



# CITY OF NEW YORK MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 10

215 West 125th Street, 4th Floor New York, NY 10027

T: 212-749-3105 F: 212-662-4215

Website: <https://cbmanhattan.cityofnewyork.us/cb10/>

## Housing Committee Meeting Minutes

### IN-PERSON MEETING

Monday, January 29, 2024 - 6:30 PM

Chair, Hon. Charles Powell

Vice-Chair, Hon. Donna Gill

### 1. Welcome & Introductions

- a. Welcome by the Chair – Housing Chair, Charles Powell welcomed all to the January 2024 Committee meeting; called the meeting to Order at 6:35 pm; and introduced himself to all who were in attendance in person and via Zoom.
- b. Members of the Housing Committee in attendance introduced themselves and their attendance is as follows: Hon. Donna Gill (via Zoom); Hon. Dominic Boyce; Hon. Brianna McClure; Hon. Lydell Tyson; Hon. Shawn Brannon; Hon. Irene Henry; Hon. Miranda Padilla; Hon. Staci Ramos did not attend the meeting, either in person or via Zoom due to illness and is Excused.
- c. The Chair also welcomed CB 10 Board members Hon. Bailey Jeremie (In Person) and Hon. Barbara Nelson (via Zoom).

### 2. Welcome & Presentations by Elected Officials (2 Minutes Limit)

- a. Stacy Marius from the office of Assemblyman Al Taylor attended the meeting via Zoom and contributed to all discussion items on the meeting Agenda.

### 3. Presentation and Discussion Item

#### Lenox Court HDFC – Letter of Support

- a. No members of the Lenox Court HDFC were in attendance at the meeting but has asked the Committee to recommend to the full Board a Letter supporting its efforts to have the NYC Department of Buildings remove a Penalty assessed against it in excess of \$120,000. It was noted by the Chair that the proposed Letter of Support tendered to the Committee by the HDFC was only received the day of the meeting and therefore was not able to be shared with the Committee in advance of the meeting (which is our stated protocol for such requests);
- b. In the October 2023 Housing Committee meeting, the Lenox Court HDFC indicated that this penalty related to some extensive façade work the Co-op had

performed on its building in accordance with NYC Local Law 11 which was successfully completed so as to fulfill the requirements of the Law. At said meeting, and again in its submission to the Committee for our January 2024 meeting, the Co-op shared with the Committee two (2) letters of support received from NYC Public Advocate Jumaane Williams and NYC Councilperson Kristin Richardson-Jordan; each requesting that the City of New York waive the aforementioned penalty against the HDfC;

- c. While Committee and Board members were able to ask detailed questions regarding the penalty in question and the work that had been done in our October 2023 meeting, the Committee was not able to ask any follow up questions to the HDfC as no representative was present.
- d. As a result, it was determined by the Committee that, due to unreadiness, no action would be taken on the request of the Lenox Court HDfC for a letter supporting its efforts to dispense with the penalty by the NYC Department of Buildings but that the matter would be referred to the CB 10 Executive Committee for possible action by it.

#### **4. Questions and Answers**

- a. There were no Questions raised by Committee members; Board members or the Community on the subject of the aforementioned request for a Letter of Support.

#### **5. Old Business**

- a. Savoy Park Update:
  - It should be noted that a considerable number of residents of Savoy Park were in attendance at the Committee meeting (it was standing room only in the Board conference room as well as an overflow outside of the meeting room). Board member Bailey informed the Committee that she too is a resident of Savoy Park and contributed to the discussion;
  - The Board and Committee have previously heard from the residents of Savoy Park and Raynard Gadson, SPTU Tenant Representative, has provided us with details on the numerous health and safety complaints of the residents of this development. Mr. Gadson was asked to present on behalf of all the residents attending and he did so and also shared a visual presentation highlighting and detailing the conditions understandably being complained of;
  - Following the detailed presentation of Mr. Gadson and presentations and comments by other residents, the Committee asked detailed questions (which were answered) and questions and comments were also welcomed by Board members on Zoom and from the community at large;

- One key point raised was the total lack of responsiveness of the Management Company for Savoy Park to the numerous complaints and concerns of the residents. Vice-Chair Donna Gill provided the name of the company which is Fairstead;
- In addition to continue to support the residents of Savoy Park with its individual and collective complaints, the Committee agreed that this matter would remain on our meeting agendas moving forward and that an invitation would be extended to Fairstead to attend and report at our next scheduled meeting in February 2024.

b. West Harlem Group Assistance Update

- West Harlem Group Assistance Organization, Donald Notice, provided the Committee with an update on two upcoming affordable home buying opportunities in our District that would soon be posted on NYC's Housing Connect Portal. It was noted that these two projects would still qualify for the Fifty (50%) percent "Community Preference" requirement of New York City (even though said "Community Preference" has since been reduced to Twenty (20%) percent and ultimately Fifteen (15%) percent by the City of New York as part of the settlement of a long, pending lawsuit. Mr. Notice pointed out that Housing Connect generally had fewer applicants for homebuying options as opposed to the large numbers of applicants for affordable rental options;
- Mr. Notice also provided the Committee with information regarding a significant Workforce Development effort being carried out by West Harlem Group Assistance that provides training and job readiness for persons in the building trades. He pointed out that while this program was not one similar to a union sponsored apprenticeship, the positions being trained for were significant with the building trade environment.

c. Esplanade Gardens Update

- In light of recent reports from Board members who are residents of Esplanade Gardens as well as numerous constituent complaints, the Committee, with the able assistance of our District Office team, invited members of Prestige Management to the meeting to hear and respond to shareholder complaints and concerns;
- While the Savoy Park residents were almost all in person, there were a significant number of residents of Esplanade Gardens on the call to address their concerns (and express them they did);
- The Committee heard complaints regarding one entire building (known as Building # 6 – or 700 Lenox Avenue) which has been without cooking gas

since late November 2023. The Committee also heard details of the lack of heat and hot water (relating to major boiler failures and operational issues) in several of its buildings as well as concern throughout the development of other health and safety issues and concerns;

- The Committee strongly recommends all Board members wishing to get full details of the complaints of the shareholders (only briefly summarized here) do so by listening to the entire recording of the meeting;
- Representatives from Prestige Management joined shareholders and community residents in the meeting via Zoom and essentially described a myriad of fiscal and monetary reasons why these conditions exist. Again, as stated above, it is recommended that Board members listen to the recording to gain a full explanation of these financial issues but essentially in the opinion of the Chair and others, there does not seem to be financial relief in clear sight and these issues will persist without some form of fiscal intervention and assistance from outside sources;
- As with the case of Savoy Park, the Committee determined that the issue of the deteriorating conditions of Esplanade Gardens would remain on our meeting agendas moving forward;
- In response to the Savoy Park and Esplanade Gardens situations (and with an understanding of just what is happening with major developments within the District, Committee member Brianna McClure recommended to that a major public informational/resource activity needed to take place in the very near future and the Chair of Housing and other Committee members unanimously agreed and asked Ms. McClure to “get the ball rolling” by reporting back in our February, 2024 meeting with a “Concept Plan” for this future event and she agreed to do so.

## **6. New Business**

In light of all discussed above, and the work that lies ahead, there was no specific New Business discussed.

## **7. Announcements**

The Esplanade Gardens meeting planned by Assemblyman Al Taylor for January 31, 2024, was announced and it was agreed that members of the Committee and Board should seek to attend.

## **8. Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:30 pm.