

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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March 24, 2009  
Start: 11:32am  
Recess: 11:40am

HELD AT: Council Chambers  
City Hall

B E F O R E:  
ERIK MARTIN DILAN  
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:  
Tony Avella  
Maria Baez  
Leroy G. Comrie, Jr.  
Lewis A. Fidler  
James F. Gennaro  
Robert Jackson  
Rosie Mendez  
James S. Oddo  
Joel Rivera  
James Vacca  
Thomas White, Jr.

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2 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: I'd like to  
3 bring this committee hearing to order. I'd like  
4 to ask if anyone feels the need for a private  
5 conversation, if they could do so outside of the  
6 chamber and put all cell phones to vibrate. I am  
7 Erik Martin Dilan, I'm the Chair of the Housing  
8 and Buildings committee.

9 Today the committee has three items  
10 before it for consideration for a vote. The first  
11 two of which deal with the rent stabilization laws  
12 of the City of New York, Intro 923, which is  
13 sponsored by Council Member Gonzalez, a local law  
14 to amend the administration code of the City of  
15 New York in relation to the extension of the rent  
16 stabilization laws as well as resolution 1815  
17 sponsored by Council Member Viverito. It's a  
18 resolution determining that a public emergency  
19 requiring rent control in this city continues and  
20 will continue to exist on and after April 1st of  
21 this calendar year.

22 The third item for consideration by  
23 the committee today is proposed Reso 1569-A and  
24 that will be a resolution granting additional real  
25 property tax exemptions to certain affordable

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housing developments.

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Our first hearing on Intro 923 and Resolution 1815 was held on March 16th of this year. During that hearing the committee received testimony from the acting Commissioner of HPD, Mark Jahr as well as a number of tenant leaders, housing advocates and some representatives of the real estate industry. As we heard at the time the report of the housing and vacancy survey submitted by HPD indicates that a citywide rental vacancy rate of 2.88%, which is below the 5% threshold. Thus a declaration of an emergency may be made by the Council affecting housing accommodations.

As I stated at that hearing and reiterate now, the committee on Housing and Buildings intends to act to protect the supply of our affordable housing. I want to express my reassurances that this committee will pass this measure today as well as the full Council later on.

As most of you in the audience know, the passage of Intro 923 would extend the rent stabilization law from April 1, 2009 to April 1, 2012. The passage of Resolution 1815 would

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2 extend the rent control law from April 1, 2009 to  
3 April 1, 2012.

4 In a different light, proposed Reso  
5 1569-A would grant additional real property tax  
6 exemptions to the Elechester Houses beginning in  
7 the tax quarter immediately following the adoption  
8 of the resolution and terminating 50 years from  
9 the date upon which the original tax exemption  
10 expired.

11 At this time I'd like to first just  
12 acknowledge the members of the committee who are  
13 present, Council Member Rivera of the Bronx,  
14 Council Member Tony Avella of Queens, Council  
15 Member Rosie Mendez of Manhattan, Council Member  
16 Jimmy Vacca of the Bronx, Council Member Leroy  
17 Comrie of Queens, the Republican leader James Oddo  
18 of Staten Island and Council Member Louis Fidler  
19 of Brooklyn and they're just hanging out in the  
20 Mets fan section over there.

21 I will, at this time, call on the  
22 sponsor of proposed Reso 1569-A, Council Member  
23 Gennaro to make a statement.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER GENNARO: Thank you  
25 Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to be here today to

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2 show my deep appreciation to you and the members  
3 of the committee and to the Speaker for moving  
4 this forward. It's critically important that we  
5 rectify an oversight that happened a couple of  
6 years ago and give the good people of Elechester  
7 that which was granted to all of their such  
8 housing throughout the city. I don't want to  
9 belabor the point.

10 I just wanted to thank you for your  
11 leadership, Mr. Chairman, to bring us to this  
12 very, very good day. I'll have more comments  
13 perhaps for the full Council. I just wanted to  
14 thank you for your leadership and urge the members  
15 of the Housing and Buildings committee to support  
16 this very important measure. Thank you Mr.  
17 Chairman.

18 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Thank you  
19 Council Member Gennaro. I'd like to ask that all  
20 items on the agenda by coupled and would ask that  
21 the clerk call the roll. The Chair recommends an  
22 aye vote on all the items.

23 CLERK: William Martin Committee  
24 Clerk, roll call on the Committee on Housing and  
25 Buildings. Council Member Dilan.

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2 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: I vote aye on  
3 all.

4 CLERK: Rivera.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER RIVERA: I vote aye  
6 on all.

7 CLERK: Avella.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER AVELLA: Mr.  
9 Chairman may I have a moment just to make a brief  
10 comment?

11 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Council Member  
12 Avella to explain his vote.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER AVELLA: I'm  
14 actually voting aye on all and I'm happy to be a  
15 sponsor of two of them. I thought I was the  
16 sponsor of the third, Reso 1815 so I don't see my  
17 name on there so please add my name. I don't  
18 understand why it's not on there.

19 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Counsel has  
20 just advised me that may be an old copy but you  
21 are indeed a sponsor on all three items.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER AVELLA: That  
23 explains it. Thank you. Aye on all.

24 CLERK: Comrie.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER COMRIE: Aye on all.

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2 Could I add my name to sponsorship to any one that  
3 it's not on, please. Thank you Mr. Chair.

4 CLERK: Fidler.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER FIDLER: I'm pleased  
6 to note that I am on all three so thank you. I  
7 just want to remind the good citizens of  
8 Elechester that the Mayor for some bizarre reason  
9 is opposing this Reso that is just a matter of  
10 fairness to people of Elechester. I vote aye on  
11 all.

12 CLERK: Mendez.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: I vote aye  
14 on all.

15 CLERK: Vacca.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: I vote aye  
17 on all and would request that my name be added to  
18 Intro 923 and Reso 1815, relative to rent  
19 stabilization and protecting those tenants.

20 CLERK: Oddo.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ODDO: Council  
22 Member Fidler you have a phone call. It's Howard  
23 Rollsten. I vote no on Intro 923 and Reso 1815  
24 and yes on the two other items.

25 CLERK: Beaz.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER BAEZ: Aye.

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4 CLERK: By a vote of nine in the  
5 affirmative, zero in the negative and no  
6 abstentions, Reso 1569-A is adopted. And by a  
7 vote of eight in the affirmative, one in the  
8 negative and zero abstentions, Introduction 923  
9 and Reso 1815 are adopted. Council Members please  
10 sign the committee reports. Thank you.

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11 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: I will hold the  
12 vote open for as long as feasibly possible. I'll  
13 hold the vote open as such time as Finance can  
14 convene a quorum. At such time the committee on  
15 Housing and Buildings will be adjourned.

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16 CLERK: Council Member White.

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17 COUNCIL MEMBER WHITE: Before I  
18 vote, may I make a statement please?

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19 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: Sure.

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20 COUNCIL MEMBER WHITE: I think on  
21 item number 1569-A, a resolution granting  
22 additional real property tax exemptions for  
23 certain affordable housing developments is a very  
24 important legislative piece. Therefore, it gives  
25 me great pleasure to vote aye on 1569-A, aye on  
Intro 923 and aye on Resolution number 1815.

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2 CLERK: Current vote now on the  
3 committee on Housing and Buildings is Resolution  
4 1569-A is ten in the affirmative, zero in the  
5 negative and no abstentions. Introduction 923 and  
6 Resolution 1815 now stands at nine in the  
7 affirmative, one in the negative and no  
8 abstentions. Thank you and the roll is still  
9 open. Committee on Housing and Buildings, Council  
10 Member.

11 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: I would like to  
12 reconvene the committee on Housing and Buildings  
13 for the purposes of allowing Council Member  
14 Jackson to vote on the agenda.

15 CLERK: Council Member Jackson, all  
16 items coupled.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER JACKSON: I vote aye  
18 on all items. Thank you.

19 CLERK: Final vote on the committee  
20 on Housing and Buildings now stands, Resolution  
21 1569-A is 11 in the affirmative, zero in the  
22 negative and no abstentions. Introduction 923 and  
23 Resolution 1815 are now 10 in the affirmative, one  
24 in the negative and no abstentions. Thank you.

25 CHAIRPERSON DILAN: The committee

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on Housing and Buildings is adjourned. Thank you.

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Amber Gibson, 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 Amber Gibson

Date April 7, 2009