, Madam Chair.

10 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Council Member
11 Melissa Mark-Viverito?

12 COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO:
13 Thank you, Madam Chair. I just have a couple of
14 quick questions. I know that some - - in my
15 district are here in the audience, and they are
16 probably going to testify, but there was a
17 question. I know that in Grant Houses there is a
18 coalition that is working. It has been reviewed
19 in the New York Times. There was an article
20 written, and I think NYCHA has joined that
21 coalition. I don't know if you could give a
22 little bit of information about that and whether
23 that is like a replicable model. Obviously there-
24 -you as NYCHA as an authority have to play a role,
25 but I understand also what you are saying that

2 obviously there has to be a lot of grassroots and
3 effort on the ground, and that is what I think
4 that this coalition is about, so I don't know if
5 you can speak to that whether it is a model that
6 can be replicated as an example of what can be
7 done in other developments?

8 FERNANDO MONTEGO: Good afternoon.
9 My name is Fernando Montego [phonetic], and I am
10 one of the staff members hired to focus on
11 community recycling. Thank you. Thank you. So I
12 know a bit about the Grant House. I see Ms.
13 Martin here. Good afternoon. The coalition is
14 actually a partnership between the resident
15 association and the Morningside Heights Coalition
16 - - .

17 COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO: The
18 Sanitation Coalition.

19 FERNANDO MONTEGO: The Sanitation
20 Coalition. Correct. And so NYCHA worked with the
21 residents and the coalition on identifying the
22 correct type of bin and where it would go, and
23 over the years, I think it has been a few years
24 now, a couple of years, Ms. Martin along with
25 other residents have identified some of the

2 challenges that they faced. One of the main
3 things is having the ability to have ongoing
4 education, but also engagement of the residents
5 because having a flyer distributing information is
6 one thing, but engaging through ongoing workshops,
7 activities, things like that, that is something
8 that we understand now is what is necessary. It
9 is not just going out. Ms. Martin went out to
10 every single floor of the development, and yet if
11 that didn't happen every year on a consistent
12 basis, it would be impossible to instill a culture
13 of recycling, so that is what we have to do. That
14 is what we are dealing with across all 334 of our
15 developments.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO: So I
17 guess it is an example of a model that can work in
18 developments.

19 FERNANDO MONTEGO: I am not sure if
20 Ms. Martin was able to do that continuously. We
21 know that working with sanitation the rates have
22 gone down and there were other challenges at Grant
23 Houses since then with regards to recycling--the
24 availability of bags and making sure that the
25 staff was also trained, that is something that we

1
2 have to work with together when it is a resident
3 based initiative, so that is one of the things
4 that we have learned from the beginning from the
5 onset. It can't just be outside organizations
6 working with residents. It also has to be--NYCHA
7 needs to be included from the onset. We have to
8 train our staff. We have to involve them. We
9 have to provide them with the adequate information
10 to rework their schedule around recycling
11 operations as well.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER MARK-VIVERITO:

13 Thank you for that, and I guess I know that they
14 are here do they will testify about their
15 experience and maybe lessons learned, lessons to
16 be learned, so I appreciate the effort obviously
17 of the residents that are really looking to
18 engage. I mean this is an issue that I think as
19 the Chair had said of Sanitation it's
20 understanding the overwhelming challenges that you
21 have as an authority, but the issue of recycling
22 is something that I feel very strongly about, and
23 I just want to see how we can figure out ways to
24 just increase that level of engagement and
25 participation. I am not going to say anything

2 negative about--'cause we have some issues here.
3 I know that I see that we don't do as much
4 recycling in 250 as we probably should. It is a
5 pervasive problem, and I think that as a city we
6 have to figure out how we engage more in those
7 public service announcements and figure out ways
8 that we can get the message across on a consistent
9 basis, so it starts really getting in people's
10 mindsets that this is something that has to be
11 part of our family life that we are aware of, so
12 it is not just a challenge that NYCHA or the
13 residents of NYCHA face; it is a challenge we see
14 across the city. Our rates are low. We are at 15
15 percent or less of what we can recycle, so I will
16 leave it there. I know there is a lot of
17 information that was shared, but thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: So first of
19 all, I hope we need a Ms. Martin at every housing
20 development throughout the city of New York. We
21 should really replicate Ms. Martin, and we just
22 want to really thank her. Let me too--yeah, I
23 hear the snaps in the back, so two snaps to that.
24 Let me also thank you for the cameras in my
25 developments Ingersoll, Whitman, Farragut and

2 Atlantic Terminal. Thank you for that. Two last
3 questions. You said 162 employees you plan on
4 hiring or increasing your numbers of individuals
5 who will be responsible for exterminating. Where
6 will those individuals be assigned throughout the
7 city of New York?

8 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: We already
9 hired them. They went to a training like I
10 mentioned. Half of them are residents. We have
11 334 properties throughout the city. We manage
12 those properties out of 140 management offices.
13 Our goal is by the end of the year each management
14 office will have at least one person, one
15 exterminator, assigned to it to do the work. As
16 you can see, we have a few extra that we can use
17 in areas in which they need additional support.

18 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Are there
19 certain areas throughout the city of New York that
20 need additional service? Can you identify those
21 developments where you have a particular problem?

22 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: My concern is
23 in terms of size, right? You have a management
24 office that manages 5,000 units versus a
25 management office that might manage 10,000 units.

2 It is logical for us to probably in that one with
3 10,000 units assign an additional person instead
4 of one, but our commitment is that each management
5 office as a minimum will have one by the end of
6 the year, and those that we decide requires more
7 people these extra will allow us to do that.

8 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: I want to thank
9 you, and I also want to thank Rick Simeon
10 [phonetic], who is in the audience. We have some
11 major development in downtown Brooklyn, and as a
12 result of the Atlantic Yards project, huge cat
13 size rodents were on the property of Atlantic
14 Terminal and through the efforts of Rick we were
15 able to abate that, and I really want to thank
16 you. So let's talk about creative solutions
17 because you heard my frustration earlier. Now I
18 believe in creative solutions. Let's talk about
19 incentivizing recycling and it is my understanding
20 that previously in PlaNYC there was a suggestion
21 about selling your recyclables because there is a
22 market for recyclables, and if in fact there are
23 some financial incentives to the NYCHA as a whole,
24 perhaps those incentives should trickle down to
25 residents. Have you thought about that?

2 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: We are looking
3 at different options. I remember a study that I
4 saw two years ago that it wasn't cost efficient to
5 us. Things have changed in the last two years.
6 we are in conversation with Sanitation and other
7 partners to see if we can do something in that
8 area. I am aware that recently one of our
9 construction contracts we were able to recycle
10 some of the construction materials, but that is an
11 area that we are looking into.

12 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: If we could
13 perhaps incentivize that again as a result of
14 selling those recyclables to certain industries, I
15 think that would go a long way in increasing and
16 improving your rates. In addition to that perhaps
17 some of those resources can be used to hire people
18 who might sort your garbage.

19 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: I truly believe
20 in that. We are recycling some materials in one
21 of our units. We have a unit that repairs
22 lawnmowers, snow blower machines, and things like
23 that. We recycle all of the metals, and the money
24 that we were able to get through that, we have
25 been able to expand and buy more materials and

2 repair more machines, which at the end of the day
3 represents a saving for us in terms of equipment
4 that we know that it works. We are looking into
5 the best way to do that.

6 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: But there has
7 to be some sort of perhaps an incentive to
8 residents to recycle, and if in fact there is some
9 financial incentive, I would argue that that would
10 improve upon your recycling rates, and if you are
11 selling your recyclables and receiving some
12 revenue, then you should use it as an incentive
13 again to improve your rate, and with that, I am
14 going to turn it over to my co-chair.

15 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: We have been
16 joined by Council Member Gale Brewer from
17 Manhattan. I don't know if she is a member of the
18 Sanitation Committee. She goes to all of the
19 hearings, so she is here. First, Council Member
20 Chin asked about these. Can you tell us for the
21 record, what languages are these available in
22 currently?

23 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: We have them in
24 English, Spanish. We also have Russian--

25 FERNANDO MONTEGO: Absolutely the

2 main four languages at NYCHA--English, Spanish,
3 Chinese and Russian.

4 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay. If
5 energy efficient bulbs, which you talked about on
6 page 2 of your testimony and that you have
7 installed over 200 compact fluorescent light
8 bulbs, you distributed this for free to your
9 residents 'cause usually they have to maintain
10 their own bulbs. Is that correct?

11 FERNANDO MONTEGO: The
12 installations happened through a series of
13 programs. One of the more notable ones--and they
14 have always been provided at no cost to the
15 residents--one of the most notable programs has
16 been through a partnership with Green City Force,
17 which I think I believe yesterday Mayor Bloomberg
18 awarded them with an award for being a very
19 successful innovative award program, and so the
20 Green City Force hires youth from NYCHA
21 developments to do green activities and provide
22 them training on green jobs, and one of the
23 partnerships that they did with NYCHA was to
24 install these CFL bulbs at different developments,
25 and then to also provide additional ones to each

2 household at specific developments including Adams
3 Houses in the Bronx, Chelsea Elliot in Manhattan
4 and I believe there is one coming up at a smaller
5 development in Manhattan as well.

6 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: So once you
7 provide it to the residents, do you know if they
8 continue to purchase them--

9 FERNANDO MONTEGO: We provide them
10 with information about their usage, their
11 lifetime, and what the expectation that once they
12 are finalized, once they die, several places like
13 Home Depot, they provide the CFL bulbs.

14 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: My question is
15 do you know how many of the residents once you
16 provide them with the free once continue to
17 utilize the more energy efficient more longtime
18 cost effective, but out of pocket, it is a lot
19 more money to buy one of these bulbs, which I
20 find--

21 FERNANDO MONTEGO: [interposing] We
22 haven't done that assessment yet because the
23 average lifespan of these CFL bulbs is about ten
24 years, and so we began installations I believe in
25 2007.

2 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Oh, okay.

3 Alright. Trees you started installing, planting
4 trees in the five boroughs city wide. You started
5 when? What year?

6 FERNANDO MONTEGO: It was a
7 partnership with NYRP [phonetic] that began in
8 2009.

9 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And so they
10 are still healthy trees and they are still
11 growing?

12 FERNANDO MONTEGO: Yeah, and after
13 several of the hurricanes and after Sandy and
14 Irene, and they have done assessments afterwards,
15 there has been more replantings. The most recent
16 one happened at Carlton Manor [phonetic] in Far
17 Rockaway--40 trees.

18 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay. On page
19 5 of your testimony, you referred to Smith Houses
20 in Margaret Chin's district where you say they
21 worked on a be proud of where you live campaign.
22 Was that resident driven or NYCHA driven or
23 resident driven with input from NYCHA. I know
24 Smith Houses. I know the tenant president there.
25 She is very active, so I was just wondering who

initiated this?

FERNANDO MONTEGO: This was after we realized that Smith Houses had the potential to really improve their recycling rates because they already had fixed bins available in front of every single building entryway as well as space in the compactor area for storage until pickup by Sanitation, so we worked with the property management particularly the manager, who was very receptive and the resident association president, Ms. Torres, and she actually helped to create a resident green committee at Smith Houses. The participation at the green committee has been met with varied success from month to month, but during the implementation of the recycling efforts, there were people that went out to really create a campaign at the 12 buildings there. They provided the staff installed the new signage, updated signage from Sanitation and we ensured that the staff was using clear bags because one of the major concerns from the residents was that if we bring down our garbage how can we assure it is going in clear bags, so we have been working with the staff to ensure that they always have

2 available supply in their stock, and we have seen
3 the rates go up, which is pretty impressive.

4 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: E waste
5 [phonetic], what does NYCHA do around e waste? In
6 the Lower East Side we have our ecology center,
7 Lower East Side Ecology Center. They do e
8 recycling in many of our public parks; however, I
9 go into my developments, and I find computers and
10 old TVs that are just dropped off I have been told
11 by residents that sometimes someone will come into
12 their buildings from another building or maybe
13 even from the neighborhood or from the same
14 development, but they will dump it in a floor in
15 another building, so what kind of education, what
16 kind of e recycling are we doing with the e waste?

17 FERNANDO MONTEGO: So one thing
18 that I do know is that previous most e waste
19 because it is larger items, they were treated as
20 bulky items by our technical services units, so we
21 used to ask our residents to put it as bulky items
22 in the designated place. Now that e waste has
23 become something that is very important to New
24 York City, and it will be implemented into the
25 recycling program in 2015, we started identifying

2 ways to inform the residents about this. One of
3 the first things that we can do is to let them
4 know the safe disposal events that are happening
5 in their communities. We have done outreach
6 through the green NYCHA website as well as the
7 resident green committee Facebook page about that
8 and then we are working with the Department of
9 Energy and Finance and Sustainability here at
10 NYCHA to really develop a more robust way to
11 handle e waste across all developments.

12 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay. Well,
13 in the Lower East Side, we can start with working
14 with the not for profit Lower East Side Ecology
15 Center, which is there and it is actually doing
16 work citywide, and we can talk about how we make
17 that better in the Lower East Side in the NYCHA
18 developments, but I think it could be implemented
19 citywide. I have a few questions 'cause I want to
20 give the public an opportunity to give testimony
21 and Council Member Brewer a chance to ask some
22 questions. Mr. Laboy, what kind of training does
23 NYCHA employees get in terms of this pest control
24 unit or your extermination unit? You mentioned
25 they get some kind of certification, but can you

2 please elaborate about that?

3 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: Sure. I am
4 going to introduce you to Louis Ponce [phonetic],
5 who under his leadership is the unit.

6 LOUIS PONCE: So exterminators are
7 licensed by the New York State Department of
8 Environmental Conservation, so they have to
9 maintain certain credits to maintain their license
10 and every year they need to obtain more credits to
11 do that. So kind of the hiring that Mr. Laboy had
12 mentioned previously, there is different levels of
13 training. So they are coming in as technicians,
14 which is one of the lowest levels to be an
15 exterminator, so they can apply pesticides, but in
16 order to be hired as a Housing Authority
17 exterminator, and pretty much the citywide
18 exterminator, you need to have a commercial
19 applicator's license, so that is attained after a
20 year of experience working with a commercial
21 applicator and also to attain the additional
22 credits that you need, the continuing education
23 credits, but all of the exterminators also take
24 the rodent academy that is provided by the
25 Department of Health. All of them have to take

2 integrated pest management courses.

3 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: How many
4 employees are in this extermination unit?

5 LOUIS PONCE: 97 employees.

6 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Citywide?

7 LOUIS PONCE: Citywide, right. 82
8 of them are exterminators. The other ones are
9 supervisors, and we have--

10 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: [interposing]
11 How much? 80 what?

12 LOUIS PONCE: 82, and we have hired
13 80 as technicians, the ones Mr. Laboy had
14 mentioned earlier, so they are technicians. They
15 are coming up under a year, so we can change their
16 licensing to commercial applicators, and then they
17 will be made full-fledged Housing Authority
18 exterminators at that point, so by the end of this
19 year, all of them will have had that transition.

20 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Do they need
21 to--any of these include the supervisors or
22 anyone--have to take continuing education courses,
23 and are there any requirements?

24 LOUIS PONCE: They are required by
25 the state absolutely.

2 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: How often is
3 that?

4 LOUIS PONCE: It is every year. I
5 believe they need to have 13. I can find out
6 exactly how many of those credits--some of them
7 are arranged through NYCHA, so definitely the
8 integrated pest management courses to kind of
9 lessen the more dangerous pesticides. We provide
10 those through the unions and through our
11 resources, and the exterminators have to maintain
12 some additional credits on their own in order to
13 maintain their licensing.

14 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Do we have any
15 of these trainings for the residents?

16 LOUIS PONCE: No.

17 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: No.

18 LOUIS PONCE: Just the information
19 provided in the pamphlet that you had. I believe
20 there is some information there.

21 [crosstalk]

22 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: This? This?

23 LOUIS PONCE: I believe there might
24 be some information there.

25 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: You might want

2 to go back through previous testimony to find out
3 what Joe Garber thought about this, which it's
4 thin. It's thinner than I remember it. Oh, that
5 is because you only gave me a... Fine. He didn't
6 think it was very helpful information in here, but
7 I will be reviewing it, and will let you know. I
8 think it might be helpful to do some of these
9 trainings with residents considering also there is
10 the community service requirement, and maybe some
11 of these trainings would qualify as hours logged
12 for that, and I think it goes a long way. I was
13 telling someone that when the recycling law first
14 came out, my landlady called me over for coffee to
15 her apartment, told me when I was going to pay my
16 rent to come over an hour before and we could sit
17 down and have coffee. She went and sat with me
18 through all of the recycling laws, and said we
19 have to start implementing this in the building,
20 and this is how it goes, and you know, we are
21 going to call, we are going to try to figure it
22 out, and we will call you out if something is
23 going wrong 'cause we are going to get summonses,
24 and if at some point if we can determine who in
25 the building is not recycling, we will give

2 notice--this is in a six unit building granted,
3 but it is a dialogue, and we were more conscious
4 of it, and put in better techniques going forward
5 for that. Mr. Health, I am not going to leave you
6 out of this discussion. I want to thank you for
7 being here, and sitting here patiently. I want to
8 ask you what training you provide for other city
9 employees and for NYCHA and if there is a way that
10 Department of Health tracks when individuals are
11 getting these trainings how they are doing and
12 how NYCHA fares in that, and then I am going to
13 tell you my problem that I have had is--and it is
14 pervasive since I have been in office. It is
15 interagency collaboration. It is hard for me to
16 get DOB to work with HPD, to get DOH and NYCHA and
17 DOT and Department of Parks and everybody on the
18 same page working together. Sometimes there is an
19 effort, and sometimes we just need to make the
20 phone calls and then there is the effort. It
21 doesn't seem to happen naturally, and so where I
22 am getting a lot of complaints we are having major
23 renovations on Houston Street, so certainly all
24 the digging up is causing I think more rats to
25 surface. DOT has to do abatement before they

2 start the construction project. They don't do it
3 right. So that means our residents end up
4 suffering. I have seen rats 'cause I ended up de
5 facto taking a training when we had Department of
6 Health come to one of my block associations, and
7 the building owners had invested in these rat
8 abatement--those big, they look like home plate,
9 like bases--and the owners were putting them in
10 wrong, and spending a sufficient amount of money
11 on it. But if you don't place them right, then it
12 doesn't help, and that is what I am finding with
13 DOT. They are placing these on NYCHA developments
14 completely wrong, so it is not helping us abate
15 the problem at all, and then they start the
16 construction and it exacerbates the situation, and
17 prior to a big project like that, is DOT--I don't
18 know. Did DOT ever reach out to NYCHA or to DOH
19 before it started installing these rat baits and
20 just give you fair warning that there would be an
21 uptake in this problem in a given area?

22 MARIO MERLINO: Hi. I am Mario
23 Merlino. The answer to that question--you are
24 talking about the constructions going on along
25 Houston or Baruch Houses?

2 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Baruch Houses
3 is on the south side of Houston. Lillian Wald is
4 on the north side of Houston, and the construction
5 is the expansion of the median. It is going on
6 from the Bowery to the FDR Drive. So I mean it is
7 not coincidental. There is a reason why I am
8 getting more complaints from those two
9 developments 'cause the project is sandwiched
10 right in between them, so that is where the pests
11 are going.

12 MARIO MERLINO: And let me just say
13 I completely agree with you about interagency
14 coordination--enormously important for the pest
15 control program because the pest control program
16 is tiny, and most of our things that we can do is
17 kind of give people advice and do inspections and
18 we have a limited ability to do baiting, but
19 really the bang for the buck is working with
20 property owners whether they are public or private
21 and public property owners, particularly city
22 agencies, so it is very important. There is kind
23 of a process where DDC will notify us before they
24 start projects so we do get those notifications
25 and I think in the case of the Houston that

2 project we have been involved in going and doing
3 walkthroughs and providing advice - - with me
4 today is saying yes. We have been out there
5 providing advice. Let me say something about what
6 you said I think you were talking about maybe the
7 way bait stations are applied, that sort of thing.
8 Very good point. Baiting is great, but baiting
9 should be done by a licensed exterminator, who is
10 well trained, and most of us are not licensed
11 exterminators, so we depend on those professionals
12 to do a good job, and what the Health Department
13 does is we actually provide a lot of advice to
14 people that are working with their exterminator.
15 So I don't know what was done in this case, but I
16 think it is also--it is part of what we counsel,
17 whether it is DOT or DDC, hey, work with your
18 exterminator. Make sure the exterminator is doing
19 a good job, and just to say that that is very
20 important thing.

21 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: I have got
22 some pictures to show you of what DOT did, which I
23 know is wrong, but I will save that for another
24 moment. I am just going to ask you one quick
25 question. I am then going to turn it over to

2 Council Member Brewer, so that then we can get to
3 the public testimony. DOHMH creates these rat
4 indexing maps, and that includes NYCHA properties?

5 MARIO MERLINO: Correct. Yes. We
6 inspect NYCHA properties as part of indexing.

7 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And how do
8 these maps fare in the city and within the NYCHA
9 properties in terms of--or is it more seasonal?

10 MARIO MERLINO: Well, first of all
11 I want to say anyone can look at the maps on our
12 website. It's the rat portal, nyc.gov/rats and
13 you can see a map of your neighborhood and you can
14 look at your property and how it relates to all
15 your neighboring properties. It is a good
16 question. So what indexing is it is inspections
17 of entire neighborhoods where we will inspect all
18 properties including all of the city owned
19 properties and NYCHA facilities, so you will see
20 all of the inspections on there. It will color
21 code it depending on whether we find rats or other
22 kinds of violations. So it is a good question.
23 Certainly there is a seasonal aspect to the rat
24 problem. In the warm months there is more
25 activity and we will see more failures if we do

2 the inspections at that time.

3 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Mr. Laboy, is
4 anyone in NYCHA going into the portal and checking
5 this information out and seeing where they make be
6 an uptake?

7 MALE VOICE: The portal is - - on
8 the rodent taskforce, so any issues are brought up
9 to us at the time. Typically we respond to
10 resident complaints. The only kind of little bit
11 different that is handled, the portal as far as
12 Housing Authority properties is the portal is
13 based on block and lot, and in many instances, we
14 have a campus that might have ten buildings, and
15 then it is one block and lot, so the indexing is
16 not equal; if you have a one family home, the
17 block and lot is much smaller, so if they have a
18 siting on ours, we might get the same rating
19 within ten buildings than a one family home. It
20 is a little bit not apples to apples for NYCHA in
21 that instance, but we do confer with them
22 definitely if there is any issues on NYCHA
23 properties. The collaboration you had spoken
24 about previously among agencies, it is an
25 excellent avenue there to look at adjoining

2 properties, who owns those properties and how best
3 to attack a rodent issue.

4 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: To your
5 knowledge, this is to NYCHA like in the case of
6 Houston Street did DOT contact NYCHA to tell them
7 they were going to be doing this work, and you
8 might have some rat issues?

9 MALE VOICE: I cannot comment on
10 the initial, but we did come up in the taskforce,
11 and they did replace those bait stations that--I
12 understand. I know what you were talking about
13 the way they were on the wrought iron fencing
14 rather than where they should have been.

15 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: So private
16 owners contact you 'cause I know there is
17 development going on right now on Avenue D across
18 from your developments. Do those private owners
19 contact you to tell you that they are going to be
20 doing construction and this might affect your
21 residents?

22 MALE VOICE: Not to my knowledge.

23 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Council Member
24 Brewer?

25 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Thank you.

2 I know that Chair Mendez asked a little bit about
3 pest control, and I think Karen Bragdon [phonetic]
4 walks on water, so my question is what exactly is
5 the process of working with DOH and NYCHA? In
6 other words NYCHA has I think you said 82 or
7 something like that actual exterminators, but you
8 do have a lot of developments, so how when a
9 development in my case called DOH, I think it is
10 sometimes hard to integrate, so how does NYCHA
11 specifically work other than training with DOH?
12 How do the two work together specifically?

13 MALE VOICE: Well, the DOH they
14 have a few avenues that they can contact us
15 definitely through our weekly meetings. The DOH
16 also issues us violations, they are commissioner's
17 orders often times, less than violations. We have
18 to respond to those within a certain timeframe, so
19 that they will bring it to our attention. We also
20 have communication. We have a gentleman that
21 works for us, Mr. Jamal Rasheed [phonetic] that
22 works very closely with--he is our technical
23 resource advisor on pest control issues, and they
24 communicate all the time whenever there is issues
25 on NYCHA properties.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: So I mean
3 rats like garbage, so if there is a trash
4 challenge that NYCHA has, how does it get
5 addressed? In other words, the rats are going to
6 come not just from construction, but from garbage,
7 and I know it is hard because you don't have the
8 compactors. I know all of the challenges that you
9 are up against. You don't have the chutes. But
10 how do you deal with if there is a garbage
11 situation, so you make it a priority when there is
12 a pest issue also?

13 MALE VOICE: Absolutely. We do
14 have chutes within the building - - recycling, but
15 for the most part of the buildings have chutes
16 that garbage is--

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:
18 [interposing] But not for the recycling.

19 MALE VOICE: Not for the recycling
20 exactly. So the garbage is brought out. If there
21 is space in that development for an exterior
22 compactor that helps often because it is not bags
23 on the sidewalk. It is within this rodent
24 resistant 30 yard container, so in these
25 instances, it helps, and we have instances where

2 trash is disposed of not properly, right, so some
3 people may leave a bag of garbage in front of the
4 building in the middle of the night, and our staff
5 won't get there until the next day, so that is an
6 opportunity. Rodents are nocturnal. So we would
7 do an outreach to those specific developments. We
8 would put something in the journal. There are
9 sometimes that we have--and we didn't bring it--we
10 have a handout that we put on the residents'
11 doors, we will bring it up through the tenant
12 association meetings, and we will put an extra
13 focus on those places if we have to have staff
14 come in early or leave late.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: And you
16 work with the wonderful teamsters and your workers
17 to try to address--all I am saying is number one
18 issue rats, rats, rats in the Brownstones - - at
19 Amsterdam, at the addition, at Harbor View, rats,
20 rats, rats, rats, and so with all due respect, and
21 there is no construction that is precipitating
22 this. It is the challenges perhaps of not having
23 enough exterminators, enough people to take care
24 of the garbage and the garbage not being put out
25 correctly, and the poor guys at the - - have a

2 horrible place to work out of, so I am just saying
3 do you think you need more help or everything is
4 fine?

5 MALE VOICE: Everything is not
6 fine.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Oh, it's
8 not fine. So what do you suggest doing about it
9 'cause it's a huge issue. I don't mean to
10 belittle it, but it is huge, and it is not being
11 addressed in a way that is really getting rid of
12 the rats to be honest with you.

13 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: Like we said
14 earlier, every property is different. Some of the
15 properties in your area doesn't have the same
16 thing that the Amsterdam Houses for example
17 outside compactors, and it is a bigger challenge
18 because education is crucial. Like Ponce
19 mentioned even though we have that document that
20 we give to the tenants the first day that they - -
21 , but also - - I mentioned that - - journal--

22 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:
23 [interposing] I know all of the journal. You have
24 got to do what Rosie said. You have got to go
25 talk to people one to one and have the

2 conversations, and you have got to give the
3 workers a decent place to work out of. It is
4 horrible at the Hostos [phonetic]. You have got
5 to do more. I just don't know if you have any
6 ideas about what else you could do or is it
7 everything, you have done everything you can and
8 there is nothing else to be done? The rats are
9 horrible.

10 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: This is an
11 ongoing process like we said. We have 80
12 additional people. By the end of the year, we
13 will have 160 exterminators. That will allow us
14 to have more people closer to the field.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: We have to
16 get rid of the garbage too because otherwise you
17 can have a million exterminators, you have got
18 garbage, you are going to have two million rats.

19 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: That is part of
20 the process that we talk resident engagement.
21 Resident engagement has to be constant. It has to
22 be in different ways like you mentioned.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay, but
24 you need to do more. You need to have--as Tish
25 suggested, you need to have some kind of

2 incentives. I just think you need a different
3 approach. I don't know how that young man is over
4 there, but he is very smart, and he seems to know
5 what he is talking about. I have never met him
6 before. - - and Rosie knows him.

7 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: Now - - .

8 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: He is very
9 good. I have to tell you. He puts us all to
10 shame because he is on it, he is a 24-7 kind of
11 guy. Go ahead. That is what I like. Go ahead.
12 We have too many rats. We have too much garbage,
13 and there is something wrong I am telling you.

14 MALE VOICE: On the part of the
15 resident engagement, I do know that I believe
16 either in March or April of this year, we
17 attempted to do a pilot study to assess the
18 resident engagement practices at Baruch Houses--

19 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:
20 [interposing] How did it go?

21 MALE VOICE: The outreach itself
22 was mixed because we went floor to floor - -
23 buildings. We work with the Department of Health
24 in partnership with them. They provided two
25 people to come with us floor by floor - - the

2 details, the literature. The struggle is always
3 to get people to come out, so we tried different
4 things at different floors.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: You brought
6 Rosie with you or Margaret?

7 MALE VOICE: Unfortunately, we did
8 not.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Ah, that is
10 your mistake.

11 MALE VOICE: But we did find
12 residents who knew other residents on each floor,
13 and they kind of helped to knock the door and made
14 everything a little bit more comfortable. So at
15 this building, it was facing severe rodent issues,
16 particularly at Baruch, and I am not sure of the
17 follow up with that, but I do know that as a
18 community coordinator, they asked me to join to be
19 part of it.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: So all I am
21 saying is with all due respect, your approach is
22 not making a big difference. His is maybe at
23 Baruch, but you have got to do person to person.
24 What happens is not only do the residents, but
25 the whole neighborhood complains 'cause they all

2 think it is coming from NYCHA, and that upsets me
3 because that is not fair to the residents, and we
4 have pockets unfortunately, and then the NYCHA
5 residents get worse reputation. That irritates
6 me. It is not right. I don't know. Whatever
7 your approach is, it is not working. You have got
8 to do the person to person. You have got to do--I
9 can talk about garbage forever. It is not put out
10 properly, and I don't think that is necessarily
11 just residents or workers. Everybody has to be
12 working together. I don't want to keep going, but
13 please change the way that you are approaching
14 this issue. And just finally, I just want to talk
15 about Cynthia Doughty [phonetic] and the folks at
16 grant go door to door on recycling. Is that what
17 we have to do generally? In other words, how are
18 we going to get more people to do recycling when
19 there is no chute because in my neighborhood, they
20 report that older adults bring all of the
21 recycling, they are so good about it, they bring
22 it all the way downstairs, and they try to be good
23 about it, but it is not easy, so what kind of more
24 innovative plans do you have recycling wise? If
25 you are going to bring Lower East Side - - you

2 have got to pay them by the way. They don't come
3 for free. How much are you going to pay them?

4 MALE VOICE: One of the things that
5 we are working very closely on is working with
6 NYCHA's new director of resident engagement.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Is that
8 you?

9 MALE VOICE: No. I'm a community
10 coordinator. We have been partnering with her.
11 She has the real expertise of organizing and
12 outreach and what are the different approaches, so
13 we are working with her to address not just what
14 can be done, but what has happened in the past,
15 and what has failed in the past with regards to
16 waste management, sanitation, but also other
17 programs that haven't been met with much success,
18 so we are developing a program with her
19 identifying possible partners for future outreach.
20 Green City Force is one of them, but we have also
21 been contacted by other potential collaborators
22 and a lot of them--

23 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:
24 [interposing] Because you could use TPL money, I
25 would suggest for the folks from Lower East Side

2 or other similar programs 'cause they are--

3 MALE VOICE: Absolutely, and many
4 of the resident associations, for example, the
5 most recent one Parkside in the Bronx, they have
6 been reaching out to us and saying, you know, we
7 are willing to provide some of our funding or some
8 of our time to focus on recycling.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: And what
10 did you do with that information?

11 MALE VOICE: We actually went to
12 Parkside. We did two lobby trainings at different
13 buildings, worked with the staff to train them to
14 ensure that they have clear bags. They finally do
15 now--out of all of the six buildings that have
16 recycling bins out there, and we did two meetings
17 with the resident association.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Cynthia is
19 here. She is really good. Thank you very much.

20 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: We are going to
21 get to Cynthia in a minute as well as the rest of
22 the individuals who would like to testify because
23 I believe we have some recommendations, and I
24 believe in being solution oriented. Just three
25 points. So you have heard from a number of City

2 Council members who believe that the answer lies
3 in a resident based initiative. I believe that
4 government should come from the bottom up as
5 opposed to the top down, particularly in this
6 incident, where we have a number of challenges.
7 Two, let me say that I just went online to your
8 rat indexing map. I put in the address to one of
9 my public housing, Department of Health, and it
10 indicated to me that in my public housing at 21
11 Auburn Place, it was inspected, rodent baiting was
12 completed on March 1st, 2013 due to visible rodent
13 activity and on May 6th, they baited another area
14 within the public housing in my residence, and it
15 was inspected and it passed inspection, so this
16 portal is excellent. It is wonderful, and thank
17 you for this information. Lastly, again when we
18 had a rodent problem in the Atlantic Terminal
19 public housing as a result of major construction,
20 I provided free rodent proof garbage cans and bins
21 to the residents in the brownstones as well as
22 residents in public housing. What can we do to
23 get rodent proof garbage cans in and around NYCHA?
24 What can we provide the residents that is rodent
25 proof? And I also--there was oh I forget--it

2 wasn't a chemical, but it was some ingredient that
3 apparently repels the rodents, and I am trying to
4 remember what it was. I think it was mint, if I
5 am not mistaken. Spearmint. And it worked. What
6 are we doing.

7 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: About the first
8 part of the question, if our residents use a
9 compactor, that will help us a lot. In some
10 properties trying--

11 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [interposing]
12 For those who are not using the compactor what are
13 we doing to enforce the law?

14 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: We provide some
15 plastic bins, and you can see rodent proof. We
16 can look at any particular property that doesn't
17 have it. We have some that I know we can move
18 them immediately, but our biggest challenge is we
19 are asking our tenants to please use the chutes.

20 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: It is also
21 enforcement, and so we may have to be heavy
22 handed, and since we now have surveillance
23 cameras, perhaps, you may want--

24 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: [interposing]
25 We mentioned that as part of our recommendations.

2 The cameras will help us a lot with lease
3 enforcement the people that is damaging the
4 elevators, entrance doors and recycle. We plan to
5 use the cameras as a tool to help us in these
6 efforts.

7 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: I have--I want
9 you to answer yes or no so we can get to the
10 public testimony some quick questions, and if
11 there is discussion to be had, we can have it
12 outside of here. Does the Housing Authority
13 employ any additional measures going into the
14 summer season regarding pest management and
15 control?

16 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: Yes.

17 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Yes. Good.
18 We will have a meeting outside of here. Are all
19 your compactor chutes working now post Sandy?

20 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: Post Sandy, I
21 believe they are. There is one location that we
22 have an issue with an elevator lift, but yes, but
23 one.

24 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: All but one.
25 What borough is that in?

2 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: I believe that
3 was in Coney Island. I believe that was in Coney
4 Island.

5 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And so I just
6 want to--

7 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: [interposing] I
8 just want to clarify that. In any given day, we
9 might have some compactors out. Actually, this
10 morning I think it was nine or ten out of the
11 2,000 or so buildings. We track this daily and
12 have--not related to Sandy.

13 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Post Sandy you
14 had a whole bunch of compactors that were out.

15 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: We fixed all of
16 them.

17 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And that
18 actually aggravated the rat problem because
19 garbage bags were being put outside the
20 developments. This week on New York One, there
21 was a news clip that showed where you have the
22 sidewalk sheds on some of your developments, there
23 is a lot of trash accumulating I guess because
24 people are throwing it out their windows instead
25 of using the compactor chutes, and it is creating

2 a lot of problems. Are you working to remedy
3 this, and is--

4 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: [interposing]

5 We instructed the managers to ensure that the
6 contract established that they have to go once a
7 month to clean that and if we call them with any
8 particular problem like the lights are out, they
9 have to go and fix it immediately. We are
10 enforcing that.

11 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: So whoever you
12 have the contract with would go and clean on top
13 of--

14 CARLOS LABOY-DIAZ: [interposing]

15 Once a month. Once a month.

16 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay. Because
17 according to the New York One news clip, there was
18 someone coming and cleaning and now it wasn't
19 being done anymore. Okay. Thank you. Thank you
20 very much for your testimony, and thank you, Mr.
21 Merlino. Merlino. Thank you very much. I think
22 you were very underutilized today. I have
23 certainly have a lot more questions for you, but
24 we can do a follow up. Thank you. I hope NYCHA
25 will leave someone here as you usually do because

2 we are going to hear from the public and I think
3 it will be very important, and what their problems
4 are and/or what they are doing in recycling, which
5 I believe looks like models that we should be
6 replicating. So the first panel will be Lily
7 Kelly [phonetic] from Global Green USA, Felipe
8 Ventegeat [phonetic] from CIVITAS [phonetic] and
9 Eric Goldstein from National Resources Defense
10 Council. So if you hear your name, please come up
11 to the table and grab a microphone. Whoever is
12 ready to give testimony can give testimony. The
13 next panel--whoever is ready can just grab the
14 microphone, identify yourself for the record and
15 start giving testimony. Thank you.

16 FELIPE VENTEGEAT: Okay. It's on
17 now. Good afternoon. My name is Felipe
18 Ventegeat, and I am president of CIVITAS. Formed
19 in 1981, CIVITAS' mission is to foster, mobilize
20 and coordinate civic action and concern in the
21 communities of Manhattan's Upper East Side and
22 East Harlem. To that end, CIVITAS seeks to
23 promote, preserve and protect residential
24 neighborhoods that are living and livable. - - to
25 focus our energies and maximize our impact,

2 CIVITAS has identified four issues as principal
3 areas of concern. They are one, land use, two,
4 transportation, three, streetscape and four, the
5 environment. Today, I would like to address our
6 concern on recycling and its effect on the
7 environment. You heard earlier about recycling.
8 It is my understanding that from garbage there is
9 a recycling diversion rate, and in the Upper East
10 Side that we oversee, it is 23 percent. In East
11 Harlem it is nine percent, and part of the reason
12 why it is nine percent in East Harlem is because
13 40 percent of the residential units in East Harlem
14 are NYCHA properties, and there is no recycling of
15 any consequence happening in the residential
16 properties in East Harlem. Recently we met with
17 the tenants' organization at the Taft Houses,
18 which has nine buildings, a significant number of
19 units, and the tenants and the tenants association
20 have the will to recycle. The problem is that the
21 facilities are not adequate to support the
22 recycling efforts. The bins--all of the
23 supportive services necessary to facilitate
24 recycling is not available at the NYCHA
25 properties. As part of CIVITAS' new program to

2 improve the rates of recycling in the Upper East
3 Side and East Harlem, CIVITAS has targeted
4 schools, apartment buildings and public housing.
5 Based on principles that good habits learned early
6 can have lifelong impacts, CIVITAS has arranged to
7 work in partnership with two schools in East
8 Harlem. The other two objectives of recycling
9 initiatives are extensive research through
10 apartment buildings and working with the NYCHA
11 properties. Part of what we have been able to do
12 in the short time that we have been working on the
13 effort is mobilizing resources within the
14 community and initially with schools, and so now
15 we are working with the Housing Authority and we
16 encourage both committees to ensure that NYCHA
17 provides the necessary resources at in
18 particularly in East Harlem and throughout the
19 city in order to make recycling real as opposed to
20 just lip service. Thank you.

21 LILY KELLY: So good afternoon. I
22 am Lily Kelly. I am the interim director of
23 Global Green USA's Coalition for Resource
24 Recovery. So Global Green is a national
25 nonprofit. We have offices all around the

1 country, so part of our interest is seeing the
2 work that New York City city agencies and also the
3 work that we do as scalable and as something that
4 could be used to inform broader accomplishments
5 across the country, so I want to first echo
6 everything that has been said concerning
7 engagement, concerning making bins convenient and
8 making them clear and making sure that physical
9 infrastructure and the outreach is all happening.

10 A lot of our work has been with the commercial
11 sector and all of those same principles have
12 definitely held true in terms of our work with
13 restaurants in particular with high employee
14 turnovers, a lot of similar issues in terms of
15 residential turnover as well, so I invite you to
16 explore best practices with regards to residential
17 as well as commercial recycling and composting
18 programs as well because there is a wealth of
19 resources out there and I am more than happy to
20 facilitate any further information you may have
21 about that. So along the lines of scalability one
22 of the things I would like to emphasize is data.
23 Collecting data is key. It will help in terms of
24 understand what practices are working in New York,
25

2 and it will also--tracking that kind of thing and
3 making that informative available will help make
4 this a case study that could be spread to other
5 cities as well. So understanding the cause and
6 effect to the reduction in garbage as a result of
7 these programs and of his infrastructure can also
8 help to track that return on investment as well,
9 which can make the case for implementing this
10 practices, which can be costly in terms of time
11 especially to make this happen, but you do get a
12 savings on that as we have discussed earlier.
13 Another element of this is looking at the fact
14 that there are these contaminants. We are talking
15 about people putting trash in with the
16 recyclables. That is a problem of design really
17 of these items that are being manufactured that
18 aren't easy to recover, and we are very excited
19 that New York has partnered with Sims [phonetic]
20 and has made all rigid plastics available for
21 recycling at the residential level, but there is
22 more to be done in terms of encouraging the
23 manufacturers and encouraging the end markets
24 being put into the trash stream to make them
25 easier to recover. As of now actually the

2 majority of what is in the waste stream is
3 recoverable and that could be increased by more
4 expression by government agencies in particular in
5 the context of other cities across the country
6 that have implemented policies or bans around
7 reducing the amount of unrecoverable waste. We
8 have the attention of the manufacturers of these
9 items, and expressions by city government and
10 other government agencies has a lot of impact,
11 especially at this sort of political moment. So I
12 would encourage you to express that sentiment to
13 companies or others who you are in touch with, and
14 I would be happy to facilitate that kind of
15 contact if that would be of use. Thank you.

16 ERIC GOLDSTEIN: Good afternoon,
17 Chairperson Mendez, Chairperson James, Council
18 Member Jackson. My name is Eric Goldstein. With
19 me is John Croix [phonetic] from the Natural
20 Resources Defense Council. We appreciate your
21 holding this hearing, which deals with a very
22 important issue involving cleanliness,
23 environmental quality, quality of life concerns
24 for over 600,000 New Yorkers. At the outset, we
25 want to recognize the positive steps the Bloomberg

2 Administration along with this Council have taken
3 on recycling over the past year, including the
4 addition of rigid plastics to the recycling
5 collection program, the steps being taken to
6 collect food waste in schools and in demonstration
7 projects, and we hope the plans underway in the
8 Council to prohibit polystyrene food packaging
9 among other things, and we also want to make clear
10 our understanding of the fact that NYCHA is facing
11 a series of challenges in terms of the multiple
12 demands that are made in their budget. I think
13 everyone here understands that, but that fact
14 should not mean that other important objectives
15 including compliance with environmental laws
16 should be ignored, should be dismissed as
17 impractical or should be treated as voluntary
18 suggestions that could be left for the next
19 administration to deal with. The city's recycling
20 laws are very clear, and the city's recycling
21 rules specifically require proper storage of
22 recyclables for pre-collection. They require
23 source separation of all designated recyclables.
24 They direct landlords to post signs by recycling
25 bins about information about how and where to

2 recycle. They mandate that property owners
3 provide new residents with sanitation department
4 recycling guidance and that owners notify in
5 writing residents of source separation
6 requirements. Spot visits by the Natural
7 Resources Defense Council to NYCHA buildings has
8 led us to conclude that these provisions and
9 others are simply not being implemented across the
10 board at NYCHA properties even today. This is
11 extremely disappointing, especially in view of the
12 fact that Mayor Bloomberg has recently
13 acknowledged that the more we as New Yorkers can
14 recycle, the more money we can save for taxpayers.
15 And this disappointment is doubled when we learn
16 that there are low cost proposals being suggested
17 by NYCHA residents and that NYCHA has thus far
18 refused to take up such offers. One final point
19 with respect to the reference made earlier today
20 about having to change the culture if recycling is
21 going to succeed. I am not exactly sure what
22 means, but if it is a suggestion that recycling is
23 somehow extra difficult at NYCHA properties
24 because residents care less about their
25 environment, the evidence that we have suggests

2 that that is completely untrue. Every poll on the
3 subject including independent surveys that NRDC
4 has sponsored has demonstrated widespread public
5 support for clean air and clean water and for
6 added recycling and this support cuts across
7 economic, racial and political and borough lines
8 throughout New York City. Indeed we understand
9 that there is a real opportunity to implement
10 demonstration projects designed by NYCHA residents
11 themselves that could provide jobs for resident
12 teenagers and boost recycling participation in a
13 very cost effective manner. If NYCHA is serious
14 about coming into compliance with the city's
15 landmark recycling law, its representatives will
16 reach out to these resident groups and to us at
17 NRDC without delay, and if not, we would urge the
18 Council to enact legislation that would jumpstart
19 resident inspired recycling collection programs
20 before the year ends. Thank you very much.

21 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: I thank you for
22 that testimony. I too caught that comment, but I
23 had to catch myself and reserve comment because I
24 also found that it was insensitive and
25 unfortunately does not really reflect reality

2 particularly given the fact that we were all
3 introduced to the wonderful residents at Grant
4 Houses and recognize all that they are doing and
5 that this really has to be led by the residents,
6 but they need some support. It is about outreach,
7 and it is about education, and that is what is
8 critically important, and also working with
9 partners such as all of you who are here today as
10 well as the Department of Sanitation. I suspect
11 that the relationship with NYCHA and the
12 Department of Sanitation is frayed or maybe non-
13 existent, and I am particularly disappointed by
14 the testimony I heard today, but nonetheless, you
15 have recommendations. All of the members here in
16 the City Council have recommendations and
17 hopefully, they will follow up on some of those
18 suggestions, and I thank all of you for you
19 testimony. Okay. Thank you all. Next panel--
20 Sarah Martin [phonetic], George Sarkissian
21 [phonetic]-- I apologize if I mispronounced your
22 name--from Community Board 11 and Susan Stetser
23 [phonetic], and this is the famous Ms. Martin that
24 everyone has been referring to. Everybody get her
25 autograph. Her people will contact your people.

2 When you get situated, Ms. Martin you may begin.

3 SARAH MARTIN.: Good afternoon,
4 Council Members and everyone else. Thank you for
5 this opportunity to testify. My name is Sarah
6 Martin, and I am the president for General Grant
7 Residents' Association at Grant Houses, which is a
8 public housing development, and I am the co-chair
9 of the Morningside Heights West Harlem Sanitation
10 Coalition, and I am here to tell you that public
11 housing can recycle. Grant Houses has a
12 functional program. It took some struggling, a
13 lot of work, and other public houses can do it too
14 if they follow our example. When we started
15 recycling in the Grant Houses, we got a lot of
16 help from our Council Member, Robert Jackson, a
17 big help as a matter of fact. We also began to
18 expand to our work to Douglas Houses [phonetic]
19 with a grant from Melissa Mark-Viverito, which is
20 most helpful, but speaking of that, we have not
21 gotten any help for Douglas Houses, so we are kind
22 of at a standstill. Now NYCHA knew Grant Houses
23 was doing a pilot program rather in partnership
24 with other developments, other resident
25 associations, I guess block associations. We have

2 a history. Now NYCHA has made three attempts to
3 do recycling at Grant Houses, and each time it
4 failed, and it is really because of lack of
5 education. That is the main thing that was
6 missing. We gave hands on workshops in all the
7 buildings. We knocked on 1940 doors. We did the
8 workshops out in the hallway. It was fun, and we
9 explained the reasons why recycling should be
10 done, where it should be done, and we realized the
11 most important thing is education and convenience-
12 -a convenient place to it, and it is difficult in
13 public housing 'cause there is really no special
14 place to put our recyclables, and we did the
15 workshops with real items like plastic containers,
16 milk containers, things that are recyclable, so
17 the resident would know for sure what to recycle
18 at that time and what not, but now of course, a
19 lot of plastics have been added, so I am actually
20 even more, much, much more better nowadays. NYCHA
21 gave us the bins for the recycles to be placed in,
22 but right now we are not sure of what NYCHA is
23 doing, what management is doing as far as picking
24 up. Certainly there is no sorting. I know
25 sometime it is contaminated, and I often have seen

2 myself that the recyclables are going in the
3 garbage. There are lots of times black bags are
4 in our bins. So that is one thing that hinders
5 us. Now we even hired residents to monitor the
6 bins to meet with residents to make sure they are
7 doing recycling properly to make it even more
8 sufficient and more better for our residents. I
9 don't know what they are going to do about Douglas
10 Houses. We got a grant to do it, but we don't
11 seem to be getting any help from NYCHA. I
12 attended one of those meetings they were talking
13 about, and to me, it was just pointless. I didn't
14 leave there with nothing at all. I found out
15 about the meeting by accident. I wasn't told. I
16 happened to find out, so I says well, I am going,
17 and I went. Of course, my name wasn't there, but
18 I signed in. They said, are you sure you are at
19 the right meeting? I said I am a NYCHA resident,
20 I am TA president, so you want me to leave? - -
21 one of our problems is that management doesn't
22 take our work seriously. We are concerned about
23 the recyclables. The porters are, the caretakers-
24 -it is not in their job description to do this
25 first of all. It is not something they want to

2 do, so they are not doing it really in a good
3 manner. We got that information by hiring those
4 monitors to go around and watch what happens when
5 the recycling bins are opened and the bags are
6 taken out. If they are the least bit
7 contaminated, they are just thrown in the garbage.
8 We watch to see how many recycled bags are put out
9 by the compactor to be picked up by sanitation,
10 and it is no comparison at all to the amount that
11 should be out there. If there is any jobs
12 available for those, we have seniors that are
13 waiting and willing to be hired. I know it was
14 said something about going out seeking youth,
15 well, we have mostly seniors that did the work so
16 far in our organization, and it was well done. We
17 did a very good job.

18 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: They do all the
19 work.

20 SARAH MARTIN: Yes, yes, yes. So
21 that is about it, and I could say a lot more, but
22 I will take some questions if you have any.

23 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Ms. Martin, we
24 are going to ask you some questions after the all
25 of the witnesses testify.

2 GEORGE SARKISSIAN: Thank you. My
3 name is George Sarkissian. I am the district
4 manager of Community Board 11. I would just like
5 to thank Council Member Mendez, James and Jackson
6 for being here. I will be speaking on behalf of
7 the board, representing the community of East
8 Harlem, which has one of the highest
9 concentrations of public housing. I'd like to
10 talk briefly about our concerns regarding rodents
11 within our NYCHA housing developments. When you
12 talk to NYCHA residents about rodents, there is
13 unfortunately sometimes a recognition of the
14 problem as an accepted part of life, and we
15 unfortunately don't think that that should be the
16 case. While NYCHA typically relies on complaints
17 from residents to identify a problem, residents
18 often don't complain about rodent infestation
19 largely because it is an accepted part of reality,
20 and consequently the situation sometimes goes
21 unaddressed and we just don't think that that is
22 the way to identify problems. We believe NYCHA
23 must do more proactive work to address the rodent
24 infestation. NYCHA staff should work more closely
25 with DOH staff to assess rodent infestation at

2 each housing development and develop a mitigation
3 strategy based on need, not on complaints. We
4 believe this is achievable. When we worked with
5 the MTA to address increased rodent activity at
6 Washington Houses as a result of the adjacent
7 construction of the Second Avenue subway, their
8 efforts produced real reductions in rodents.
9 Coordinated, proactive efforts can produce results
10 and rodent infestation does not have to be a
11 reality the NYCHA residents live with. We look
12 forward to working with NYCHA to develop this
13 strategy district wide.

14 SUSAN STETSER: Thank you. My name
15 is Susan Stetser, district manager representing
16 Community Board 3 in Manhattan and also our chair,
17 Gigi Lee [phonetic] is here because this issue is
18 so important to us. I want to thank you for the
19 opportunity to testify and I also want to mention
20 at the back of my testimony that you have, there
21 is a chart of all the NYCHA sites of rat
22 infestation failures for this year for Community
23 Board 3 and then also--it is right before the map--
24 --and then also a map of the NYCHA sites in
25 Community Board 3. Community Board 3 district is

2 designated by DOH as a UAR area, which means
3 urgent action required. Community Board 3 has an
4 overall rodent problem, and we also have a large
5 number of NYCHA developments. We have 14,500
6 units, which is 26 percent of the units in
7 Manhattan. Many NYCHA developments like our parks
8 with serious problems have land where rodents can
9 burrow, and they are densely populated and
10 therefore generate a lot of garbage, so it is not
11 surprising we have a serious rodent problem on our
12 NYCHA properties. Our residents don't complain in
13 numbers corresponding to the problem, which is
14 basically same thing George was saying about CB
15 11, but we have been working very closely with DOH
16 for the last three years, and they inspect the
17 NYCHA sites through the neighborhood indexing
18 program, and they have indexed the entire district
19 annually for the last three years, so we do know
20 where the failures are even without complaints.
21 We have been working with DOH very closely since
22 the beginning of the indexing process when we were
23 designated as having the second worst rat problem
24 in Manhattan. Now we have gotten a little bit
25 better. We are now only the third worst. We have

2 specifically been working with Caroline Brandon
3 [phonetic] who is here, who is a research
4 scientist and the Manhattan indexing and UAR
5 coordinator, and I will say the bad news is that
6 we have a bad problem. The good news is that we
7 get Caroline to work with us because she treats
8 our community like her family, and we would be
9 nowhere without her. We also have the good
10 fortune to work with Dr. Bobby Corrigan
11 [phonetic], who is a worldwide acknowledged urban
12 rat expert. The biggest obstacle in reducing
13 serious rodent problems is holding city agencies
14 accountable when DOH has issued referrals for city
15 owned properties the processes for DOH to make
16 referrals to the owner agency when there is a
17 finding of rat infestation. NYCHA has been in the
18 top three agencies receiving these referrals from
19 DOH. The city owned properties are an area of
20 focus for CB 3 because of the number of properties
21 that have failed for rat infestation. There is
22 not a process to hold agencies accountable as
23 there is with private properties, and this
24 includes holding NYCHA accountable. Dealing with
25 rats is difficult, but it does seem that NYCHA

2 developments are not receiving the best rat
3 abatement that is possible, which is not
4 acceptable. Good Old Lower East Side, GOLES, has
5 been working with NYCHA residents and some
6 developments are beginning to be better organized
7 to better report rodent problems. The resident
8 organizing along with the community board and
9 elected officials working to coordinate city
10 agencies on this issue has brought some attention
11 and effort and NYCHA has been more responsive
12 recently. We have been working closely with DOH
13 for several years in encouraging workshops and
14 trainings for residents. The community board has
15 taken on the role of coordinating agencies to
16 respond to rat problems and in 2012, we hosted a
17 meeting where agencies came together to coordinate
18 response for NYCHA properties the impacted
19 agencies are parks, dot and sanitation, and you
20 have been talking about this agencies
21 collaborating. It is kind of incredible that the
22 community board is the one doing this. I think as
23 productive the problem is that we don't have the
24 resources to do it as often as properly as we
25 should. At the time of the meeting NYCHA reported

2 their focus was not rats, they were more concerned
3 about bedbugs and their resources were directed
4 there. It appeared the agency was short staffed
5 and did not have resources to respond in the most
6 effective with rat problems. There needs to be a
7 protocol for agencies to work together as rats
8 obviously do not stay within agency areas of
9 jurisdiction. For instance, we observed rat
10 burrows in our broken curb street bed in NYCHA.
11 First there was discussion back and forth between
12 agencies as to which agency was response, and it
13 turned out it was DOT responsibility to fix, but
14 it must be reported to DOT by NYCHA. When CB3
15 tried to follow up, we were told to have NYCHA
16 list this as a higher priority, so we had to go
17 back and forth between agencies to make sure this
18 was reported, and then have the priority bumped
19 up. This was reported by us after our March
20 walkthrough, which I will describe, and we are
21 still waiting for this to be fixed even though it
22 is now a high priority. We have also observed
23 serious problems evidenced by large rat burrows in
24 parks property in Baruch and also in a joint
25 operated playground in Wald housing that is under

2 parks jurisdiction. This is a beautiful,
3 beautiful new playground that was built recently,
4 and it is now that people just see the rats
5 running out of there. After this observation both
6 DOH and I reported these problems to the parks
7 borough commissioner, and these areas are now
8 being baited and there is follow up, but this
9 depended on our random observation and there is no
10 protocol to ensure this property is - - . If we
11 hadn't been in a meeting together and happened to
12 be in a meeting with the park commissioner, it
13 just never would have happened. NYCHA staff seems
14 to believe the problem is often with residents not
15 disposing of garbage properly, and there
16 definitely seems to be tension between staff and
17 residents on this issue that is not being
18 addressed. DOH does conduct staff trainings for
19 pest control staff for all of NYCHA properties
20 every year. On March 13th, Community Board 3
21 organized a rodent walkthrough with DOH and NYCHA
22 and elected officials and GOLES, who in turn
23 organized residents who had firsthand experience
24 of rodent areas. This was at Baruch, but was not
25 just about Baruch. We understood the problems

2 there were representative problems in NYCHA
3 developments; however, Baruch is significant
4 because it is the largest development in Manhattan
5 with 3,200 units. The walkthrough was extremely
6 productive. I am not the expert. The findings
7 were all pointed out by DOH, and I hope you have
8 continued conversations with DOH to explain the
9 specifics of these issues. Some of the
10 observation--we observed tracking powder along the
11 exterior of buildings. This is toxic and should
12 not have been accessible to the public. NYCHA
13 acknowledged there were no bait stations. DOH
14 always installs bait stations in severe
15 infestations, but NYCHA reported that they did not
16 have the resources at that time, but that bait
17 stations would be provided. Doors and basement
18 windows were open. This allows rats easy access
19 to buildings. Residents reported some buildings
20 in which they would never enter the basements
21 because of the number of rats. We opened an
22 electric box and a huge rat jumped out. It should
23 have been monitored for rats, and it should have
24 been sealed, so the rats could not enter. The
25 open boxes not only shelter rats; it allows rats

2 to chew on electrical wiring. There were stagnant
3 pools of water, hoses from a broiler room were
4 draining water through open windows. The water
5 attracts the rats and open windows brings them
6 indoors so they can penetrate the entire building.
7 The baiting was not implemented properly. DOH has
8 instructed the staff in how to bait but
9 instructions are not always followed. We observed
10 bait that was sitting on top of rat burrows. It
11 is poison and should not be visible, and also to
12 be effective, it should be inserted deep in the
13 burrows. Compactors have been installed in most
14 of our NYCHA developments to help with the garbage
15 problem that is causing most of the rats; however,
16 if they are not kept clean, they feed the rats.
17 There have been many complaints of compactors not
18 kept clean and I have observed this myself at - -
19 Houses because it is visible from the girls Club
20 building across the street. We have had
21 consistent failures at Riis [phonetic], Wald,
22 Gompers [phonetic] and Meltzer [phonetic]. The
23 block association on Meltzer, which is a senior
24 residence, complains constantly about the rats
25 from the area. The inspection results can be seen

2 on the nyc.gov rat portal, and we also receive
3 district wide reports from DOH and a yearly rat
4 indexing map. I have got to tell you have. I
5 have that map on my wall during my district
6 service cabinet meetings. We talk about it all
7 the time. - - list of our rat failures are with
8 my package. I want to say we do talk about this a
9 lot at district service cabinet--Caroline didn't
10 know this, but actually some of the agencies
11 complain that we talk about rats too much. NYCHA
12 will come to our meetings if we ask them to, but
13 it is actually not just a generally productive way
14 because they are listening to problems. That is
15 not really how protocols are changed, and it is
16 not really how things change. I do think the
17 attention given recently has made a difference.

18 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Wow. Okay. I
19 think I have less rat questions, so I am going to
20 start with my rat questions, and then I am going
21 to tap into all of your knowledge, Ms. Martin.
22 What is that noise by the way? Do we know? For
23 the community boards, you both mentioned some rat
24 problems. I am aware of some of the rat problems
25 in my district and Council Member Chin's district,

2 so my experience is your experience is that there
3 is not interagency collaboration and even when we
4 get it it is jumping through hoops trying to do
5 the follow up and getting them to work together on
6 this then exacerbates the problem. Is that
7 correct?

8 SUSAN STETSER: It is correct. I
9 am not sure that all agencies are actually allowed
10 to like--when I coordinate a meeting they will
11 come. I am not sure they are allowed to call
12 these meetings.

13 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay and
14 community boards has district cabinet meetings.
15 Can we deal with some of these issues there or it
16 doesn't get resolved in those meetings?

17 SUSAN STETSER: I will let George
18 say his experience--they are generally about two
19 hours, and we deal with lots of issues. So we can
20 touch on the fact that there is a problem if there
21 is one site that is a problem or if there is like
22 the water main on Houston, we will talk about
23 that, but we certainly cannot deal with all of the
24 problems that we need to deal with. That needs to
25 be a separate meeting. In the last couple of

2 years, I think we have done that twice, but I
3 always feel guilty because we don't have the
4 resources for the proper follow up.

5 GEORGE SARKISSIAN: Just like Susan
6 said, NYCHA is not there regularly, so when these
7 conversations come up, they just kind of come up
8 organically. Sometimes you hear them from other
9 agencies, but whenever like DOH is at the center
10 of the conversation, it seems to work. So that is
11 just something to note.

12 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay. I was
13 going to ask another question. Do either one of
14 you know of associations that are doing recycling,
15 and do they come to the community board? Have
16 they mentioned any problems or you are not aware
17 of any NYCHA developments that are doing
18 recycling?

19 GEORGE SARKISSIAN: We don't know
20 of any associations. Felipe from CIVITAS was
21 here. They are the first civic association kind
22 of taking a look at it, but we don't have any
23 associations doing some organizing around
24 recycling in East Harlem at least.

25 SUSAN STETSER: We have worked with

2 GOLES to work on the rodent issue, but as far as I
3 know, that hasn't been specifically about
4 recycling. I was kind of surprised to hear there
5 was door to door knocking in Baruch and we knew
6 nothing about it.

7 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: I knew nothing
8 about it, but... You know, I didn't know if it was
9 NYCHA initiated or tenant association initiated
10 because the president there never informs me about
11 anything, but that is neither here nor there.

12 SUSAN STETSER: I am just hearing--
13 I think you will hear testimony later, but I don't
14 think the residents knew about it either.

15 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Ms. Martin, I
16 salute you and everything that you are doing.
17 Yes, please.

18 [applause]

19 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Because
20 creating change is not easy, sustaining change is
21 even more difficult and to get a group of people
22 to do it that needs to be acknowledged. So you
23 are the president at Grant Houses. Correct?

24 SARAH MARTIN: Yes.

25 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And how long

2 have you been the president there?

3 SARAH MARTIN: About 18 years.

4 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And how long--
5 when did you create this group, and I see an
6 article here about Ms. Gloria Allen [phonetic].

7 SARAH MARTIN: Yes, that is my vice
8 president.

9 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Is she here
10 today?

11 SARAH MARTIN: No, unfortunately,
12 she is not.

13 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: You give her
14 my regards. So when did you and Ms. Allen and
15 anyone else from your association start organizing
16 around recycling?

17 SARAH MARTIN: Well, it started I
18 guess about 1994 we was doing something called
19 Hands Across the Street with Morningside Gardens,
20 prior to the Sanitation Coalition being formed,
21 and we started doing things like cleaning up
22 parks, vacant lots, and talked about doing bigger
23 things, so long story short, we said imagine what
24 could happen if we did recycling in our large
25 development and if it worked. Imagine how much

2 less garbage would be in our communities if we did
3 it across the city. The goal was to start it at
4 Grant Houses and seeing the success that it would
5 spread like a disease maybe across the city - - go
6 and do the same workshops with the resident
7 associations and then they could - - at Grant
8 Houses. So that was the goal, but there was
9 obstacles in the way, of course.

10 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: How big is
11 your development? How many buildings and how many
12 units more or less?

13 SARAH MARTIN: We have nine
14 buildings and 1940 units.

15 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: 1940.

16 SARAH MARTIN: About 4400 people.

17 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And when did
18 the Sanitation Coalition begin?

19 SARAH MARTIN: It has been so long-
20 -the same time we started doing outside park
21 stuff, cleanup, parking, vacant lots, neighborhood
22 parks, that is what really started that.

23 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And so this
24 coalition is comprised of more than just the
25 residents at Grant Houses, correct?

2 SARAH MARTIN: Yes, Morningside
3 Gardens and other block associations and other
4 developments, yes, and Community Board 9.

5 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And so you did
6 it the old fashioned way. You guys went building
7 to building, door to door, floor to floor asking
8 people to recycle, giving them trainings.

9 SARAH MARTIN: We took lead from
10 what happened before. We realized that education
11 was missing prior. That is why it didn't work.
12 Now if you do hands on workshops, and share with
13 people why you should recycle and find a place to
14 do it--it wasn't easy because we wanted to do it
15 on each floor, maybe in each building in the
16 lobby, but our fear of fire hazards we weren't
17 able to do it that way, so we had to find a place
18 to do it that was convenient because we are not
19 going to walk a block to recycle. It has to be
20 convenient, and that is the way it works best. So
21 that---it is about 30 percent recycling we are
22 doing in Grant Houses at the present. - -

23 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: In your
24 testimony earlier you said that NYCHA didn't take
25 you seriously, so when the residents started doing

2 this, you reached out to the staff there at the
3 development?

4 SARAH MARTIN: Right and not only
5 Grant, NYCHA in general, and we weren't getting
6 too much attention until we brought in our Council
7 Member, Robert Jackson, so when he came on board,
8 we got some attention, so that is what made it
9 move forward, and like I said, we had a
10 partnership with NYCHA. I don't know what
11 happened to it, but we partnered together.

12 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And the place
13 NYCHA provided a place, did Robert Jackson help
14 you secure the place to do the recycling or...?

15 SARAH MARTIN: We searched and
16 finally decided that we could put it close to each
17 building, so all the residents had to do is bring
18 the recyclables down and put them in the bin
19 whether it's raining, snowing, thundering,
20 lightning, whatever, they would be able to do that
21 every day, once a week, twice a week. We - -
22 recyclable bags to bring them done, but the
23 problem is there is never enough space because
24 there are times that we bring recyclables down and
25 we can't put them in the bins. They either have

2 not been emptied as promised which is twice a day,
3 so you can't open them, so they are left down
4 sometimes in little supermarket bags, tied up,
5 rinsed, good recyclable stuff, but if they can't
6 take a look, they throw them in the garbage. They
7 are not going to open them up and put them in with
8 the recyclables. That is the problem. They don't
9 realize it is part of their job. Management says
10 it is, but watching tells me it is not.

11 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: You mentioned
12 Douglas Houses, so that is the neighboring
13 development and you tried to get them to implement
14 it or--individuals from there tried to--

15 SARAH MARTIN: We had meetings with
16 Douglas we realized a serious rat problem, very
17 serious, because a lot of garbage being left in
18 various places, so we met with the resident
19 association--the superintendent I do believe, but
20 weren't getting very much support from management
21 and still haven't.

22 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: You mentioned
23 the seniors. What about the younger kids. Are
24 you implementing something to teach the kids about
25 the recycling so that way they can keep doing

2 that? Is that working at all?

3 SARAH MARTIN: Most of the time
4 when we had our workshops, we are encouraging if
5 there are any children in the house bring them out
6 into the hallway because that is one way of making
7 sure of their success. Kids if they see something
8 they are going to remind their parents. I know my
9 grandkids did it. Grandma, this is recyclables,
10 right? So kids teach parents sometimes. So we
11 welcome them. We have little coloring books to
12 give out to the kids, and we made them a great
13 part of recycling. At the end of each building we
14 finish, we had a little ceremony, and we invited
15 our elected officials, and some people from NYCHA
16 and we had the children come down and they put the
17 recyclables in the bin, held a little ribbon
18 cutting so to speak. So it was a fun experience.
19 So yes, we do involve youth with our recycling.
20 We wanted to take it to the schools too, but
21 sometimes principals are not receptive of those
22 things. We have two neighboring schools P.S. 125
23 and P.S. 36 and a few charter schools, but it is
24 not easy when you go to the superintendent or to
25 the principal--they claim they are doing it

2 already, so...

3 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Let me just
4 ask you how often do you do trainings for
5 residents and when new individuals move into the
6 building, do you welcome them and do you do a
7 little training for them and tell them about the
8 tenant association or the resident patrol and the
9 recycling program. Do you do that?

10 SARAH MARTIN: Education is
11 ongoing. For instance like if there is a new
12 resident that moves into Grant Houses management
13 lets me know. I get a list, and in turn the
14 secretary sends a letter introducing the resident
15 association and we have our meetings and every
16 month we discuss recycling at our monthly
17 meetings.

18 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Excellent.

19 SARAH MARTIN: Also in the Grant
20 newsletter the resident association has their page
21 and we also express things about recycling on that
22 page, and how important it is to recycle.

23 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: So just a
24 couple of last questions, and that is if you don't
25 mind since Council Member Jackson has left the

2 room, how much money did he appropriate to you?

3 [laughter]

4 SARAH MARTIN: I don't have that
5 figure.

6 [background conversation]

7 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Only \$9,000 a
8 year?

9 SARAH MARTIN: We try to do
10 fundraising and other things to--

11 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [interposing]
12 So in total, what is the cost annually?

13 SARAH MARTIN: We do the work for
14 nothing, so... there is no check in the mail for us.

15 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: but if you were
16 to prepare a budget, how much would you say it
17 costs just your development, not Douglas, just
18 yours, Grant.

19 SARAH MARTIN: Oh right, if we had
20 all the support we needed, a ballpark figure, but
21 \$30,000 I would say to do it real well and get all
22 of the materials that we need.

23 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: \$30,000.

24 SARAH MARTIN: Because when we have
25 meetings we like to have little snacks. That

2 encourages people. We put a flyer up and - - .

3 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Were you aware,
4 Ms. Martin, that there is a market for these
5 recyclables?

6 SARAH MARTIN: Yes.

7 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: And if in fact
8 they were to sell your recyclables and generate
9 some revenue do you think that that would be a
10 good idea and perhaps some of that revenue go back
11 to fund your initiative?

12 SARAH MARTIN: It's an excellent
13 idea.

14 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: So you support
15 that recommendation?

16 SARAH MARTIN: Most definitely.

17 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: And have you
18 identified--I don't know if you have had an
19 opportunity to examine the recyclables and
20 determine what businesses in the neighborhood that
21 are generating the garbage?

22 SARAH MARTIN: No, not really.

23 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Not really, no
24 sense like a lot of cups from here or plastic from
25 here, or in the neighborhood?

2 SARAH MARTIN: Well, there is a lot
3 of businesses in the neighborhood that dumps their
4 garbage in our area where we put our garbage at.

5 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: That is a
6 separate issue, and we have got to get to that,
7 but just in terms of I am looking at if we were to
8 identify businesses for the most part in the
9 neighborhood that are generating the recyclables
10 or the garbage.

11 SARAH MARTIN: Yeah, there is
12 plenty of those. Garbage. Yes.

13 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: So is it cups
14 like from certain companies?

15 SARAH MARTIN: All sorts of plastic
16 packing, plastic indeed. Yes. Paper goods.

17 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: From any
18 particular business? Can you identify any
19 particular businesses that is generating more
20 garbage than others?

21 SARAH MARTIN: The supermarkets,
22 yes, a few restaurants, yeah.

23 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Within your
24 neighborhood?

25 SARAH MARTIN: Within my

2 neighborhood, of course.

3 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Have you ever
4 thought about since one particular restaurant or
5 business is generating more garbage than others
6 having a conversation with them?

7 SARAH MARTIN: We have went to our
8 supermarkets and asked do they recycle.

9 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: And what did
10 they say?

11 SARAH MARTIN: Yes, and whether
12 they have an area where we can return even plastic
13 bags. Yes.

14 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: I guess what I
15 am getting at is packaging of their products.

16 SARAH MARTIN: Packaging I have not
17 had that experience.

18 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Okay. thank
19 you for that, and have you had conversations with
20 the Department of Sanitation? Have they assisted
21 you in this effort at all?

22 SARAH MARTIN: I haven't been
23 satisfied. I'll put it that way--with the
24 pickups, no.

25 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: If we were to

2 increase the amount of the pickups, would that
3 assist you in reducing the pileup if you will
4 because you have lack of space?

5 SARAH MARTIN: What would help
6 would be that they would empty the bins twice a
7 day as promised and maybe - - separation.

8 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: - - separation,
9 but that is not in their job title, is that
10 correct?

11 SARAH MARTIN: It appears to me
12 that dealing with recycling period is not in their
13 job description, so that is a big problem.

14 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: So Ms. Martin,
15 based upon what you have observed and some of the
16 challenges you have, we are going to draft a
17 letter to New York City Housing Authority asking
18 that they assist you in your efforts at recycling
19 at Grant Houses.

20 SARAH MARTIN: It's much
21 appreciated.

22 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: You're welcome,
23 ma'am. And the recycling bags. Do you purchase
24 them or does Sanitation provide that to you?

25 SARAH MARTIN: That is provided?

2 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: By?

3 SARAH MARTIN: NYCHA has the bags,
4 but oftentimes, they are black bags in the recycle
5 bin. They should be clear, plastic bags, and they
6 are black garbage bags. That is because they
7 don't have a supply of them.

8 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: As far as you
9 know, based upon this violation is Grant Houses
10 are they issued a violation by Sanitation as far
11 as you know?

12 SARAH MARTIN: No, not as far as I
13 know.

14 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Okay. Thank
15 you, Ms. Martin. I really appreciate it, and
16 since there is going to be a change in the
17 administration, I would recommend that you submit
18 your resume.

19 SARAH MARTIN: Thank you very much.

20 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Just for the
21 record, I noticed Cynthia Doughty was answering
22 some questions from out in the - - . Ma'am, your
23 name is Joan Levine [phonetic], so thank you for--
24 clearly you are all working together and provided
25 us some background information.

2 FEMALE VOICE: [off mic]

3 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Yes, I came a
4 few years ago, and it was incredible what you were
5 doing there, and I'd like to replicate that in my
6 neighborhood. It is individual will--

7 SARAH MARTIN: [interposing] It is
8 important the residents be involved because NYCHA
9 cannot do it. We need the help, but the residents
10 should be the one that takes the lead.

11 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: We need some
12 more seniors like you all over the city.

13 SARAH MARTIN: Seniors get it done.

14 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Seniors get it
15 done. You should get a t-shirt. Thank you very
16 much.

17 [background conversation]

18 SARAH MARTIN: I urge the people
19 that live there. It's them. They live there.
20 They breathe the air, so it is most important that
21 they do the work.

22 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Can you from
23 NYCHA, young man, I forgot your name--can you
24 make sure her bins are getting cleared out twice a
25 day?

2 MALE VOICE: [off mic]

3 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: We are going
4 to do that as well, but I'd like for you to take
5 it back since you are here. Thank you. I want to
6 thank this panel for their testimony. We will
7 continue to work together on this issue. The next
8 panel will be Bridget Vincente [phonetic] from
9 Mott Haven Houses and Nova Stratchon [phonetic]
10 from the Bronx and doesn't have a name, but it
11 says Mothers on the Move advocate. Is someone
12 here from Mothers on the Move? Okay. I am going
13 to need your name on this. The sergeant will give
14 it to you, and you can just put your name on it,
15 and then we will get it back. Alright, and then
16 the next panel is the panel from the Good Old
17 Lower East Side. We will have Theresa Pedroza
18 [phonetic], Inez Turpin [phonetic] and Jeanette
19 Tumor [phonetic], and that will be the last panel.
20 If I did not call your name and you want to
21 testify, it is because I did not get a sheet, and
22 if you want to testify, you still can. You just
23 need to fill it out and give it to the sergeant.
24 Okay? So we will listen to everyone's testimony.
25 Whoever is ready, just sit down, grab the

2 microphone. The red light being on means it will
3 amplify your voice, and again, let me read the
4 names of the people Nova Stratchon, okay, so that
5 is you from Moms on the Move. Alright, so I have
6 this--and Bridget Vincente, great?

7 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: To the
8 gentleman who wants to remain anonymous, you
9 recognize that you are being videoed, so your
10 image will be on television even though you are
11 not providing your name. You are okay with that?
12 Alright.

13 BRIDGET VINCENTE: Good afternoon,
14 council members. Thank you so much for having
15 this hearing. It is a day of jubilee. My name is
16 Bridget Vincente. I am a NYCHA resident living in
17 the Mott Haven Houses. The reason why I am here
18 today is because I thought I was doing the right
19 thing as a law abiding citizen by recycling in my
20 building until 2006. This is when I witnessed my
21 recyclables being thrown away with the garbage. I
22 was shocked and disappointed to learn that all of
23 my efforts over the years were in vain because
24 NYCHA does not recycle. Since that time, I have
25 been taking my recyclables to my children's school

2 in Harlem and dropping them off. Being that my
3 efforts were just a drop in the bucket, I knew
4 something had to be done. I found the perfect
5 opportunity to establish a recycling program in my
6 development when I came across a NYCHA posting
7 urging residents to get involved with Commissioner
8 Lopez's green agenda. Consequently, I started a
9 resident green committee in my development with
10 the confidence of fulfilling the commissioner's
11 agenda to help green public housing. Towards that
12 end, I held public meetings and events to raise
13 awareness and educate NYCHA residents about
14 recycling and energy efficiency. I conducted door
15 to door surveys to ascertain residents' interest
16 in learning and participating in a recycling
17 program. I organized a recycling rally to
18 mobilize residents around the issue. I created
19 the door to door, floor to floor, recycling pilot
20 project, which proposes a unique solution not only
21 to help NYCHA come into compliance with New York
22 City recycling laws, but it would also address the
23 high unemployment rate amongst NYCHA residents by
24 creating sustainable green collar jobs. Under
25 this initiative NYCHA residents will be hired to

2 go to each unit in the development to retrieve
3 recyclables collected by residents. Monies
4 generated from the sale of those recyclables would
5 then be used to help pay the workforce. I met
6 with the commissioner and her staff to explore the
7 proposal, which to my dismay was ultimately
8 rejected. I was then asked to redirect my
9 interests and focus on other green topics like
10 gardening and energy efficiency because NYCHA
11 stated they weren't ready to address the issue.
12 At that point, NYCHA made it extremely difficult
13 for me to carry out my duties at RDC [phonetic]
14 president to organize and educate residents around
15 this important issue that plagues my community
16 with the lowest recycling rates in the city. When
17 I tried to organize a series of free workshops
18 with - - office of recycling outreach and
19 education, my request was consistently denied. I
20 find this to be discriminatory because every New
21 Yorker who requests these services from go NYC
22 [phonetic] are entitled to receive them with the
23 exception of NYCHA residents. In a news article
24 that explores why recycling rates are dismal in
25 underserved communities, City Councilwoman and

2 Chair of the Committee on Sanitation and Solid
3 Waste, Letitia James, says "The Bloomberg
4 Administration needs to better educate low income
5 communities about the benefits of recycling."
6 NYCHA also recently declined help from Sustainable
7 South Bronx and Ron Gonan [phonetic], the deputy
8 commissioner of recycling and sanitation and
9 representatives from Ecocycle [phonetic] to
10 explore how recycling can best be promoted in the
11 South Bronx. I was instrumental in bringing this
12 group to Mott Haven Houses to tour the
13 development. During the tour, I shared my ideas,
14 solutions and benefits of my pilot program.
15 Ecocycle had a \$200,000 grant slated toward a
16 project to encourage residents to do their part.
17 Unfortunately, NYCHA turned them away and
18 Sustainable South Bronx took that \$200,000
19 elsewhere. What better place would have
20 benefitted in the community that has the highest
21 concentration of developments in CD1? Best of
22 all, it would not cost NYCHA not one penny. This
23 further proves that the problem with recycling in
24 NYCHA is not the people; it's NYCHA. Why is our
25 right to recycle being prohibited? Why don't we

2 have a right to receive outreach services that are
3 in place to educate NYCHA residents? In my
4 experience NYCHA's reluctance to address this old
5 problem with new ideas is what keeps great plans
6 from beign explored, allowing NYCHA to skirt the
7 law and unnecessarily dump millions of pumps of
8 recyclables each year in landfills. Polluting the
9 planet at taxpayers' expense is criminal.

10 Instead, we should be working on solutions that
11 support community, economic development and a
12 health environment. By that I am referring to the
13 door to door, floor to floor recycling pilot
14 project. Thank you.

15 NOVA STRATCHON: Good afternoon,
16 everyone. My name is Nova Stratchon. I am a
17 resident of New York City Public Housing, - - ,
18 but I am also a housing organizer and I work and
19 come to love and build in the community of Mott
20 Haven and Mott Haven Houses in particular at this
21 time. On behalf of hundreds of residents such as
22 myself, I would like to speak on the form of
23 discouragement that folks face in the Mott Haven
24 Houses. When the idea was created by a NYCHA
25 resident for NYCHA residents that would have

2 addressed some major issues, one of course,
3 unemployment, but we want to bring awareness and
4 what I felt was real engagement with the residents
5 and it brought excitement for recycling. It would
6 have created a direct pipeline between residents'
7 recyclables and the proper procedures and the
8 proper carting company to get rid of these
9 recyclables instead of just being destined for the
10 trash. With unemployment still standing tall in
11 the South Bronx at 12.5 as of February 2013, the
12 idea of residents doing door to door outreach to
13 ensure folks are aware of the dates and designated
14 times to leave their recyclables at the door for
15 pickup and with the ultimate goal of creating
16 living wage jobs through something so simple, but
17 yet, something so needed. You can't blame
18 inability to recycle on us residents. When they
19 were hyped and ready to get involved in this
20 recycling project, when residents were geared up
21 and showed so much excitement, NYCHA came and shut
22 it down. They came up with a list of liabilities
23 as to why this pilot program couldn't happen. Now
24 let me speak about some liabilities that we face
25 every day. About eight of New York's bravest had

2 to get my relative out of the elevator the other
3 night. That is a liability. We have mold and
4 other conditions in our apartments. That is a
5 liability. If I can't keep a job or get a job, I
6 can't pay my rent. I am liable to get evicted, so
7 that is a liability, so we have many liabilities
8 that we face every day in New York City public
9 housing, and it has nothing to do with recycling.
10 So at the end of the day bringing hope to a
11 community and creating green awareness to change
12 the behavior and to understand that green in this
13 case is not just a color, that it is a practice,
14 and I think that is about it because I am kind of
15 nervous. Yeah, that's it. But thank you. Thank
16 you.

17 [background conversation]

18 MR. X: Hi. I came out here today
19 to say like all of the accusatory remarks that
20 Sarah Martin and Bridget Vincente made about how
21 NYCHA takes the recyclables and basically black
22 bags them and throws them away with regular
23 garbage is actually true, and I have the documents
24 to back it up. A few years ago, I confronted
25 NYCHA with this because I saw them doing it in my

2 development, and I was told basically that it was
3 none of my business that the recyclables were
4 beign sorted and that it basically constituted
5 harassment if I brought this up again. I made it
6 a point to file a Freedom of Information Act
7 request with NYCHA and the Department of
8 Sanitation, and I exchanged e-mails with people
9 and the Sanitation Department basically did not
10 comment on it, and I have those e-mail exchanges.
11 People off the record who worked for Sanitation
12 said it has been long known that NYCHA isn't
13 required to recycle and Sanitation has no
14 jurisdiction to fine them basically because one
15 city agency cannot fine another city agency. The
16 Department of Sanitation basically said they have
17 no documents on where this garbage goes even
18 though it has been obvious that they do pick it
19 up. What I did was I took it a step further, and
20 I have taken pictures of the roll off containers,
21 the compactor containers that have permit numbers
22 on them, and I e-mailed and had conversations with
23 the New Jersey Department of Environmental
24 Protection that takes these roll off containers
25 and they told me it goes to a waste transfer

2 station in New Jersey, and I have the addresses to
3 that also. I don't know how much more information
4 you need. I have those and I would be willing to
5 provide the Council with those documents. That's
6 it. I think now we will just take questions. I
7 have a few more comments, but I think you guys can
8 direct some questions at the panel.

9 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: I want to
10 thank this panel for their testimony. It has been
11 my belief that the Housing Authority was not
12 recycling as is my commercial landlord, but it is
13 another thing to hear it. More importantly what
14 is discouraging to me when residents are getting
15 active and want to do something it is not
16 encouraged. It is not supported. Sort of like
17 resident consultation or engagement. Anybody who
18 has been going to - - meetings knows what I am
19 talking about... anyway. They invite you to
20 meetings, but then they don't really take what you
21 are saying into consideration, so they can
22 document you have been at a meeting, but that is
23 about it. So Ms. Vincente, can you tell me when
24 did you--you said you discovered in 2006--

25 BRIDGET VINCENTE: I discovered

2 that my recyclables were not being separated and
3 hauled away to be repurposed in 2006. I had been
4 recycling way before that, so that was the moment
5 of my discovery.

6 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And you are on
7 the tenant association or you are on the executive
8 board or you were just recycling with other
9 neighbors and then you found this out?

10 BRIDGET VINCENTE: Yes. Yes.

11 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And did you go
12 and tell your tenant association about this or the
13 management office?

14 BRIDGET VINCENTE: No. At that
15 point I wasn't active. I figured they knew, and I
16 wanted to do something, but I didn't know where to
17 go at that point because I wasn't active in the
18 community at that point. I was just doing my
19 recycling like any other citizen following the
20 law.

21 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Yeah, it is
22 frustrating. Like my office from my district
23 office, we bring all of our paper here because it
24 gets recycled here. We found that at our
25 building, our commercial building, even though we

2 were sorting it all out, they were just jumbling
3 it all together. Ms. Stratchon, you said that you
4 reside in Claremont Consolidated?

5 NOVA STRATCHON: That is where I
6 live. Yes.

7 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And so you
8 were doing recycling there or you were doing
9 recycling as part of your organizing or both?

10 NOVA STRATCHON: Yes, to clarify,
11 the recycling piece came in through Mothers on the
12 Move - - and part of a report we did was solutions
13 to greening our hood. We came out with this
14 report. Basically we surveyed Mott Haven,
15 Patterson, Mitchell, different developments in the
16 area. - - we surveyed those developments and from
17 the findings, we basically - - intersections
18 health issues, which is recycling because of the
19 accumulation of garbage, the rodents, unemployment
20 and just overall conditions in our community at
21 that time, and out of that report, we did a series
22 of workshops. I did some workshops at Mott Haven,
23 and folks - - it is a situation where folks have
24 to go for further education, but we wanted to show
25 that there was hope for folks like myself--I am

2 still working for my GED; I am still in a
3 situation where I would like to be better off--
4 that we could find a position in the green
5 economy, that we could find our place in the green
6 economy. Give us the proper training as
7 residents. There is this thing called Section 3
8 if it even still exists, right, and put all of
9 these things--the point is the residents have just
10 like Ms. Martin said, the residents knows best.
11 We live it, we breathe it, we see it every day, so
12 we know how we would benefit, how we would be
13 sustained. Ms. Bridget is an inspiration because
14 her idea alone, it could generate something. It
15 really could and just for them to say it is a
16 liability - - liabilities. Residents are saying
17 that they want to do this. This is something that
18 they are willing to do. This is not a volunteer
19 job. - - we already have to do community service
20 to live in public housing, right? We have to our
21 15 hours or 8 hours or whatever it is, but let's
22 start sustaining families. We have to pay our
23 rents. I understand they are not an employment
24 agency because that is the first thing that NYCHA
25 would say, but please let's work something out.

2 Let's find a way where we can bridge that gap.

3 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: So we have Ms.
5 Martin in Manhattan who is hero, and now I am
6 finding two heroes in the Bronx, Ms. Stratchon,
7 Ms. Vincente. So Ms. Stratchon, you just put a
8 light bulb just went off. The 15 hours that some
9 individuals within NYCHA have to where they have
10 to perform community service. I think that is a
11 really good idea to--using those community
12 service, or it's not really community service or
13 that requirement, and perhaps creating a green
14 initiative I think would go a long way in one
15 complying with that federal law as well as you
16 said greening your hood, and that is something
17 that I would love to talk to NYCHA about, and Ms.
18 Vincente, I really love your idea, and your
19 suggestion. Similar to what Ms. Martin did, have
20 you guys approached your City Council Member about
21 any resources to fund your initiative?

22 BRIDGET VINCENTE: We just had Ms.
23 Viverito. She has just been designated our new
24 councilperson, and I did send her a packet, and I
25 received an e-mail to schedule a meeting. Prior

2 to that Arroyo was our council, and I sent the
3 packet, and I did not receive a response. I sent
4 it twice, and she was very interested in setting
5 something up.

6 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Excellent, so I
7 will follow up with a conversation with Council
8 Member Melissa Mark-Viverito, and also will follow
9 up with New York City Housing Authority, the
10 chairman with respect to Mott Haven public housing
11 as well as Claremont, where I visited recently,
12 and I was informed that there was a rodent
13 problem.

14 NOVA STRATCHON: Yeah, we just had
15 a press conference there along with the Urban
16 Justice - - 'cause we have rats scratching in my
17 walls. I recorded it.

18 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: I was invited
19 to the press conference, but unfortunately attend,
20 but I had previously met with residents from
21 Claremont, who indicated that they had a major
22 rodent problem, and I would love to reach out to
23 all of the other public housing - - Patterson and
24 Mitchell?

25 NOVA STRATCHON: Yes.

2 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: I would love to
3 talk to them about creating an initiative going
4 forward with respect to making sure that we are in
5 conformity with the law or in compliance with the
6 law as it relates to recycling. Mr. X, I'd love
7 to see your documents, your FOIA request. If you
8 could submit them to counsel here, that would be
9 greatly appreciated. We would like to review it.
10 With respect to any information that you have on
11 NYCHA employees who may have just taken
12 recyclables and thrown them into the waste stream,
13 I would love to see that.

14 MR. X: I just have a few comments.
15 I know you had said before, Councilwoman, that
16 there wasn't a full fisted attempt, and I agree
17 with you on that. One thing that Carlos Laboy-
18 Diaz said before from NYCHA that there needs to be
19 a team effort and we need to engage residents, he
20 said you need to change the culture. I think part
21 of the biggest problem with recycling and also the
22 rat problem is they fail to engage residents and
23 there is no enforcement. They will tell people
24 you need to recycle. You need to properly dispose
25 of your garbage, but when people don't do it, when

2 people leave bags of garbage, NYCHA's solution is
3 to take out the garbage can, which is what they
4 have done in my development, and people still
5 leave the garbage, and they threaten them with
6 lease termination or fines, but they don't follow
7 through on it, and I think part of the rat problem
8 is because of NYCHA. They don't enforce it, and
9 that is part of the problem.

10 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: If anyone can
11 answer this, Ecocycle, is that grant still
12 available?

13 BRIDGET VINCENTE: Hopefully, there
14 will be another grant, but I am sure they want to
15 see what happens with this \$200,000. It was given
16 to a private development in Highbridge in the
17 south Bronx, so--

18 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [interposing]
19 So was it an annual grant or was it a one-time
20 grant?

21 BRIDGET VINCENTE: I don't know
22 that. I know the Ecocycle is a company that is a
23 partner with Coca Cola is one of their - - from
24 the representative from there, and I am sure that
25 there is a way to reach out to find that if we

2 could possibly receive more grant monies that was
3 designated, I believe--

4 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: [interposing]

5 And model it after what Ms. Martin is doing in her
6 development, and so NYCHA representatives that are
7 still here, I am really troubled by all that we
8 have heard from this panel, and obviously, I would
9 hope that NYCHA representatives would work with
10 Ms. Vincente and Ms. Stratchon with regards to
11 their issues. I know that Claremont has a major
12 rodent infestation that we really need to address.
13 I am glad you are taking notes. We need to
14 contact Mott Haven public housing. The fact that
15 they are not recycling is troubling, and the fact
16 that they basically turned Ms. Vincente away and
17 was unwilling to work with her is equally
18 troubling as well as Mitchell, Patterson, we need
19 to make sure that there is a recycling program at
20 all of the public housing as well as work with
21 these wonderful not for profits, Mothers on the
22 Move and perhaps review the solutions on greening
23 our hood that have come forth from that
24 organization. I will be in touch with NYCHA
25 obviously when I receive the documents from this

2 gentleman and drafting a little to the chairperson
3 with respect to the fact that some of the
4 employees it has been charged are taking the
5 recyclables and throwing them away with the
6 regular garbage, which is in violation of the law
7 and shall not be tolerated. So I thank you for
8 taking those copious notes, and I thank this
9 panel.

10 MR. X: Can I just say just two
11 more quick points? I think going back to what
12 Councilwoman James was saying about incentivizing
13 things, I think the green committees although a
14 very good idea is a failure because there is a
15 lack of incentive. You can't tell a whole bunch
16 of residents to come up for basically
17 volunteering. There is a lot of red tape. You
18 need to go through a lot of hoops and hurdles to
19 get the resources that you need. The solution I
20 don't think is what the panel up here of NYCHA was
21 saying, they need more caretakers or more pick-ups
22 because I think that is how most city agencies
23 operate, just typical bureaucracy. When things
24 don't work the solution is to throw more money at
25 the problem or throw more resources, and that is

2 definitely not it, and the last point I wanted to
3 make is I have seen a lot of business plans, a
4 good amount, and Ms. Vincente's plan has all the
5 aspects of something that I would definitely if I
6 was an investor invest into. It has education.
7 It has an enforcement aspect. It has incentives
8 for residents, which is what you are looking for.
9 It reduces NYCHA's caretaking and operating cost,
10 and then most of all I think it creates jobs and
11 it puts money back into NYCHA, which is strapped
12 for cash, and that is it.

13 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: So you all
14 support the financial incentives as a result of
15 selling off the recyclables having it just
16 returned to these organizations, which are doing
17 great work on the ground. You all support that
18 recommendation?

19 MR. X: Yes, and I don't want to
20 see documents that back it up. I want to see the
21 money poured back into NYCHA. I want to see the
22 fruits of that.

23 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Just one last
25 question, Ms. Vincente. In one of the attachments

2 to your testimony, the second paragraph, second
3 bullet green jobs created for NYCHA residents, it
4 says here in the middle current estimates for the
5 sale of recyclables from NYCHA is about 60 million
6 annually. I was just wondering where that
7 information came from? How can we verify that?
8 The second bullet, right in the middle of the
9 second bullet. Current estimates for the sale of
10 recyclables from NYCHA is about 60 million
11 annually.

12 BRIDGET VINCENTE: Well, what we
13 did is take the numbers from how much recycles are
14 thrown away or used from families per day, which
15 is 2.5 pounds, and it was an estimation, and it
16 was multiplied into days, months and weeks, and we
17 used the whole entire development, all the
18 boroughs to do that configuration.

19 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: The 2.5 pounds
20 is what is recyclable per a family of garbage, or
21 is that just the total garbage?

22 BRIDGET VINCENTE: That is just
23 recyclables.

24 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: That is just
25 recyclables.

2 BRIDGET VINCENTE: The weight in
3 recyclables, 2.5 pounds per day.

4 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: So if that is
5 correct, that is extra monies that we don't need
6 to do in field development, which is only going to
7 yield 30 to 50 million by the way. Anyway. I am
8 just saying. I want to thank this panel for their
9 testimony, and now we go to the last panel, which
10 is the Good Old Lower East Side panel. Theresa
11 Pedroza, Inez Turpin, and Jeanette Tumor.
12 Alright. Thank you. I am learning a lot today.
13 How about you, Tish? If anyone else wants to
14 testify, we will take you. You have just got to
15 fill one of these out. Otherwise, this will be
16 the last panel. So whenever you are ready, just
17 grab the microphone and start giving your
18 testimony.

19 INEZ ROBINSON TURPIN: Okay. Thank
20 you. Good afternoon, everyone. - - , ladies and
21 gentlemen. My name is Inez Robinson Turpin. I am
22 a resident and vice president of the 612 East 14th
23 Street Campos Plaza One Housing and a member as
24 well of the Good Old Lower East Side. NYCHA needs
25 to effectively manage the waste of the residents

2 in my area as we lack sanitary disposal areas for
3 individual buildings in the Campos Plaza area
4 meaning there needs to be a solid waste and
5 recycling bins in front of each and every building
6 as we lack proper education around recycling and
7 the increased amount of trash that is left
8 unattended for several hours and days at a time,
9 which is undoubtedly leading to the growing rodent
10 populations in the Lower East Side along with
11 other things we know--construction as well--and
12 people not really adhering to proper sanitary
13 conditions, meaning continuing to leave their
14 herbage outside, continuing to throw their garbage
15 outside the window, continuing to leave their
16 garbage after it falls out of the trash chute in
17 the hallways. For years, I have witnessed
18 management in my development experiment with
19 different methods of how to manage solid waste.
20 They used to be metal cans with lids, then
21 nothing, so trash accumulated in front of the
22 building, then recycling was reduced, but it
23 wasn't reduced properly enough to the point where
24 I believe there was a strict understanding about
25 how things should be done. So trash accumulated

2 in front of the building, and then recycling was
3 introduced to the developments, but with little
4 success because there was no real education given.
5 A sticker and a pamphlet in one language is not
6 enough to change decade old habits or to reinforce
7 the importance and the need for recycling. When
8 that challenge wasn't met with success instead
9 they began putting unsightly, foul smelling and
10 unsanitary dumpsters in front of my buildings and
11 other alternatives for other buildings in the
12 development. Some residents even had to walk to
13 the trash compactor area to discard larger solid
14 waste. This cannot be healthy, nor can it be
15 safe. The trash is only picked up once a day.
16 This is problematic because many families keep
17 different schedules and toss out trash all times
18 of the day. During the weekend, the eyesore of an
19 overflowing dumpster in front of my building
20 brings by my fears of creating a safe haven of
21 sorts for rodents who congregate around their
22 usual food source, which is garbage. Today I ask
23 the Council to urge NYCHA to reevaluate how it
24 deals with solid waste, to put sanitary and safe
25 trash and recycling near buildings to create an

2 effective and ongoing pest management program and
3 to encourage the agency to provide more education
4 around recycling. Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Thank you.

6 THERESA PEDROZA: Hi. My name is
7 Theresa Pedroza. I am a resident at - -

8 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Can you just
9 pull it a little close to you?

10 THERESA PEDROZA: Hi. My name is
11 Theresa Pedroza. I am a resident at Jacob Riis,
12 and I am a board member at GOLES. Also, I am a
13 CB3 board member. Rodents had invaded my
14 community in the last 15 to 20 years. I have to
15 walk in the middle of the street because I am
16 scared of the rats coming out and attacking me. I
17 see them everywhere, but especially I see them in
18 front of my building and in all of the grassy
19 areas. They come out of the sewers and they are
20 always by the big compactors on 8th Street. In the
21 last several years, NYCHA has removed most of the
22 garbage cans in front of the buildings, all over
23 the property and are no longer on the street
24 corners. You have to cross the street just to
25 toss away your personal trash. With the influx of

2 all of these bars and restaurants, there is more
3 trash, which is food for the rats. When I walk
4 around the neighborhood, the night before trash
5 day is the only night I see trash on the sidewalk,
6 but in the public housing, our trash stays out on
7 the curb for days at a time. At Jacob Riis, we
8 don't even have a proper trash can with lids.
9 Those big black bags are just like a feeding
10 frenzy for the rats, and I have a phobia, so it
11 makes me feel anxiety just thinking about walking
12 around my building in the daytime and even more
13 petrified when it gets dark. I have seen some
14 attempts at baiting, but they don't seem to work.
15 I see those big rat traps that are an eyesore and
16 they don't seem to be replaced or even maintained,
17 and I still see lots of rats. I would like NYCHA
18 to install proper solid waste receptacles with
19 lids so that the rodents won't have a food source.
20 We also need proper extermination, more trash
21 pickups in the public housing. I have a couple of
22 issues with the statements that we made. I wanted
23 to know if the exterminator jobs are permanent,
24 and they don't spray for bugs anymore. You have
25 to call up to make an appointment, and when you

2 call that you have mice in your apartment, they
3 come in and they come with those little glue
4 traps, but if you have holes, then you have to
5 make another appointment for them to come fix the
6 holes, and when they come to fix the holes, they
7 come with the glue traps again, and they don't
8 come with the proper equipment to fix the holes
9 either. Again the lack of knowledge of management
10 knowing what the other people are doing, it is
11 what is really messing up--that is why jobs don't
12 get done properly. The cameras. Thank you, Rosie
13 Mendez, for the cameras at Baruch. We need
14 cameras in the elevators now because that is where
15 the influx of rapes--

16 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: [interposing]

17 I am working on that now with the borough
18 president.

19 THERESA PEDROZA: Thank you very
20 much.

21 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: So hopefully
22 we can get that done this summer in this budget.

23 THERESA PEDROZA: The booklet as of
24 today was the first time I ever saw that booklet,
25 and I--

2 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Which one?

3 THERESA PEDROZA: That little
4 booklet.

5 [crosstalk]

6 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: A home to be
7 proud of. Anybody knows Joe Garber? He was very
8 colorful when it came to talking about the home to
9 be proud of.

10 THERESA PEDROZA: The lighting that
11 was installed, those new lightings were installed
12 so very poorly that the one in the bathroom, my
13 mother refuses to leave it on because it makes a
14 clicking sound, and then the one in the kitchen
15 she doesn't even use it because the color it hurts
16 her eyes, so we need to do something about the
17 lighting. Also the trees, we have trees that
18 since Sandy, the trees have the salt line goes
19 halfway up the trees and the trees are dead, so we
20 have between Jacob Riis, Lillian Wald, and Baruch
21 there is some 80 to 100 dead trees that are over
22 five stories high--five to eight stories high, and
23 belie me, after the summer, the things are going
24 to start falling. That is another funding issue
25 we are going to have to deal with with NYCHA. The

2 rats--I can keep talking about that. They are
3 saying that they came out and did I don't know
4 what--this young gentleman said he came to Baruch,
5 but they have tunnels everywhere. You can see
6 through the tunnels. They look like highways. If
7 NYCHA came and at least--even if they did-- - -
8 those tunnels, those are burrows. These are
9 families of rats coming out. Maybe we would have
10 a slowdown of the rat issue. That is what they
11 need to do besides baiting those big bait traps.
12 Young man, you need to come and fight for the
13 community. That is where you need to be. You
14 need to come with us and fight with the community
15 because from what I heard, there is no future in
16 NYCHA.

17 [laughter]

18 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Stop. He is
19 doing a good job. You need a friend on the
20 inside, so let's encourage him. You keep your
21 job, young man. Next, who knows. The change in
22 the administration, you could be commissioner.

23 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Apparently
24 anybody can. Oh, I am sorry.

25 JEANETTE TUMOR: Hi. My name is

2 Jeanette Tumor. I am an environmental public
3 health organizer at Good Old Lower East Side, and
4 I'd like to apologize to the Council for all of
5 those documents, but those are testimonies that
6 were to be submitted of our members on 80 percent
7 post-consumer recycled paper, by the way. So you
8 guys know what to do with that when you are
9 finished reading them.

10 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Are you giving
11 your own testimony.

12 JEANETTE TUMOR: I will be giving
13 testimony on behalf of Damaris Reyes [phonetic] at
14 Good Old Lower East Side, and so I will just
15 begin. Good Old Lower East Side is a 35 year old
16 membership organization dedicated to tenants'
17 rights, economic equality and community
18 revitalization. As a pioneer and a leading voice
19 in public housing issues both locally and
20 nationally, we reach more than 10,000 people on
21 the Lower East Side every year with our work. In
22 the context of NYCHA's plan to seek extreme
23 measures like developing luxury towers on the
24 grounds of eight of its developments in an effort
25 to generate funding, we must pay special attention

2 to all funding expenditures. NYCHA pays for
3 separate sanitation services and if at this moment
4 NYCHA wants to examine the effectiveness of this
5 expenditure it should look no further than Baruch
6 Houses. In March, GOLES led representatives of
7 the offices of Community Board 3, Department of
8 Health and Mental Hygiene, New York City Housing
9 Authority, Councilwoman Rosie Mendez, Daniel
10 Squadron, Senator Brad Hoylman, Brian Cavanaugh
11 and Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer
12 alongside public housing residents on a road
13 walking toward Baruch Houses to get a glimpse of
14 what Baruch residents experience on a daily basis
15 returning home. The rat infestation at Baruch and
16 elsewhere in the Lower East Side and around the
17 city can be seen as a direct product of the
18 inadequate sanitation services currently
19 contracted by NYCHA and the need for an integrated
20 pest management system, including adequate
21 disposal sites, daily trash pickup, rodent proof
22 bins and proper baiting techniques. Today I would
23 like to address a few of these points. Many NYCHA
24 properties lack trash receptacles in front of the
25 buildings leaving residents with little recourse

2 but to leave trash bags out unprotected from
3 rodent infiltration and nesting. This represents
4 a prime vector for rodent infestations plaguing
5 our developments in the simple installation of
6 proper trash receptacles at each building would
7 significantly impact the rodent population. I
8 would like to state that for the record when we
9 did the rodent walking tour on March 6th with all
10 of the agencies, we identified several dumping
11 places that were not approved by NYCHA that were
12 in fact NYCHA garbage bags, so NYCHA staff dumped
13 garbage on cracked ground on - - place where it is
14 obviously like a rat infestation like a feeding
15 ground. It was takeout. Okay. Further, some
16 developments house unsafe disposal sites also
17 contributing to infestations. For example at
18 Campos Plaza, two huge dumpsters sit in front of
19 Inez's building 612 East 14th Street. This is a
20 major problem given the area rodent infestation
21 and NYCHA must take proper measures to ensure that
22 its sanitation contractors comply with proper
23 rodent mitigation practices. Also, despite
24 efforts by Commissioner Lopez through NYCHA's go
25 green program, the number of developments with

2 recycling programs and recycling bins remains
3 minimum. Recycling education and dedicated
4 recycling bins should be compulsory for
5 developments as part of a waste and pest
6 management system. Lastly, given the dense
7 population of our developments, daily trash
8 pickups should be mandatory. With solid waste
9 sitting out on premises for 36 hours or more NYCHA
10 creates a prime breeding ground for rodents. This
11 must change along with improvements to baiting
12 practices to include proper baiting techniques and
13 protocol that demands the active rodent burrows
14 are monitored until the infestation has been
15 proven to be mitigated in tandem with the
16 replacement of all onsite receptacles with rodent
17 proof bins. Given the hefty role of rodents in
18 terms of how people living in infested areas come
19 to navigate their neighborhoods with many people
20 developing roundabout routes to avoid walking past
21 trash bags or limiting their amount of their
22 walking at night, the absolute importance of
23 revamping NYCHA's waste management to help control
24 the rodent population cannot be overstated.
25 Residents' health and quality of life depend on

2 these basic reforms, and in a moment where NYCHA
3 would scrutinize its expenditures, the value of
4 its millions spent on sanitation must come into
5 question when its current system can't meet
6 residents' basic needs to walk safely to their
7 homes without fear of rats. I urge the committee
8 to call on NYCHA to implement the changes
9 mentioned today in order to arrive at a waste
10 management system that will effectively mitigate
11 the rodent population in our developments. Thank
12 you.

13 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Thank you.

14 Okay. A little bit of administrative stuff. Just
15 for the record, we have submitted written
16 testimony for the record from Gloria Molina
17 [phonetic], from Bradshaw Liddy [phonetic], from
18 Jonathan Gardenhier [phonetic] and from Carmen
19 Negron [phonetic], so all of that is being
20 submitted into the record. So in your testimony
21 you say recycling was introduced to the
22 developments. Who introduced it at Campos Plaza?

23 INEZ ROBINSON TURPIN: It came a
24 little after 1990. It came in and was wonderful
25 because we did have the blue bags and we were

2 really--I was trying to do it. I don't know if
3 other people thought it was too much of an effort
4 to separate black from blue, but it didn't last
5 very long. I think maybe two months and then
6 people just started going back and throwing their
7 garbage back into I think we had plastic bags, and
8 then we had the garbage bins at that time, and
9 then it just got so horrendous with the garbage
10 because they start throwing the garbage against
11 the fence that they had to bring the dumpsters
12 back.

13 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: So what this a
14 NYCHA effort, tenant association or just tenants?

15 INEZ ROBINSON TURPIN: It was a
16 NYCHA effort.

17 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Who was the
18 manager at that time?

19 INEZ ROBINSON TURPIN: Oh, I can't
20 remember.

21 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Because I
22 remember you had a great manager there for a
23 while, and then they took her away because she was
24 so good, and they gave her a bigger development,
25 and then she got heart problems. Be careful,

2 young man. That is what will happen when you are
3 good.

4 INEZ ROBINSON TURPIN: I can only
5 speak for Campos Plaza because that was put up in
6 1982, and that is when I moved in. I can't speak
7 for 205 or 643 or the others because they were put
8 up before then, so the management that was there
9 when I came, that is when everything started - - .

10 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay, so it
11 wasn't the manager I am thinking of. The
12 dumpsters you are talking about, they are located
13 on--

14 INEZ ROBINSON TURPIN:
15 [interposing] They are in front of 14th Street,
16 which is in front my door when I come out in the
17 morning.

18 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: In front of
19 14th Street?

20 INEZ ROBINSON TURPIN: East 14--
21 they face East 14th Street.

22 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: 'Cause there
23 are some dumpsters that are on the 13th Street side
24 on the - - .

25 INEZ ROBINSON TURPIN: That is

2 where the compactor is on the back.

3 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Yeah because
4 that is where they are planning to build the
5 infield housing, so I don't know where they are
6 planning to put all of that stuff.

7 INEZ ROBINSON TURPIN: - - is
8 behind the compactors.

9 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And get rid of
10 some of the parking.

11 INEZ ROBINSON TURPIN: Yes, they
12 are so I am losing two things--garbage and car
13 space.

14 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Have they told
15 the tenant association where they are planning to
16 relocate those compactors and those dumpsters that
17 are on the 13th Street side? Is there resident
18 consultation where they ask you where you want to
19 put these things? This is not happening?

20 INEZ ROBINSON TURPIN: We do have
21 them. We do have them - - . Sometimes if you are
22 not listening, people aren't paying attention or
23 they are not telling you because right now the
24 whole focus is on this land deal. People are more
25 concerned about losing their homes and wondering

2 what their playgrounds and their parking spaces
3 are going to be more than recycling their garbage.
4 What's more important? Taking your garbage
5 downstairs or losing your car space? That area
6 has really gotten so congested that one young lady
7 stated with the restaurants and all the other
8 lively social activities we have going on on
9 Avenue B, recycling is going to be a major, major
10 problem. Garbage is going to be a major major
11 problem. I kind of digress, but just saying I
12 don't know where they are going to put the
13 compactor. I don't know where they are going to
14 put anything once they start building. If they
15 start building, we must stay positive on that.
16 But I have another thought on that, but I can't
17 mention it either.

18 [background conversation]

19 INEZ ROBINSON TURPIN: I would love
20 to, and I will really be quick on this because it
21 had gotten so bad with the garbage that I have a
22 good rapport with our maintenance guy and I have
23 put notes on just my floor when I became vice
24 president about picking up your trash and sweeping
25 up. If you drop food in front of the compactor,

2 at least sweep it up. Pick up what you have, and
3 he asked me to make signs for all 17 floors in my
4 building, and I did for him, and I asked him did
5 it make any difference, and he said it helped a
6 little bit because years ago housing used to go
7 through your trash if it was nasty or you left it
8 outside your door, if they found your address in
9 it, they would take it to the management office,
10 and you would get a letter in the mail. Whose
11 trash is this or why is your trash left out? Some
12 people used to leave it outside their door and
13 wait for maintenance to take it done. They would
14 leave Washing machines and stuff in the hallway,
15 and wait for the maintenance to take it down, so
16 that kind of worked a little bit. Now that we
17 have the cameras, everybody wants to be clean
18 because they think everybody is seeing them throw
19 trash on the floor. So - - I just think you
20 should take care of where you live. Stop
21 complaining about the people across the street. -

22 -

23 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Ms. Turpin and
24 Ms. Pedroza, can you tell me if in your
25 developments you have ever either through resident

2 meetings or notifications or anything been told
3 about e waste and recycling or trainings or bulk
4 days because I never knew about bulk days until I
5 moved - - .

6 MULTIPLE VOICES: No.

7 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Everybody is
8 shaking their head no just for the record.

9 THERESA PEDROZA: They used to have
10 these big recycling bins on 6th Street. They have
11 a white one for paper and a green one for other
12 bottles and stuff like that, but they took them
13 things away. They were there for like a year or
14 so.

15 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: 6th Street and
16 what was that on?

17 THERESA PEDROZA: It was between D
18 and - - . Now you don't see them. They took them
19 out. They really didn't recycle like everybody is
20 saying. They really didn't.

21 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Both of your
22 developments were flooded. Can you tell me if the
23 rat problem got worse post Sandy? Do you see more
24 rats?

25 INEZ ROBINSON TURPIN: I didn't see

2 any. I was very fortunate not to see any. The
3 people on the Avenue C side did because they are
4 closer to the water, but I was blessed not to see
5 any rats. I was also blessed not to get too, too
6 flooded out. 612 got saved very much so compared
7 to a lot of the other buildings that surround us.

8 THERESA PEDROZA: We have always
9 had rats for a long time for the last 15-20 years
10 'cause there has been so much construction going
11 around in the neighborhood, so they just come
12 straight across the street, and when Sandy came
13 they actually drowned a lot of them.

14 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: They went to
15 Fifth Avenue because my constituents from Fifth
16 Avenue are complaining to me.

17 THERESA PEDROZA: But now they have
18 come back very strong. There is more now.

19 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: What I noticed
20 post Sandy I took a walk, there was a lot of
21 holes, a lot of burrow, and so I went and
22 complained to NYCHA. I told them exactly where
23 some of them were. They were mostly along the FDR
24 Drive in Riis and Wald. Have you guys taken a
25 walk there? I know they redug and they filled in

2 some of the holes and they put some--have you seen
3 them?

4 THERESA PEDROZA: They have a lot
5 of holes. All you have to do is walk through the
6 complex and I could take you all over--in front of
7 10, behind 20 and 30, right where the compactor is
8 - - if you walk through that whole little area--

9 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: So you are
10 talking about the center of the development?

11 THERESA PEDROZA: I am talking
12 about big gigantic burrows.

13 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: I did a walk
14 through afterward, and they got rid of some of the
15 burrows right on the FDR, right along some of the
16 buildings.

17 THERESA PEDROZA: They have got big
18 ones against the wall. They are still there.

19 JEANETTE TUMOR: A large issue that
20 we found when we had NYCHA and Department of
21 Health and all of the electeds and residents were
22 that we found there was this really nonchalant
23 attitude from NYCHA about jurisdiction over the
24 land, so NYCHA would be like, you know, we would
25 see an issue that would obviously be a violation

2 that would be noticed, and New York City Housing
3 Authority would say, oh, that is Department of
4 Transportation's issue, no, that's a Parks issue,
5 and so the idea of interagency accountability
6 keeps coming up as a leading theme because there
7 are lots of loopholes and there are a lot of
8 scapegoating that can happen when you say, oh,
9 well, this is Parks Department's issue when every
10 single development in the Lower East Side has a
11 park on it, so there is going to be an
12 infestation, and there needs to be some cohesion
13 when there is work being done.

14 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: So is there an
15 interagency committee or taskforce to deal with
16 this rodent problem?

17 INEZ ROBINSON TURPIN: I never saw
18 one in place.

19 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: So perhaps--

20 JEANETTE TUMOR: [interposing] No.
21 We have worked really closely with our community
22 board, and we are very fortunate to have elected
23 officials who are committed to grassroots
24 organizing. Unfortunately, the bureaucracy that
25 is often times found with agencies whether it be

2 capacity or just general disinterest has made it
3 really challenging to be able to bridge that gap
4 between the needs of the community and the
5 assessments that they make on a daily basis, and
6 then recognizing what agencies can actually do to
7 change those challenges.

8 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Are there any
9 plans as far as you know to increase the number of
10 trash receptacles as opposed to these two large
11 dumpsters?

12 JEANETTE TUMOR: No, I think that
13 when we are dealing with populations in public
14 housing often times there is a disconnect between
15 what people think that they can get and what they
16 actually ask for, and so I grew up in that
17 building, so I thought it was commonplace to have
18 rats or to have roaches or to have a dumpster in
19 front of your building or to not have access to a
20 lot of things, so I think that that is a common
21 theme when I talk to folks on the street, when I
22 am asking them about recycling or asking them
23 about rats. Well, we always had rats or you ask
24 people about the trash, and oh, they don't care.
25 It doesn't matter anyway.

2 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: Has GOLES
3 research determined whether or not there is any
4 grants out there or any--

5 JEANETTE TUMOR: [interposing] We
6 put together two reports with Pratt Institute in
7 2011. - -

8 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: You actually
9 live in Brooklyn. Don't you? On Hancock Street,
10 right?

11 JEANETTE TUMOR: My address is on
12 that paper. I was like yeah..

13 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: No, I am not
14 stalking you.

15 JEANETTE TUMOR: So what the report
16 helped us to identify were that there are several
17 working models of environmentally friendly
18 integrated pest management programs that use both
19 the green and the gray approach. We have
20 infestations at this level. We have to look at
21 tactilely, but we also have to look at it more
22 thinking about the long term for the people who
23 are going to continue to live here. So there
24 federal grants and there are citywide grants, but
25 there are other opportunities to kind of piecemeal

2 stuff together and there has been success in
3 vastly different urban landscapes, but there has
4 been success because there has been a partnership
5 between agency and grassroots organizations.

6 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: So to the young
7 man from NYCHA before you go home and have a drink
8 or see a therapist, I think we need an interagency
9 approach to the Lower East Side and to Baruch and
10 all of these because there seems to be a major,
11 major rodent infestation problem in this
12 neighborhood, and also I would recommend perhaps
13 looking at trash receptacles that are rodent proof
14 as opposed to these two huge dumpsters. I know
15 because you are represented by Council Member
16 Rosie Mendez there is no need for me to make these
17 recommendations and I am sure she will lead the
18 way to address all of your issues, and if not,
19 young man, I am sure that she will be visiting you
20 personally to further make your life difficult.

21 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: I want to
22 thank this panel for their testimony, and is there
23 any last thing we want to say, Tish?

24 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: No, no.

25 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: We said it

1 PUBLIC HOUSING, SANITATION, SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT 180

2 all?

3 CHAIRPERSON JAMES: We said it all.

4 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay. Thank
5 you.

6 [applause]

7 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Bang the
8 gavel, girl. Adjourn us. I want to thank
9 everyone for being here today.

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Kimberley Campbell 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

Kimberley Campbell

Date 6/8/13