

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS

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November 15, 2016
Start: 1:17 p.m.
Recess: 1:25 p.m.

HELD AT: Committee Room
City Hall

B E F O R E: JAMANIE [phonetic] WILLIAMS
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Rosenthal
Salomonka [phonetic]
Rodenchick [phonetic]
Cornegy
Torres
Levine

1 COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS

2 CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: Good afternoon
3 everyone. My name is Jamanie Williams, Chair of the
4 Council's Committee on Housing and Buildings.

5 The city has recently experienced a
6 series of gas explosions which recently, which
7 resulted in fatalities, injury and displacement. In
8 response we're introducing here a package of ten (10)
9 bills designed to increase the safety of our gas
10 infrastructure. We added these bills in April and
11 have amended them to address concerns that have been
12 voiced over the past few months.

13 Today we're here for the purposes of
14 conducting a vote on this package of legislation. As
15 mentioned, we took a lot of time with these bills.
16 Uh, there was some frustration but I think New
17 Yorker's should be proud at the time we took to make
18 sure that we got the bills right and not just did
19 something that was responsive but something that was
20 helpful to solve the problem. We have a lot to cover
21 so I'm gonna give a brief overview of the bill before
22 us. Here we go.

23 Entry number 738A sponsored by Council
24 Member Levine barring individuals from performing
25 work on gas piping systems after January 1, 2020

2 unless such individuals are licensed master plumbers
3 holding a gas qualification or hold a limited gas
4 qualification to perform under the personnel and
5 immediate supervision of a gas qualification holder
6 or licensed master plumber.

7 Proposal entry number 1079E sponsored by
8 the Speaker would require that the final inspection
9 of gas piping systems be performed by the Department
10 of Buildings.

11 Proposed entry number 1088A sponsored by
12 Council Member Espinal would require that commencing
13 on January 1, 2019 owners of buildings with gas
14 piping systems have such systems periodically
15 inspected.

16 Proposed entry number 1090 sponsored by
17 Council Member Gibson will require owners to instruct
18 their tenants to call on one of their gas service
19 providers prior to informing such owners when a gas
20 leak is suspected.

21 Proposed entry number 1093A sponsored by
22 Council Member Mendez would require gas service
23 operators and building owners to notify the
24 Department of Buildings within 24 hours when gas
25 service is shut off or not restored.

2 Proposed entry number 1094A sponsored by
3 Council Member Richards will require the
4 administration to identify set-up factors related to
5 natural gas violations that risk the safety of
6 residential and commercial buildings. The
7 administration would also be required to report on
8 how such risk factors have been used to target the
9 enforcement of laws and rules.

10 Proposed entry number 1098A sponsored by
11 Council Member Rodriguez will require that gas
12 corporation report to the administration annually on
13 asset conditions, planned infrastructures, projects
14 and investment priorities.

15 Proposed entry number 1100A sponsored by
16 Council Member Vacca would require the Department of
17 Buildings to establish or adopt a standard governing
18 the installation and location of natural gas
19 detectors after an industry standard has been
20 promulgated. It would also require the installation
21 of natural gas detectors that comply with standards
22 in all multiple dwellings.

23 Entry number 1101 sponsored by myself
24 would require the Department of Buildings to
25 establish temporary field gas violations resolution

1 program to allow owners of buildings with fuel gas
2 piping systems or appliances which violate any
3 provision of the New York City construction codes to
4 bring such systems or appliance into compliance with
5 such codes without penalties.

6
7 Entry number 1102 also sponsored by
8 myself will designate violations of existing law
9 regarding gas piping systems immediately hazardous.

10 Out of politeness we'll ask if any
11 Council Members want to make any statements on the
12 bills?

13 [Council Member Inaudible in background]

14 All right. Seeing none, I'd like to
15 thank my staff for the work they did to assemble this
16 hearing including Nick Smith, my deputy chief of
17 staff and administrative director, Jen Wilcox and
18 Megan Chen counsel to the Committee, Jim Mopitino
19 [phonetic] and Hose Conde, policy analyst to the
20 Committee and Sally Gassin [phonetic] the Committee's
21 finance analyst. I'll be voting aye on this package
22 of legislation and I encourage the Committee members
23 to vote also in the affirmative. With that I'd like
24 to call the clerk to call the roll.

1
2 WILLIAM MARTIN: William Martin,
3 Committee Clerk, roll call vote Committee on Housing
4 and Buildings. All items are coupled. Chair
5 Williams.

6 CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: I vote aye.

7 WILLIAM MARTIN: Mendez.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Aye.

9 WILLIAM MARTIN: Cornegy.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER CORNEGIE: Aye.

11 WILLIAM MARTIN: Levine.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVINE: Aye.

13 WILLIAM MARTIN: Rosenthal.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: Permission to
15 explain my vote. I just want to congratulate

16 CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: You haven't said
17 yes yet.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I know.

19 CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: Okay, sure go
20 ahead. [Laughter]

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSENTHAL: I want to
22 congratulate the Chair and echo your sentiments. It
23 does feel like a long time since the horrible events
24 but this package of legislation is so thoughtful and
25 well written I congratulate your Jen Wilcox, your

1 legislative counsel and Chair, I congratulate you and
2 all the sponsors of the bills and I vote aye on all.

3 WILLIAM MARTIN: Torres.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER TORRES: [Pause] Sure.

5 [interpose] You're positive, right.

6 WILLIAM MARTIN: Cordenchic [phonetic].

7 COUNCIL MEMBER CORDENCHIC:

8 WILLIAM MARTIN: Ionel [phonetic].

9 COUNCIL MEMBER IONEL:

10 COUNCIL MEMBER SALOMONCA:

11 Ionel.

12 WILLIAM MARTIN: By vote of 8 in the
13 affirmative, 0 in the negative and no abstentions;
14 all items have been adopted. [Pause]

15 WILLIAM MARTIN: Council Member Espinal.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ESPINAL: Permissions to,
17 permissions to speak on my bill.

18 [background comment No] [Laughter]. You
19 come late and want to speak. [Inaudible]

20 COUNCIL MEMBER ESPINAL: I just want to
21 thank, I just want to thank you man, just want to
22 thank you. Just want to thank the Chair Jamanie
23 Williams for all of his work getting this package of
24 bills passed. I introduced a bill that would require
25

1
2 periodic inspections of gas piping because we've seen
3 in the past there have been many explosions due to
4 deteriorating piping and maybe piping that has been
5 adjusted by unscrupulous plumbers so I think it's
6 important that we continue to put laws in place so
7 they can be periodically inspected and make sure
8 those accidents don't continue to happen in the
9 future so with that I'll vote aye.

10 WILLIAM MARTIN: Council Member
11 Rodriguez.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ: Aye.

13 [background comment] [Laughter]

14 WILLIAM MARTIN: Vote now currently
15 stands at 10 in the affirmative.

16 CHAIRPERSON WILLIAMS: Thank you very
17 much. With that the hearing is now closed.

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C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date November 29, 2016