



*Chairman Mohammed Mujumder - District Manager: William Rivera*

# Land & Zoning, Economic Development & Planning Committee Meeting Summary

## April 8, 2024

**Board Members:** Mitchell Halpern, Twywana Bush, Alizia McMyers, Andrea McLeod, Kevin Kiernan, Kristine Garcia, Shereese Trumpet

### 1. Introduction

**A. Committee Description:** The Land & Zoning, Economic Development & Planning Committee represents the community's interests with regard to the use of land, zoning, landmark, building, etc. and acts as a liaison between community members and Department of City Planning, Department of Buildings & the New York City Economic Development Corporation.

### 2. Speakers

#### A. Sylvia Clark, New Covenant Dominion Federal Credit Union

New Covenant Dominion Federal Credit Union or NCD CU is not like a traditional bank. NCD CU's goal is to help the local economy, not to make a profit. They are a minority-owned and low-income designated serving people, churches, and businesses in the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Westchester.

They exist to:

- Fill in the gap of underbanked households and organizations in our community
- Help organizations meet operational and financial demands
- Set organizations on a path of financial success
- Empower our community through financial education and counseling

What They Offer:

Small Business Accounts: Savings Accounts, Checking Account Mobile App Online Banking & E-Statements 24-Hour ATM

Financial Education: Webinars, Counseling, Calculators, Videos, And more!

Small Business Loans: Term loans up to \$75,000, Auto loans

Contact: Location: 1185 Boston Road, Bronx, NY, 10456

Hours: Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday/Friday 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Thursday 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

[newcovenantcu.org](http://newcovenantcu.org); (718) 328-3930

NCD CU is part of the credit union cooperative that has hundreds of ATMS free of charge throughout the nation

NCD CU is looking to partner with organizations that can provide access to their members

Free webinars online can be used by anyone via their website, however, financial counselling is strictly for members

#### B. Kristen-DCP, Discussion on CHO: Shared Housing

The idea of shared housing goes by different terms: co-living, SROs, this already happens currently illegally when a landlord rents a large home to various individuals by room. This works in other states and the committee is aware that the city is looking at the feasibility of operating this housing program in New York. Currently, due to zoning this is set up is illegal.

Kristen from DCP mentioned the city is looking to address zoning to make this type of residency possible via City of Yes.

Committee Questions include: How does the city potentially want to roll this out?

What other laws/regulations would be put in place for this? Would new development be needed, additional fire escapes, precautions, etc?

These types of living arrangements already exist, what are some of the concerns that have arisen?

Some seniors have already started doing this to assist with their rent payments.

Noting that some of these types of housing that exist may be illegal.

This type of housing is typically managed by an outside company that manages the whole process from start to end. PadSplits is one of these companies that already serves other states in managing these types of SROs, locating tenants, collecting rent, etc.

This type of housing offers another potential opportunity for people that may not be able to afford a full rental. Leases would be involved, and residents would be considered legal tenants.

Parking may be a concern with limited city parking availability already.

### 3. New Business

#### A. May Agenda Items

Potential for future presentation on Soundview/Hunts Point Pedestrian Bridge at L&Z Committee. Letter of support was drafted by CB9 full board, however, presentation was held at Parks Committee Meeting. Proposal is for construction of a pedestrian bridge that connects Soundview and Hunts Pt. Currently, the only way to get across is via Bruckner Blvd which is dangerous and unpleasant. The idea is to connect the parks and the 2 communities together. This would give people in Soundview access to the 6 train and the Metro North Station opening in Hunts Point. The recent objective would be to include the pedestrian bridge study to the Hunts Pt Metro North construction/stationary improvement.

Suggestion to garner support for this initiative at the Climate Strong Communities event on the 18<sup>th</sup> at Sonia Sotomayor.

### 4. L&Z Chairman Article Review

#### A. **This article provides insights into the complexities of housing policy and zoning regulations in addressing housing affordability crises, particularly in expensive cities like Los Angeles, San Francisco, and New York. It challenges the assumption that emulating the housing policies of less expensive cities will solve the affordability problem.**

<https://www.strongtowns.org/journal/2024/4/3/to-fix-housing-in-americas-expensive-cities-dont-emulate-the-inexpensive-ones>

Key points from the article include:

- **Zoning's Role in Housing Affordability:** Zoning regulations significantly influence where and what types of housing are built. However, zoning often constrains housing development rather than facilitating it, contributing to housing unaffordability across the United States.
- **Uniformity of Zoning Policies:** Despite regional variations, most U.S. cities have similar zoning regulations that prioritize single-family homes, mandate minimum parking requirements, and restrict building height and density. These regulations hinder housing supply and affordability.
- **Misconceptions About Zoning:** Contrary to popular belief, less expensive cities also have restrictive zoning policies similar to those in expensive cities. Even in high-growth regions like the Southeast, zoning regulations impede housing development and contribute to affordability challenges.
- **Urban Sprawl vs. Infill Development:** While less expensive cities may experience rapid horizontal growth through suburban sprawl, this approach is unsustainable in

densely populated areas like Los Angeles and San Francisco due to geographical constraints and transportation limitations.

- Importance of Zoning Reform: Zoning reform is crucial for addressing housing affordability in expensive cities. Allowing more infill development in established neighborhoods is essential to increasing housing supply and reducing costs.
- Future Challenges for Less Expensive Cities: Less expensive cities that have not yet faced severe housing affordability crises should prioritize zoning reform to avoid future challenges similar to those experienced in expensive cities.
- In summary, the article emphasizes the need for context-specific zoning reforms tailored to the unique challenges of each city to effectively address housing affordability issues. Simply emulating the housing policies of less expensive cities may not provide viable solutions in the long term.

## **5. DM Update**

- A. Update on the development on Seward and Randall Ave (Casa de la Fe), they have started Scope of Work, which mean developers will start to prepare what it will cost to actually build here. This ULURP was voted on some time ago and developers signed Community Benefits Agreement. DM Rivera will be meeting with the team there soon and will invite them to present any updates at L&Z committee. DM Rivera would also like to do this with Camber Group for Stevenson Square.
- B. Update that is has been confirmed that Target is pulling out of their lease, we have no idea what is coming here in its place. There has been no traction on the old Models location as well.

### **OFFICE INFO**

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