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Int. No. 178

By Council Members Epstein, Louis, Marte, Hanif, Cabán, Maloney, Feliz, Brooks-Powers, Hankerson, Krishnan, Wilson, Aldebol and Morano

A Local Law to amend the New York city charter, in relation to establishing an office of conversion assistance

Be it enacted by the Council as follows:

Section 1. Chapter 1 of the New York city charter is amended by adding a new section 20-r to read as follows:

§ 20-r. Office of conversion assistance. a. Definitions. As used in this section, the following terms have the following meanings:

Affordable housing unit. The term "affordable housing unit" means a housing unit that is required to be affordable to an extremely low income household, a very low income household, a low income household, a moderate income household, or a middle income household, as such terms are defined in section 25-117 of the administrative code, pursuant to a regulatory agreement, restrictive declaration, or other similar instrument with a federal, state, or local governmental entity or instrumentality.

Applicant. The term "applicant" means a person engaging in a conversion project in the city.

Conversion. The term "conversion" has the same meaning as set forth in section 15-01 of the zoning resolution of the city of New York.

Director. The term "director" means the director of the office of conversion assistance.

Person. The term "person" has the same meaning as set forth in section 1-112 of the administrative code.

b. Establishment of office. The mayor shall establish an office of conversion assistance. Such office may

be established within the executive office of the mayor, as a separate office or within any other office of the mayor, or within any agency the head of which is appointed by the mayor. Such office shall be headed by a director, who shall be appointed by the mayor or, if the office is established within an agency other than the executive office of the mayor, by the head of such agency.

c. Powers and duties. The director shall have the power and duty to:

1. Coordinate and collaborate with all relevant agencies, including but not limited to the department of housing preservation and development, the city planning commission, the department of buildings, the board of standards and appeals, the landmarks preservation commission, community boards, and borough presidents, on matters related to conversions, including but not limited to the review of project proposals, issuance of permits, administration of tax programs, review of city policies and procedures, and dissemination of information regarding conversions to the public;

2. Facilitate interagency communication regarding conversions;

3. Liaise with federal and state governmental authorities engaged in conversion activity, including but not limited to the issuance of permits and the administration of relevant grant, loan, and tax programs;

4. Serve as the primary point of contact for purposes of providing technical assistance concerning conversions to applicants;

5. Develop and implement a publicly accessible online portal, available in English and the designated citywide languages as such term is defined in section 23-1101, to carry out the duty set forth in paragraph 4 of this subdivision, while maintaining the privacy of applicants that use the portal;

6. Develop educational and advisory materials for the general public on conversions;

7. Identify economic and regulatory conditions hindering conversions in the city;

8. Collect the data set forth in paragraphs 2 through 7 of subdivision d of this section; and

9. Perform other relevant duties as the mayor may assign.

d. Report. Within 12 months after the effective date of the local law that added this section, and annually

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thereafter, the director shall prepare and submit to the mayor, speaker of the council, and public advocate, and post conspicuously on the city's website, a report that includes but need not be limited to the following information:

1. A description of the activities undertaken by the office of conversion assistance pursuant to subdivision c of this section in the past 12 months;

2. The number of applicants that contacted the office of conversion assistance that initiated a conversion project in the city in the past 12 months, disaggregated by borough;

3. The number and current status of conversion projects pending in the city in the past 12 months, including but not limited to whether the project is in the design, procurement, or construction phase, disaggregated by borough;

4. The number of conversion projects completed in the city in the past 12 months, disaggregated by borough;

5. The number of affordable housing units created by conversion projects completed in the city in the past 12 months, disaggregated by borough;

6. The number of conversion projects completed in the city in the past 5 years, disaggregated by borough;

7. The number of affordable housing units created by conversion projects completed in the city in the past 5 years, disaggregated by borough; and

8. Recommendations to address conditions hindering conversion projects as identified pursuant to paragraph 7 of subdivision c of this section.

§ 2. This local law takes effect immediately.

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