

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON AGING

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June 18, 2014  
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HELD AT: Committee Room - City Hall

B E F O R E:

MARGARET CHIN  
PAUL VALLONE  
Chairpersons

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Deborah Rose  
Chaim M. Deutsch  
Mark Treyger  
Maria del Carmen Arroyo

A P P E A R A N C E S

Council Member Brad Lander

Jessica Katz  
Assistant Commissioner Of Special  
Needs  
New York State Housing Preservation  
And Development

Karen Taylor  
Department For The Aging

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Director Of Legislative Affairs And  
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Lindsay Goldman,  
New York Academy Of Medicine

James Arnold  
Executive Council  
AARP For State Of New York

Christine Hunter,  
Principal  
Magnusson Architecture And Planning In  
New York City  
And A  
Member Of The Design For Aging  
Committee Of The New York, AIA NY  
Chapter.

Leo Asen  
Chief Innovation Officer  
Self Help Community Services, Inc.

Bobbie Sackman  
Director Of Public Policy  
Council Of Senior Centers And Services

A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

John Napolitano  
Director Of Community Development And  
Planning  
HANAC, Inc.

Gary Gutterman  
Chief Housing Officer  
And  
Metropolitan Council On Jewish Poverty

Kay Boonshoft  
Director - Community And Government  
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Brian Sullivan  
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Elizabeth Esser-Stuart  
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Division Of The New York Legal  
Assistance Group "NYLAG"

Camilla Sabine  
New York Legal Assistance Group

John Tynan  
Brooklyn Catholic Charities

Claudette Duff  
Integrity Senior Housing  
Staten Island

Raymond Kozma:  
Integrity Senior Housing  
Staten Island

A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Danielle Johnson  
Integrity Senior Services  
Staten Island

2 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Good morning, sorry  
3 that we're a little bit late this morning because  
4 we had it stated earlier. I'm Margaret Chin, the  
5 Chair of the Aging Committee. We are joined today  
6 by, uh, I saw Council Member Koslowitz, who's  
7 earlier and Council Member Rose who are also of the  
8 Aging Committee. We also have Council Member Brad  
9 Lander here, who is the sponsor of the legislation  
10 that will be talking about today. Uh, today we are  
11 here to look at the housing needs of Seniors and to  
12 figure out what the City can do to expand and  
13 preserve affordable housing options for Seniors.  
14 By now, most of us know that the population of  
15 those over 65 in New York City is growing faster  
16 than any other age group. This isn't an issue  
17 that's isolated to a few communities. Every  
18 borough is going to see a lot rise in both the  
19 number of seniors and the percentage of their  
20 population made up of seniors. Even now, when  
21 we're just starting to see increases in number of  
22 seniors in the City, the demand for affordable  
23 housing for seniors far outweigh the supplies.  
24 Program that has historically kept New Yorkers in  
25 affordable housing like Mitchell Lama Houses,

2 Section 8 Vouchers and Rent Regulation have stalled  
3 due to federal budget cuts and loopholes that allow  
4 units to be deregulated. The chance of benefiting  
5 from these programs is becoming far too rare.

6 Every year we learn that more units are now renting  
7 at market rates and that the wait list for  
8 subsidized housing are growing longer or that they  
9 just stop accepting applications. Clearly the  
10 writing is on the wall here. These hearings are  
11 important in terms of drawing attention to the  
12 issue, but the City must begin taking concrete  
13 steps to address the housing needs of seniors. The  
14 Mayor's report on affordable housing is a promising  
15 start. While Mayor Bloomberg, in his previous term  
16 has new housing market place initiative, barely  
17 touched upon senior housing issues, Mayor de Blasio  
18 has already outlined some strategies for improving  
19 housing options for seniors. I want all the  
20 seniors and advocates here today to know this is  
21 not a one-time discussion and this committee is  
22 going to continue to follow up and make sure that  
23 we're moving in the right direction. To that end,  
24 we are also hearing a bill that I believe will help  
25 us get there. Intro Number 337, introduced by

2 Council Member Brad Lander would create a Senior  
3 Housing Task Force devoted to developing  
4 recommendations that would increase the  
5 availability and affordability of housing for  
6 seniors. I will turn you now over to Council  
7 Member Lander so that he can speak a bit more about  
8 the bill. And we've also been joined by Council  
9 Member Van Bremen.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Thank you very  
11 much Madame Chair for your leadership on this issue  
12 and for scheduling this hearing on this critical  
13 topic. I think all New Yorkers know that we face a  
14 crisis in senior housing and especially safety and  
15 affordable senior housing. Uh, those who  
16 themselves are seniors or approaching that age, but  
17 also anyone who's got a parent or a senior relative  
18 the crisis and the challenges is dramatic. It's  
19 already extraordinarily difficult today to find a  
20 decent, safe, affordable place to live at a price  
21 you can afford or to stay in the home or the  
22 neighborhood that you've loved if you're a senior  
23 and that's before the skyrocketing rates of seniors  
24 in the ways that we're getting older as a City as  
25 was so well-documented in the Age Friendly New York

2 Report so that by 2030 if we don't take dramatic  
3 steps the crisis we already face will, you know,  
4 will today's, will look like we had it good today,  
5 which is hard to believe. Of course it's most of  
6 the, uh, lower incomes and we see growing senior  
7 homelessness and we see enormous rent burdens and a  
8 number of seniors who experience severe rent  
9 burdens is growing, um, but even for people with  
10 some means the crisis has grown and I've  
11 experienced the sow dramatically and depressingly  
12 in my district in a building where 130 market-rate  
13 units, middle income seniors with their families,  
14 mostly nearby, many of over 100, some with  
15 dementia, Holocaust survivors, the Tuskegee Airmen,  
16 um, are losing their homes because of rising real  
17 estate values, uh, greedy landlords beyond belief  
18 is evicting all of them and closing an assisted  
19 living facility because market rate rentals or  
20 condos simply pay much more even in market rate  
21 senior housing so this crisis spans the income  
22 spectrum and is something that we need to take  
23 dramatic action on. In recent years,  
24 unfortunately, there's been a withdrawal as the  
25 Chair said, the Bloomberg Administration Housing

2 Plan did not put special attention on seniors but  
3 more than that, at the state and federal levels,  
4 the withdrawals have been significant. The old 202  
5 and 811 Programs that used to provide resources  
6 here have been largely eliminated and I have not  
7 found in many cases the state to be a strong  
8 partner either. At Prospect Park Residence, the  
9 State Department of Health, which is supposed to  
10 protect our most vulnerable seniors approved the  
11 sec..., the closure plan in secret and as really were  
12 in court because they simply failed to protect the  
13 rights and health of our seniors so we need to take  
14 dramatic action. Um, now I originally introduced  
15 this bill two years ago to create, maybe even three  
16 years ago, to create a senior housing task force  
17 and I am very pleased, as the Chair mentioned that  
18 we seen some good strong action in the early days  
19 of the de Blasio Administration, the Housing New  
20 York Plan, the first time in history, one of the  
21 ways in which it is really ground breaking has a  
22 commitment to senior housing, a very specific  
23 commitment that I think we'll, we'll hear more  
24 about a desire not only that units are created and  
25 preserve the available for seniors but that we look

2 at our tax incentive programs and other ways in  
3 which we can make sure we are doing right. Um, but  
4 there's more that we need to do, partly this is not  
5 only a City problem, we need the state and federal  
6 government as partners. Obviously if you're going  
7 to have assisted living or nursing homes, or  
8 service enhanced enriched housing, you have to use  
9 Medicare or Medicaid resources, um, we need to keep  
10 pushing the federal government and even within the  
11 City we have to make sure that all of our agencies,  
12 the Department of Housing and Preservation  
13 Development, DPTA, NYCHA, Department of Finance,  
14 DOAHMH, it's got to be an "all hands on deck"  
15 effort and that was the idea behind the idea of  
16 creating a Senior Housing Task Force was to get all  
17 of those resources together, um, so that we can  
18 build on the great work that's all ready being  
19 done, but make real commitments to go even further,  
20 so I appreciate the opportunity of the Chair to  
21 have this hearing and to have the support of our  
22 colleagues. I look very forward to hearing the  
23 administration's testimony. I there is also  
24 advocates that are going to testify. Um, the goal  
25 of dramatically improving our City's commitment to

2 safe, decent and affordable senior housing, I think  
3 is shared by everyone and the question we face  
4 today is "what's the best way to look forward in a  
5 very concrete way?". Thank you very much.

6 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Thank Council Member  
7 Lander. We have also been joined by Council Member  
8 Deutsch, Council Member Levin, uh, Council Member  
9 Vallone, who's Chair of our Senior Center  
10 Subcommittee. Today a couple of, Council Member  
11 Rose and myself, we are on the budget negotiation  
12 team, so we would have to leave a little bit early,  
13 uh, for that meeting, which is very important. We  
14 want to make sure, you know, money for senior is  
15 there, so I will ask Council Member Vallone to  
16 finish up the hearing so I apologize to some of the  
17 advocates if I am not here, but, um,...

18 [OFF MIC]

19 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: ...oh and then we have  
20 three other hearings going on next door, but we  
21 don't have council members going in and out, but,  
22 um, Council Member Vallone will chair the remainder  
23 of the meeting when we have to leave a little bit  
24 early, but, um, first of all, I also want to thank  
25 everyone for being here today and of course,

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2 especially, our committee staff, Kelly Taylor, our  
3 Counsel and Tahim Supera[Sp?], our financial  
4 analyst. So we're going to start off this morning  
5 by getting the administration sworn in so that they  
6 can begin their testimonies. So Kelly?

7 KELLY TAYLOR: Can you please raise  
8 your right hand? Do you affirm to tell the truth,  
9 the whole truth and nothing but the truth in your  
10 testimony before the committee today and to respond  
11 honestly to Council Member questions?

12 [OFF MIC] I do.

13 KELLY TAYLOR: Great.

14 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Thank you, you can  
15 begin.

16 JESSICA KATZ: I thank you. Madame  
17 Chairwoman and members of the committee, my name is  
18 Jessica Katz, I'm the Assistant Commissioner of  
19 Special Needs Housing of the New York City Housing  
20 Preservation and Development. I'm joined by Jordan  
21 Press, HPD's Director of Legislative Affairs and  
22 Federal Policy. I appreciate the opportunity to  
23 testify today on the steps our agency has taken to  
24 address the housing needs of seniors and the steps  
25 we will take to expand upon those efforts under the

2 Mayor's recently released affordable housing plan  
3 *Housing New York*. I'm also pleased to offer our  
4 thoughts on Intro 337, which would create a Senior  
5 Housing Task Force. It is estimated that the  
6 number of New Yorkers who are aged 65 and older  
7 will increase by 40% in the next 25 years. Making  
8 sure that seniors have an affordable place to live  
9 is an essential part of HPD's mission and that of  
10 this administration. In 2009, with the support and  
11 full collaboration of the City Council, the New  
12 York Academy of Medicine published a report titled  
13 *"Age Friendly NYC - Enhancing Our City's Livability  
14 For Older New Yorkers"*. The City Council and the  
15 Academy of Medicine issued a progress report in  
16 2013. Some of the key initiatives called for in  
17 this report include targeting funds and providing  
18 loans to build low-income senior housing, examining  
19 parking requirements within a zoning resolution,  
20 providing loan assistance for home repairs,  
21 improving access for the senior citizen rent  
22 increase exemption or "SCRIE", expanding eviction  
23 prevention legal services for seniors, providing  
24 additional support services for naturally occurring  
25 retirement communities, targeting Section 8 Seniors

2 and promoting new models for aging in place. Many  
3 of these items are exclusively a part of the  
4 Mayor's Housing New York Plan, or are already part  
5 of the work that HPD and our partners are doing to  
6 increase the supply of senior housing. For low  
7 income seniors whose income tends to stay stagnant  
8 while rents increase, subsidies are needed to  
9 support low rents. Like all affordable housing,  
10 the creation of units for seniors first requires  
11 capital funding to build the buildings. As the  
12 council may already know, the Mayor has doubled  
13 HPD's capital budget to support the goals of the  
14 Housing New York Plan. We will combine that City  
15 funding with other funding streams, such as low  
16 income tax credits or federal home dollars to  
17 create new senior housing. Unfortunately, the  
18 federal government has not provided any new money  
19 for the HUD 202 Program, its signature senior  
20 housing program but the President has requested new  
21 funding for the 2015 budget and should Congress  
22 fund the program HPD will aggressively pursue those  
23 dollars on behalf of New York City. Operating  
24 subsidies are always a challenge to fund,  
25 especially since the federal government has reduced

2 support for the Section 8 Program. Nevertheless,  
3 HPD and our partners at the Housing Authority are  
4 committed to leveraging project-based Section 8  
5 vouchers to make housing affordable to low income  
6 seniors whose incomes remain stagnant or decline  
7 over time. Our partners at the Housing Development  
8 Corporation are also working on initiatives to  
9 better cross-subsidize affordable housing and allow  
10 us to reach additional low-income families. To  
11 encourage development, the City will propose  
12 amendments to the zoning resolution that reduce  
13 requirements for parking which often goes unused by  
14 senior housing residents to update outdated  
15 regulations, to recognize a wide-range of senior  
16 housing facilities that now exist, relax minimum  
17 unit sizes which prevent the creation of  
18 appropriately sized senior housing units, and  
19 address other zoning constraints in order to make  
20 senior housing development easier and more cost  
21 effective. We will also actively seek out ways to  
22 develop new senior housing in collaboration with  
23 NYCHA, leveraging their resources and prioritizing  
24 their residents. As members may already be aware,  
25 both the state and the council recently enacted

2 legislation to increase income eligibility for the  
3 "SCRIE" program from \$29,000 to \$50,000. HPD  
4 applauds this initiative and recognizes the  
5 importance of this program, which prevents rent  
6 increases for seniors. We are committed to  
7 performing more robust outreach eligible seniors  
8 and increase the reach and breath of the "SCRIE"  
9 program. New York City is one of the last major  
10 metropolitan areas in the United States without a  
11 dedicated project targeted to LGBT seniors. The  
12 Housing New York Plan encourages developers of  
13 senior housing to partner with non-profit LGBT  
14 service providers to provide inclusive affordable  
15 housing opportunities for Lesbian/Gay/Bisexual and  
16 Transgender Seniors. The plan also recognizes the  
17 success of the City' programs for NORCs, or  
18 Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities, which  
19 in partnership with housing providers and health  
20 and social service agencies, bring needed services  
21 into housing communities with significant  
22 concentration of seniors so that older residents  
23 can safely age in place in their own communities.  
24 Approximately one-third of DFTA Funded NORC  
25 programs operate a NYCHA developments, to many of

2 New York's most vulnerable seniors. Regarding the  
3 legislation the committee is considering, as I have  
4 described in my testimony, we believe that the  
5 imperative for senior housing is well researched  
6 and clear. The Age Friendly NYC Plan and the  
7 Housing New York Plan were both crafted with the  
8 input and expertise of numerous stake holders  
9 including the city council and both are excellent  
10 catalogs of promising policy ideas that will help  
11 seniors live affordably in high quality housing in  
12 our City. The administration already clearly  
13 supports and lays out ideas for addressing housing  
14 needs of New York City's senior population. As an  
15 alternative to the proposal of this legislation  
16 which we believe would divert human resources from  
17 its critical task that was already laid before us  
18 by Housing New York, we would instead commit to  
19 holding two or three senior round tables this year.  
20 We convene these meetings with the consultation  
21 input and participation of the council via this  
22 committee. We would work on the details of these  
23 meetings with the council. The topics could  
24 include financing methods for senior housing, or  
25 more broadly, incorporating senior needs into

2 inter-agency senior neighborhood planning efforts.  
3 We'd hope for participation from council members as  
4 well as advocates. Additionally, as seniors figure  
5 prominently in the Mayor's Housing Plan, you have  
6 our assurance that we will be incorporating this  
7 issue into the broader discussions that we have on  
8 housing programs and policies that are specific to  
9 seniors. While meeting the housing needs of  
10 seniors does have certain unique aspects, we want  
11 seniors to be eligible for and encouraged to live  
12 in all types of housing integrated through all,  
13 throughout all NYC neighborhoods and for the most  
14 part, we want them to be able to age in place in  
15 the communities where they have spent their lives.  
16 As the Housing New York Plan so eloquently states,  
17 "A Measure Of Any Great City Is How Effectively It  
18 Cares For Its Most Vulnerable Residents." We  
19 couldn't agree more. I appreciate the council's  
20 support and attention to this issue. Thank you.  
21 I'm happy to answer any questions.

22 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Uh, thank you.  
23 Would the representative of DFTA, Karen?  
24 [laughing] Yeah, she'll be joining the meeting and  
25

2 will do it all together. Now you got to do it.

3 [laugh]

4 KELLY TAYLOR: Can you please raise  
5 your right hand? Do you affirm to tell the truth,  
6 the whole truth and nothing but the truth in your  
7 testimony before the committee today and to respond  
8 honestly to Council Member questions?

9 [OFF MIC]

10 KELLY TAYLOR: Great.

11 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: We have to do that  
12 in every committee, so we have to follow the rules.  
13 Okay. Thank you for your testimony, um, I'm going  
14 to start off with some general question about the  
15 Mayor's Housing Plan relating to senior and they, I  
16 think I can turn on, turn it over to Council Member  
17 Lander, uh, you want to ask specifically about the  
18 administration's position on the legislation. Uh,  
19 so in terms of the Mayor's plan. I mean you talked  
20 about, uh he has put some emphasis on in terms of  
21 housing for seniors so have you sort of developed a  
22 timeline that we can, and, uh, for when we can  
23 start seeing progress on each of the strategies  
24 that's laid out in the plan?

25

2 JESSICA KATZ: Um, so the first meeting  
3 of the implementation task force met this week and  
4 the first thing we did was kind of create a matrix  
5 of all the different initiatives and the time line  
6 and what in particular for the senior time, for the  
7 senior initiatives a lot of them, um, are connected  
8 to broader conversations such as the zoning. The  
9 rezoning issues are going to be all in one package  
10 and the seniors will be part of that, um, so they  
11 each will have, they each will have a separate time  
12 line, yes.

13 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: But some of them  
14 are, I mean some of them could be more immediate  
15 like in your testimony you talk about, um, the  
16 SCRIE. I mean City Council will pass a legislation  
17 to raise the income cap and one of the issues that  
18 was raised during the hearing is that how do we get  
19 that word out so that more seniors can apply and  
20 qualify for SCRIE and then will be able to, I mean  
21 stay in the home and that will help achieve one of  
22 the goals that the Mayor has set out in his plan,  
23 but you got to put some resources to make that  
24 happen. I mean it's great, we got the bill passed  
25 and it is only for two years so the administration

2 has to start thinking one, getting the word out and  
3 second, to make sure that this is long lasting and  
4 not just for two years. Ann?

5 ANN: Yup, so, um, leading up to and,  
6 um, just after the passage of the legislation we  
7 have had several meetings with the Department of  
8 Finance who you now know has oversight over the  
9 SCRIE Program and we are working, um, furiously  
10 with them to develop a marketing plan and to help  
11 them identify data sets so that we could actually  
12 do very targeted marketing instead of just, you  
13 know, sitting out at tables helping to find the  
14 right folks. So it's our hope that working with  
15 DHCR, Social Security, doing all kinds of cross-  
16 data matches that we can actually hone in and find  
17 the people in those stabilized apartments so we can  
18 do very direct marketing campaigns. We're going to  
19 put, um, the little piece you could put in bills  
20 for Con Edison and telephone bills, um, we're  
21 talking about doing bus and subway campaigns so we  
22 are working on a very aggressive marketing campaign  
23 and not just with the City agencies but all of our  
24 community partners. We're all in on this so  
25 everybody wants to help spread the word.

2 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Ah, it's good that  
3 to hear that you want to do the bus and subway  
4 because we've heard from advocates, um, telling us  
5 that it's also important to market to family  
6 members and friends so if they see something in the  
7 subway that "how you could help your parent stay in  
8 your home" they will be able to call and find out  
9 more information, so I think we want to make sure  
10 that we follow up with the administration on that  
11 and anything that we can do in the City Council to  
12 help we will definitely want to do that. Uh, the  
13 issue is that in terms of preservation of  
14 affordable housing, um, we heard, I think it was  
15 just yesterday that the Mayor, Deputy Mayor Alicia  
16 Glen talked about, uh, NYCHA and talked about the  
17 about the opportunity of creating fantastic senior  
18 housing, uh, on NYCHA sites? Uh to help, uh, move  
19 seniors who are living in apartments that might be  
20 too big for them, the whole right sizing campaign  
21 that NYCHA and the City has been doing, so what is,  
22 uh, do you have examples of projects that the  
23 administration has done, or are looking forward to  
24 do, that could implement that, can move seniors out  
25 of existing housing that they have?

2 JESSICA KATZ: So I think the Deputy  
3 Mayor's comment was taken a little bit out of  
4 context and NYCHA wants to really make sure they  
5 are starting with the needs and the desires of the  
6 tenants living in their development, but I will say  
7 that NYCHA has released an RFP for Project Based  
8 Vouchers, which is probably one of our more  
9 scarcest resources here in the City and a great  
10 number of HPD funded projects have applied to that  
11 RFP and will be developing those sites, but mostly  
12 not on NYCHA property but on, on private other HPD  
13 owned property.

14 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: How many units is  
15 that RFP aiming for?

16 JESSICA KATZ: We don't know.

17 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: But you must have a  
18 target or something that you were planning to aim  
19 for?

20 JESSICA KATZ: Well it's a, it's a  
21 NYCHA RFP but it was also based on what the Section  
22 8 budget is going to be, which we actually never,  
23 we don't find out until very late in the game so  
24 they created an open-ended RFP so that if they got  
25 more vouchers they could do more and if they got

2 less they could scale back. There was none, there  
3 was not a number listed on the RFP.

4 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Okay, I think that's  
5 the first time we've heard of that but we should  
6 definitely follow up and get some more, um,  
7 information on that. Uh, one other question I have  
8 and I'll turn it over to my other colleague, is  
9 that in your testimony, um, you talk about  
10 recognizing the success of NORC, that's great, we  
11 agree with you, but we want to see, is HPD also  
12 advocating with the administration to increase  
13 funding, uh, for the NORC Program, because right  
14 now they're, administration, uh, well, DFTA issued  
15 RFP, and there was not enough money to cover, uh,  
16 all the group that have applied that was qualified.  
17 So would advocating the administration to put some  
18 more money in, uh, so that more NORCs can be funded  
19 so HPD, if you think it's a good thing, are you  
20 also hoping this, uh, advocate for more funding?

21 JESSICA KATZ: We'll take that back to  
22 the Commissioner. Thanks.

23 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Well I hope so  
24 because I was very happy to so that in your  
25 testimony. So I, I hope you do that. So I'm just

2 going to pass on to my other colleague and I'll  
3 come back with some other questions. Council  
4 Member Lander?

5 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Thank you very  
6 much Madame Chair and, uh, thank you, uh, Ms. Katz  
7 and it's great to have both HPD and DFTA here, um,  
8 and I really appreciate all the work that has been  
9 done in Housing New York, uh, uh, as I said the  
10 ways in which clearly the administration cares  
11 about and shares this goal we have. Um, I also  
12 really appreciate that everybody's goal is to get  
13 to the "doing", um and that the goal is not just to  
14 spend a lot more time planning and studying.  
15 You're right that Age Friendly New York took a  
16 great and extensive look at these issues, too few  
17 of which got implemented, um and many of the other  
18 things that HPD is looking at, the tax incentive  
19 programs are all related so, our goal is not to  
20 have another long process of you know, planning and  
21 study our goal, but I think there's two things, um,  
22 that the legislation intends that I want to better  
23 understand how you think are, are going to happen  
24 and those are really, um, coordination, both the  
25 cross-city agencies and in relationship to state

2 and federal partners, um, and, uh, a real  
3 attentiveness to implementation and time line  
4 within the senior housing realm. Uh, you know, and  
5 I think those, so maybe let me just those as  
6 general questions and I will have a few more  
7 specifics, but I think there's a lot of good things  
8 in the plan, but I think really understanding how  
9 we're going to coordinate a diverse set of agencies  
10 at multiple levels to keep the focus on, on senior  
11 housing and attend to implementation of those steps  
12 so that we could really know we're making a  
13 difference in a way in which the council's a, a  
14 real partner and it's good to hear, for example,  
15 the implementation task force, uh, met that's  
16 something that the council's really had a role in  
17 yet, so both on coordination and implementation,  
18 um, you know, explain to me why, uh, how you see  
19 those happening. I think the bill provides a  
20 framework, we're open to other frameworks but we  
21 really want to know uh, that those are going to,  
22 that those are in place.

23 JESSICA KATZ: Sure, so there's a few  
24 of the initiatives in the plan that have already  
25 been implemented with the help of the council the

2 "SCRIE" bill has already passed, so that was a  
3 fantastic early win for the council and New York  
4 City Seniors and one of the initiatives in the  
5 plan. Um, I've already spoken about the NYCHA  
6 Project-based RFP so when the winners of that are  
7 announced we will be able to really get started on  
8 some of the senior housing projects that a lot of  
9 the non-profit advocates in this room have been  
10 working on and being able to make sure that these  
11 units are affordable to seniors of very, very low  
12 incomes as opposed to the sort of higher income  
13 bands that a typical low income housing tax credit  
14 is able to address. Um, I think the, on a question  
15 of inter-agency coordination, that's been the most  
16 exciting and quite frankly, the biggest challenge  
17 of the plan and I think in the first few months of  
18 the administration we've spent more time with  
19 Department for the Aging and other, our other  
20 agencies, both within our own Deputy Mayor's  
21 umbrella and kind of a much more porous structure  
22 across those deputy mayors so we've spent much more  
23 time together and kind of understand each other's  
24 programs and...

2 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: So that is  
3 great and I, but again, you know, how's the council  
4 see that, how does the public see that? Um, and I  
5 guess I want to ask some specific questions about  
6 where things get developed that I know that the  
7 senior housing task force would be a place that  
8 they could do that, um, and I don't know that just  
9 the whole housing plan frame work is sufficient so...

10 JESSICA KATZ: Um, so I think the, the  
11 first thing that the housing, the implementation  
12 task force is doing is figuring out how to  
13 subdivide those initiatives so there is, it's  
14 divided in some ways by chapter, so there's one  
15 chapter that's specifically on vulnerable  
16 populations, housing for people with accessibility  
17 needs and the housing needs of seniors are very  
18 intertwined so we're trying to keep those closely  
19 linked together, um, and then there's some broader  
20 origin things as we talked about, zoning,  
21 additional resources for housing in general that  
22 would help everybody in need of low income housing  
23 and we want seniors to be a big part of that as  
24 well.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: So, and I  
3 appreciate your point that's certainly you know,  
4 senior and supportive housing go together that's  
5 your, that's your portfolio and I think when we  
6 think about different kinds of service  
7 enhancements, the relationship to tax breaks,  
8 models, so I could easily see those being put  
9 together but so, there is a plan that will be an  
10 implementation Sub-committee on senior and  
11 supportive housing?

12 JESSICA KATZ: Mmm hmm.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Okay, so maybe  
14 you already have this task force and the question  
15 is to finding a way for both advocates and members  
16 of the public and the council to engage with it.  
17 Can you tell me a little bit more of how you  
18 envision that working? What is that process?

19 JESSICA KATZ: So I think that's  
20 currently in progress. As we said the larger  
21 umbrella task force just met for the first time  
22 this week and that's one of their first things as  
23 figuring out on how to split out the tasks so that  
24 we're not too side road and we'll be able to talk  
25 to each other but that it's also not such a broad

2 topic of conversation that we don't really drill  
3 into the nitty gritty of the specific policy  
4 initiatives.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: And is there  
6 envisioned council role in that?

7 JESSICA KATZ: So that's what we have  
8 proposed here is that, that we incorporate the  
9 council into some of these additional round tables  
10 that we need to gather more information about the  
11 policy ideas that have not been fully developed.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: But the round  
13 tables are part of the implement? I'm just trying  
14 to, like you had, it sounds like you have  
15 implementation committee or planned that doesn't  
16 involve the council so it's nice that we can be in  
17 a couple of round tables, but I guess it does,  
18 sound like things need to be integrated in some  
19 way.

20 JORDAN PRESS: So I, I would just add  
21 that in response to you know, today's hearing and  
22 thinking about how we can address the goals of the  
23 legislation that the round tables that we would,  
24 that we planned to hold, you know, we hope will,  
25 will address in getting the in, getting the input

2 from council members, from members of this  
3 committee, from advocates, um, I guess I would say  
4 just in a less formal way than the legislation  
5 proposed.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: And I guess  
7 what I would say is that while we're flexible on  
8 thinking about the legislation and some of what is  
9 in there, there are things that you have already  
10 moved forward on since it was introduced a couple  
11 of years ago, I think maybe we're looking for a  
12 little more formal way than having a couple of  
13 round tables. It, it, it, we all share the goal.  
14 What we want is to be able to work together  
15 thoughtfully not waste time and kind of planning  
16 and conversation and yet be able to work together  
17 across the advocacy community. The housing, the  
18 housing advocacy community, the senior advocacy  
19 community and the council and partnership with you  
20 and I think there's a lot of things. You know, one  
21 thing that the council's been passionate about is  
22 thinking about getting seniors, uh, better access  
23 to counsel in housing court so that's, you know,  
24 been a, been a big passion of a lot of members  
25 that's, uh, you know, and none of these are the

2 silver bullet. We want those new service models  
3 for you know, and, and that's going to take a day,  
4 a relationship to Medicare, Medicaid and the State  
5 and we've been very creative in the supportive  
6 housing realm of thinking of some new models but we  
7 need those new models we like to think about, ah,  
8 access to the council, um, and even at the  
9 neighborhood level. Something that the housing  
10 plan is very good on, thinking about how we plan  
11 for neighborhoods, what it means to plan an  
12 accessible neighborhood the one that works for  
13 seniors and how DOT and, uh, are working to make  
14 sure. In some ways it's great to expand NORC  
15 funding but it's also going to be important to make  
16 sure every neighborhood, that was the whole idea of  
17 Age Friendly New York. Um, works for, so, in all,  
18 in all of those areas I think it's, and I'll end my  
19 questioning here. It's um, it's clear there's a  
20 good will and a good intent. Um, I think we want  
21 to find a good frame work also to make sure that  
22 people with a lot of good ideas across different  
23 agencies and levels of government can work together  
24 to make sure those ideas are fully developed and  
25 really keep them on path visibly in some tangible

2 ways going forward so I appreciate the work you've  
3 done and I appreciate the clear desire to work with  
4 us to make that real and we look forward to  
5 following up afterwards to figure out some ways we  
6 can amend or adjust the bill or you can amend or  
7 adjust your plan so we can achieve our shared goal  
8 and goals.

9 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Thank you. We've  
10 been joined by Council Member Treyger. Uh,  
11 question by Council Member Koslowitz?

12 COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: Thank you  
13 Madame Chair. I represent an area that has a lot  
14 of seniors, probably one of the highest, uh, number  
15 of seniors in New York City. It's Forest Hills and  
16 Rego Park and Kew Gardens and yet there is nothing  
17 there for seniors as far as affordable housing. I  
18 have been fighting for years to have some kind of  
19 senior housing built in my community so people can  
20 get some relief. I do have a NYCHA development in  
21 my community, which is run very, very well. I  
22 certainly have no complaints about it at all. One  
23 of my problems is that many people would like to,  
24 if they can't afford their rent, they would like to  
25 move into the housing project and yet there's no

2 you just can't say, "I'm moving into the housing  
3 project." They send them all over the entire city  
4 to Brooklyn, to the Bronx to anywhere not in Forest  
5 Hills because that's the only development. There  
6 is problem here. I also represent a very highly  
7 Orthodox community and people are used to going to  
8 their synagogues to worship and you can't put them  
9 in a place in Brooklyn or the Bronx that they, it  
10 would be impossible for them to get to the places  
11 of worship because they can't drive they have to  
12 walk and Forest Hills and Rego Park, as far as you  
13 know, thinking that there are poor people living in  
14 my area in Kew Gardens, there are very poor people.  
15 I have kitchens, I have people standing on lines  
16 getting food to eat. There is a place that there  
17 could be senior housing and I would love to see  
18 that and that is the old Parkway Hospital. It's  
19 been sitting there for eight years, all  
20 graffitied[Sp?] it, it's disgusting. What could be  
21 done for all these people? People ignore Forest  
22 Hills, Rego Park, Kew Gardens because they think  
23 everybody living there is rich. Not true at all.  
24 If you were in my office I would say 85% of the  
25 calls are from seniors crying. I mean thank God

2 now with "SCRIE" going up it's a, it's a big help  
3 to many because I had so many people being evicted  
4 who was \$90 short a month on their rent because  
5 they're social security and whatever they were  
6 getting from "SCRIE" went up because they get an  
7 increase in social security. What could be done  
8 for these people that are like forgotten and I'm  
9 sure there's other communities that these same  
10 people live in that they're just forgotten?

11 JESSICA KATZ: Um, so if there's a  
12 specific site that you want to talk about... take a  
13 look at who owns that property and what might

14 COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: Yes, the old  
15 Parkway Hospital.

16 JESSICA KATZ: We're taking proposals  
17 all the time for new senior housing developments.  
18 Um, on the, on the geographic preference issue, we  
19 have actually been strategizing around on how to  
20 speak to HUD about this. There is a, there is fair  
21 housing laws in some cases prohibit us from having  
22 a geographic preference, uh, because there is a  
23 fear that the geographic preference becomes a proxy  
24 for race in a lot of parts of the country.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: And I  
3 understand that but they also have to take other  
4 factors into consideration.

5 JESSICA KATZ: Of course, we completely  
6 agree and particularly in a city as diverse as New  
7 York City, um, and in certain neighborhoods that  
8 are in any case, we've been strategizing around how  
9 to approach HUD about waivers and things that would  
10 allow us to meet the goals of fair housing laws but  
11 also recognize the diversity of New York City and  
12 that people want to live in their neighborhoods.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: And you're  
14 preventing them from living their lives because as  
15 I said there's a large part, whether it be a  
16 synagogue or even a church, you take a senior who's  
17 used to going to that one particular place and you  
18 can't dislocate them someplace else when there is  
19 absolutely no way of getting to where they worship.

20 JORDAN PRESS: You're, you're  
21 mentioning Parkway Hospital, um, reminded me that,  
22 um, in the Commissioner's testimony during the  
23 budget hearings something I want to reiterate on  
24 her behalf now is that is part of the housing plan,  
25 we are very committed to working with council

2 members and individual communities about where the  
3 best locations are, you know, for new affordable  
4 housing in the City. What the best locations,  
5 where preservation opportunities are right. Um,  
6 the Mayor and the HPD Commissioner have made a  
7 commitment that this will be a, um, an approach  
8 that really involves the communities and is not a,  
9 is not a top down, um, City Hall is coming in and  
10 saying "this is where we're putting affordable  
11 housing", um, it's quite the opposite and so we, we  
12 look forward to working with you in the coming  
13 weeks and months on helping to identify what the  
14 best locations in your districts.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER KOSLOWITZ: I look  
16 forward to that. They seem to find us when they  
17 want to put homeless shelters, they just. The  
18 Hotel Pan Am has gone out of business and there's  
19 homeless people coming in. This is not my  
20 district, it's right next door and I know the  
21 council members of those districts are very upset  
22 and in Glendale, near a chemical factory, so that  
23 they find you know, the area. For other things  
24 that will benefit people's lives and make it, you  
25 know, better, they seem to get lost. Thank you. I

2 look forward to working with you. I'm talking  
3 about the old administration not the new  
4 administration.

5 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Thank you for  
6 clarifying that council member. Uh, Council Member  
7 Levin?

8 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Uh, thank you  
9 very much uh, Madame Chair, thank you, uh, the  
10 administration for the testimony. So, uh, I wanted  
11 to ask, this has been, uh, um, an area of concern  
12 for me for some time as a representative of an  
13 area, um, that is a rapidly gentrifying area, um, I  
14 represent Greenpoint, I represent Downtown  
15 Brooklyn, Boerum Hill. Um, and, in those  
16 communities what I've seen in recent years, um, we  
17 have a lot of non-rent stabilized housing stock so  
18 housing, rental, you know, rental housing stock,  
19 uh, four or five units or less, um, and, um, when I  
20 go to the senior center in my neighborhood I will,  
21 uh, inevitably hear from a senior who's being  
22 evicted because, uh, somebody who owns the building  
23 passed away, left it to, uh, niece or nephew, um  
24 and they want to sell the building and clear out  
25 everybody in, and, um, people are getting evicted,

2 seniors are getting evicted, um, uh, at an alarming  
3 rate. I mean I hear from seniors who are facing  
4 this, uh, people that are living in the apartments  
5 for 20-25 years. Um, so what's the plan for, uh,  
6 those seniors who are not rent stabilized, don't  
7 qualify for "SCRIE", um and are facing 50%  
8 increases in areas that are, uh, rapidly  
9 gentrifying? What do they do? Any? It's a  
10 challenging population but, it's a challenging  
11 problem but what do we do about it?

12 JESSICA KATZ: You're raising a very  
13 serious concern, it's a serious concern at the  
14 department. I mean, probably number one request  
15 that we get from 311 from seniors looking for  
16 affordable housing. Um, we have a small, but very  
17 dedicated staff, um, that does housing and mostly  
18 we refer and give people applications and try and  
19 help them search for affordable housing but there  
20 are very, very long wait lists

21 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Right.

22 JESSICA KATZ: so it's  
23 undoubt...undoubtedly true that we need additional  
24 senior housing and...

2 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Well what could  
3 we do?

4 JESSICA KATZ: except for the services.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: And the thing  
6 about, just like from also, uh, you know, rent  
7 regulation is up next year, uh, and it's an  
8 opportunity to go to the state and ask for stronger  
9 rent laws. I mean is there things we can do from  
10 a, from a statutory perspective, um, at the state  
11 level, uh, to protect the seniors that are in, uh,  
12 currently not in rent stabilized units? I don't  
13 know, is this something that the administration  
14 would look to consider supporting, or?

15 JESSICA KATZ: I mean, perhaps, we  
16 haven't examined that but we can certainly take a  
17 look.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Because when I,  
19 I refer these seniors to, uh, to legal assistance  
20 to legal services and they can't help them because  
21 they're not rent stabilized. So they'll go and  
22 they'll interview and they can qualify in terms of  
23 income, but they won't, they won't qualify because  
24 there's no legal protection for them at all. So I  
25 mean we need to look collectively and see what we

2 can do for protecting seniors in getting them new  
3 rights to new laws, um, to stay in their homes.  
4 Um, the other question that I have is what is the  
5 waiting list for seniors in 202 Housing? How many,  
6 how many seniors are on the waiting list?

7 JESSICA KATZ: Um, so there's probably  
8 some advocates here in the room who can answer that  
9 question better for their own buildings. Each HUD  
10 202 Program keeps its own waiting list and I don't  
11 know the exact number but it's an astronomical  
12 number.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: It's like in the  
14 hundreds of thousands, right?

15 JESSICA KATZ: I mean for each  
16 individual building I don't know if it gets that...

17 **[INTERJECTION]**

18 JESSICA KATZ: It's a tremendous  
19 number.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: The point being  
21 that you know, and I've been saying this for a  
22 while now, this seems, you know, baby boomers are  
23 turning 65 and 70 and, um, and the, uh, fastest  
24 growing segment of the population is seniors and  
25 just at that time now, uh, is when we stopped

2 building new senior housing. I bet you that the  
3 overall senior housing list, uh, wait list, is in  
4 the hundreds of thousands at this point because,  
5 and if we're only able, if we're only producing,  
6 how many senior units are we producing a year in  
7 New York City? A couple of hundred maybe, right?

8 JESSICA KATZ: It's not a thousand, in  
9 the high few hundreds.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Yeah.

11 JESSICA KATZ: Um, so what happened  
12 with the, on the development side, you're right,  
13 the 202 Program was sort of this Marquis Program  
14 that we were working at, it includes both capital  
15 and a rental subsidy so people, seniors who moved  
16 into a 202 can be anywhere from no income at all to  
17 50% of AMI instead of this narrowing marketing  
18 band, then the HUD 202 Program became insufficient  
19 to do business in New York City because they cap  
20 for a per unit cost per capital kind of ran out.  
21 It's useful that it's in New York City so we lost a  
22 little steam that way. Um, the City came in and  
23 paired its own funding with the HUD 202 Program to  
24 provide a gap to make sure that we can leverage all  
25 that federal funding so we did that for several

2 years. Then the HUD 202 Program ceased to provide  
3 any new funding at all for apartments so now we  
4 couldn't use that. Then we created, what I kind of  
5 call the "synthetic" HUD 202 Program, where we used  
6 our, uh, we used our mainstream affordable housing  
7 resources through tax exempt bonds and tax credits  
8 too, and then paired that with project based  
9 vouchers from NYCHA in order to create what looks  
10 and feels like a HUD 202 that's just financed  
11 through City funding, um, then super frustration  
12 hit and then our Section 8 budget didn't allow us  
13 to even do that so we're trying to be creative and  
14 work around some of these funding cuts.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Is there any way  
16 to do it without, without Section 8, without  
17 budgeting Section 8 to kee...to meet that, to help  
18 meet the rent gap?

19 JESSICA KATZ: Um, one of the ideas  
20 we're exploring and the plan is to create some  
21 income off-sets so if you have a higher income tier  
22 that can cross-subsidize a lower income tier.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Mmm hmm.

24 JESSICA KATZ: So that's one way to do  
25 it without much reliance on rental assistance. In

2 certain neighborhoods 50% or 60% of AMI may be  
3 roughly what seniors earn, not, not true in a lot  
4 of New York City neighborhoods. But there are some  
5 where we can do it without rental assistance...

6 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Right.

7 JESSICA KATZ: ...without income level.

8 JORDAN PRESS: I would add that the  
9 President's request for additional 202 funding for  
10 this year now I don't know that it's very likely  
11 that Congress will go ahead and fund it but, uh,  
12 the point I want to make is that, uh, it focuses on  
13 its Rental Assistance Money rather than Capital  
14 Money, which is what 202 always was, and, um,  
15 Jessica can speak of this better than I, but for  
16 the City to have 202 Rental Assistance Money,  
17 specifically, uh, would work beautifully for...

18 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Sure.

19 JORDAN PRESS: to fill the gaps in the  
20 projects...

21 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: because we would  
22 come up with the Capital money right? If the  
23 Mayor's doubling the capital budget at HPD then we,  
24 we, we presumably have the capital money to build  
25 the affordable housing, um, the question is with

2 202...with senior housing how do you make up the  
3 rent? The other thing is, look, we have a State of  
4 New York that has a big budget and we have a City  
5 of New York that has a budget and, um, you know,  
6 this should, you know, we should be able to, uh, to  
7 find ways to do that, either, you know, in addition  
8 to say, doing some offsets. If there are seniors  
9 that able to, that are making 50% or 60% of AMI  
10 great, but we should also be looking at like, you  
11 know, a city subsidy or a state subsidy. Um, we  
12 can't just all be, if the federal government is  
13 not, if the federal, if Congress was controlled by  
14 Republicans that are not interested in supporting  
15 affordable senior housing in New York City, um, and  
16 we know that that's the case, and it's only going  
17 to stay tha..., I mean I don't think the Democrats  
18 are taking back the house this year, then, then we  
19 should, we need to start looking at what we can do  
20 without them, um, because, you know, I mean the,  
21 the, the pace of seniors that are applying for  
22 senior housing versus seniors that are getting  
23 senior housing is like, you know, thousand to one,  
24 or something like that. I mean, it, it's, it's  
25 red, it's astronomical, it's really, and the longer

2 wait to get back on track, the worst the situation  
3 gets.

4 JESSICA KATZ: So the need definitely  
5 far outweighs the supply of senior housing in the  
6 City. We have stayed on track by using the sum of  
7 the strategies we talked about by using leveraging  
8 project-based for NYCHA or once in a while doing  
9 senior housing in the neighborhood that can support  
10 50% or 60% of AMI. Um, and we've also done a lot  
11 of senior housing preservation. One of the other,  
12 uh, the 202 Program has been around for a very long  
13 time and a lot of those buildings are really in  
14 need of an upgrade and to maintain the  
15 affordability and the physical quality of the  
16 building so we spend a lot of our taxes and bond  
17 cap on refinancing old HUD 202 Projects to make  
18 sure they are up to par and that they remain  
19 affordable for the long term.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Thank you very  
21 much. Thank you Madam Chair.

22 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Thank you. I think  
23 it would be good if we can get DFTA and also with  
24 HPD to collect the data and not just asking the  
25 advocates because I think the City should have data

2 of how many seniors are moving in senior housing,  
3 how many of them have applied or on waiting lists,  
4 because a lot of the waiting lists actually have  
5 closed, uh, so if we can sort of put together the  
6 information, I think that's something the task  
7 force would be asking for, at least have a rural  
8 picture of the needs. We can say it's great but,  
9 but it would be great to be able to demonstrate it.  
10 Um, and also, it would be good to look at how many  
11 seniors are living, um, in subsidized housing that  
12 are not meant for seniors, because a lot of them  
13 they were able to apply based on their income, low  
14 incomes so they got them to, uh, go in subsidized  
15 housing, uh, that are not senior housing, so we're  
16 when we're looking at, you know, really reading  
17 into senior housing not just necessary to housing  
18 just for seniors. If we did housing that you can  
19 allow people to age in place, um, and subsidize  
20 their rent, I think that would be important. So, I  
21 think what we're going to ask the agency to collect  
22 the data. Council Member Rose? You want to ask  
23 your question before you leave? And then you let  
24 me know how the progress is going over there?

2 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: I almost made a  
3 clean get away. Um, a, so just briefly, uh, you  
4 know that the current age of, requirement for  
5 senior housing is 62 and there are long, long lists  
6 which sort of rel...relegates the living sub-standard  
7 housing shared arrangements are shelters for, um, a  
8 period between one and two years, um, does the  
9 administration have a comprehensive plan to combat  
10 the issues of seniors living in sub-standard  
11 temporary housing while on long waiting lists and,  
12 um, do you think any of the HDC initiatives would  
13 address these needs?

14 JESSICA KATZ: Um, so that HDC  
15 financing is the anchor financing that provides  
16 money for most of the senior housing that we do.  
17 We've done about 5,000 units of senior housing.  
18 Let's see over what time period. It was 5,000  
19 units over, I think eight or nine years, I'll have  
20 to check that, um, I know HDC provided a lot of the  
21 financing for those projects but it's hard to make  
22 them truly affordable as we said, without the  
23 rental assistance. Um, with regard to seniors  
24 living in emergency and temporary housing, we met  
25 yesterday with the Department of Homeless Services

2 and I think there's about 1,000 seniors that are  
3 currently living in New York City's homeless  
4 shelters, which is obviously a tragedy. Um, we,  
5 we're working with the Department of Homeless  
6 Services to leverage money from the state through  
7 their Medicare redesign team where seniors who are  
8 in homeless shelters tend to also be high users of  
9 Medicaid so some of that Medicaid redesign money  
10 that's intended more broadly to help lower the  
11 Medicaid costs for the City are being targeted for  
12 rental subsidies for that population.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Um, is there some  
14 sort of formula that you, um, you use in terms of  
15 identifying where these units would be?

16 JESSICA KATZ: Where senior housing  
17 would be?

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Uh, yeah, I'm  
19 talking about geographically where they would be  
20 located, um,...

21 JESSICA KATZ: Well I think in the past  
22 we've been very driven by kind of what  
23 opportunities came our way and one of the things  
24 was that the Housing New York Plan attempts to do  
25 is really hone in on neighborhoods and figure out

2 what the neighborhood needs are first as opposed to  
3 say, taking the proposals as they come. So that's  
4 one of the big changes that HPD is undergoing now.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: So, um, how do I  
6 get a, a you to target my district because the need  
7 is great. Um, we have a long waiting list, um, and  
8 the housing supply is just non-existent. So how do  
9 I get, you know, some targeted help?

10 JESSICA KATZ: Sure, I'm happy to talk  
11 more primarily to find who the, either not-for-  
12 profit or for-profit affordable housing developers  
13 are who been successful in that neighborhood and  
14 then we can start talking to them about what sites  
15 might be appropriate.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: And, and, um,  
17 NORCs have been, you know, that seems to be sort of  
18 the designer word, uh, this budget season, um, and  
19 rightfully so, you know they are currently 28 and,  
20 um, but there are none on Staten Island. So, um, I  
21 want to know if there are, uh, real plans to look  
22 at, um, modifying the program so that some of the,  
23 I don't like to call them "outer boroughs" but the  
24 other boroughs, will, um, you know, be considered  
25 of, or a different sort of plan that sort of takes

2 a sprawl layout into consideration. And then I  
3 wanted to know about, um, I have several NYCHA  
4 facilities that are senior facilities specifically.  
5 Would they qualify to be a NORC and is that a  
6 conversation that we can have soon?

7 JESSICA KATZ: So I know this topic has  
8 come up before, um, Karen Taylor, who is sitting  
9 behind me, is uh, heads up our bureau of community  
10 services and she's our housing expert, um, we  
11 recently did a solicitation for NORCs.  
12 Unfortunately nobody in the borough of Staten  
13 Island applied, which does not mean they were not  
14 eligible.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Well it was  
16 because of the criteria.

17 JESSICA KATZ: That's what we need to  
18 come and take a look at.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: We didn't qualify  
20 because it was the criteria that was written.

21 JESSICA KATZ: So we are happy to come  
22 out and meet with you if you want to bring together  
23 some of those, um, developments. We can sit and  
24 talk with them and look at what the numbers are.  
25 There's not going to be a new solicitation in the

2 next few years but there may be things that we can  
3 do with those developments to start getting  
4 organized on their own.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Um, ok, thank  
6 you. And then just, um, a basic question about how  
7 the City plans to fund the service coordinators,  
8 um, that are in senior buildings, um, a part of  
9 your plan?

10 JESSICA KATZ: Um, so in the HUD 202's  
11 there is money for HUD to pay for the service  
12 coordinator so there's a great number of 202's  
13 where HUD pays for those and that's actually one of  
14 the few things have been funding in this arena in  
15 recent years.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ROSE: Okay, thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Thank you. Uh,  
18 Council Member Vallone?

19 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Thank you  
20 Madam Chair. Good morning everyone. Uh, I think  
21 we like, deal with all of these, if we could look  
22 at short term and long term goals and when you hear  
23 from every council member or anyone who speaks,  
24 there is no affordable housing or projects that are  
25 going to be able to take care of these wait limits

2 right now. Um, as probably most of us have said on  
3 the community boards, any time zoning is brought up  
4 it's the ultimate taboo and the neighborhoods as to  
5 no one wants to touch it so I'm looking at a  
6 realistic problem what we're going to face that I  
7 see in your testimony the ideas of easing zoning  
8 requirements or looking at the deterrence in the  
9 current zoning law. I think we need to expedite  
10 that because all of this becomes talk unless we can  
11 build. And if we can't find the areas to build, or  
12 locations, I like Karen and all the Queens members,  
13 I've reached out to the successful senior assisted,  
14 senior living, uh, providers and they keep telling  
15 us there's no place to build. That's got to be our  
16 number one in these list of things to look at  
17 because if we can't, I think the question becomes  
18 "have you targeted possible sites throughout the  
19 different boroughs, is there locations that could  
20 be possible sites if these zoning restrictions have  
21 been made and how is the best way to expedite  
22 them?"

23 JORDAN PRESS: So I, I would say that  
24 this is certainly one of the very first few things  
25 that the administration is working on in relation

2 to the plan, um, conversations between HPD and City  
3 Planning, um, we are in, either in each other's  
4 buildings, uh, meeting with one or another or on  
5 the phone nearly every single day, if not every  
6 single day. Um, so I just wanted to assure you  
7 that is front and center in first steps of the  
8 plan.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: We don't know  
10 that and I think as we are front and center also,  
11 going back to our districts, we need to be able to  
12 relay that information that the talks are going and  
13 there are some sites we can get the community  
14 boards involved. Let's start the process now as  
15 to, instead of developing round tables and years of  
16 talk, I, I, the realistic barriers are right in  
17 front of us and I think we should tackle those,  
18 like tomorrow and I think we should start preparing  
19 our local communities and our zoning boards that  
20 this is going to become a priority and if you  
21 listen at those meetings they say, well what if  
22 someone leaves the site and now there is a multi-  
23 condo, co-op complex and now we're screwed with  
24 this site? We're listening to that and I think we  
25 have to put some restrictive qualifiers on there

2 to, to protect the communities that this is only  
3 used for senior. And that doesn't exist so I don't  
4 know if we can maybe look at some emergency zoning  
5 relief so that there is, um, targeted, because if  
6 we go through the zoning process, they're talking  
7 about months and years of creating new layers of  
8 zoning in special areas and hearings. So maybe we  
9 do some type of emergency targeting for senior  
10 housing relief that can cut the process for  
11 particular sites as opposed to looking at whole  
12 communities and changing the zoning. I think we're  
13 open for...

14 JORDAN PRESS: Well, well, we'll  
15 certainly discuss that with, um, City Planning. I  
16 also wanted to let you know we've already begun the  
17 engagement to some degree by, uh, making visits to  
18 the borough board meetings. Uh, we've done, the  
19 Commissioner and representatives from City Hall  
20 already done Manhattan and um, and Queens. Uh, we  
21 have Brooklyn coming up in a couple of weeks and  
22 uh, the Bronx in a couple of weeks and our work  
23 with Staten Island to schedule the visits there.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: If you could  
25 help provide that information to the council

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2 members of where you've been and where we could  
3 look at these sites we'd like to assist you with  
4 this and speed it along.

5 JORDAN PRESS: Sure.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Uh, Council Member  
8 Deutsch?

9 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Thank you  
10 Madam Chair. Thank you, uh, good morning. First  
11 of all if you take notice I always during the City  
12 Council stated meetings I sit next to my colleague  
13 Council Member Koslowitz and when we have City  
14 Council Hearings I try sticking together with her  
15 because we have similar districts. Uh, we have  
16 very high population of seniors in our districts  
17 and that's according to statistics. Um, you  
18 mentioned before that, um, you have many seniors  
19 that are in homeless shelters. DO you know what  
20 that amount is?

21 JESSICA KATZ: It's around a thousand.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: About a  
23 thousand and do you know, um, how many different  
24 shelters they are placed?

25 JESSICA KATZ: I don't.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER DEUTSCH: Okay, because  
3 my question is, is that if we have let's say a  
4 thousand seniors in homeless shelters, which we  
5 call it Homeless Shelters, and if we combine them  
6 in one building then we could call it "Senior  
7 Housing" and take away the name "Homeless Shelter"  
8 so that was, that's one recommendation because when  
9 you put the senior citizens in a, in a different  
10 type of environment, number one, we have to make  
11 sure whether it is a NYCHA, uh, or it's in homeless  
12 shelters that's before we start building and, and,  
13 uh, different senior, different homeless shelters  
14 or placing senior citizens and putting additional  
15 people, trying to into NYCHA housing, number one,  
16 make sure that it is safe, uh, cause otherwise  
17 we're putting people in the lion's den and everyone  
18 needs to have that safe environments, so first and  
19 foremost, you mentioned you work with, uh,  
20 different agencies so also you work with the New  
21 York City Police Department and as well as local  
22 patrols to make sure that these environments remain  
23 safe before we expand housing in, in, in such  
24 areas. So, um, saying that, I don't have really,  
25 I'm going to be very brief, but I would like to

2 request a meeting in my district if we can have a  
3 public forum in the very near future and to listen  
4 to some of the seniors and let them know what we  
5 have, what our plans for their future and also  
6 maybe if we can get different ideas that make you  
7 better understand the 48<sup>th</sup> Council District so, uh,  
8 um, I'm going to reach out to your office and see  
9 if we can set something up if that's okay with you?  
10 Thank you so much.

11 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Thank you. Council  
12 Member Lander you have some follow up questions?

13 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Um, yeah, and  
14 I'll be brief and I appreciate the times you guys  
15 have spent. But first, you know, in response to,  
16 uh, Council Member Levin's inquiry on thinking  
17 about, uh, rent regulations and what we want to  
18 advocate for next year. I guess I do want to point  
19 out that sort of you know, one of the areas where I  
20 think where we have some more thinking to do. And  
21 one thing I think I asked the Commissioner about in  
22 the preliminary budget hearing was the good  
23 landlord-good neighbor tax credit that the council  
24 had looked at a few years ago to preserve, uh,  
25 tenancies in small buildings, unregulated buildings

2 where people, and you know a lot of people who rent  
3 out, uh, a unit to a neighbor or senior and then as  
4 rents rise you're like it's hard to keep justifying  
5 a below market rent, uh, um, in many cases, they're  
6 not "SCRIE" eligible because it's not rent  
7 regulated so, um, so that's one thing I know we're  
8 eager to have looked at in addition to other rent  
9 regulation strategies and I do just want to sort  
10 say for the record, uh, it isn't as much a  
11 question, part of my, you know, motivation is the  
12 seniors at Prospect Park Residence are in court  
13 today and then that owner, uh, bought the building  
14 seven years ago with an eye on the J-51 expiration.  
15 He, he just scammed us. That was a 15-year J-51  
16 issued 15 years ago and seven years ago he thought,  
17 "you know what I can make money for as long as the  
18 tax break is in place and boot them out at the end  
19 and make literally a killing" and he's evil and  
20 that's not on us, but he gamed us, we gave him  
21 millions of dollars in tax breaks, um, only to have  
22 him throw out 130 eligible people and I, I, most  
23 people wouldn't do that so it's not, it's fare that  
24 we wouldn't have imagine someone would the first  
25 time. You know but like, the first time, boy he's

2 an evil genius and the second time we're chumps.  
3 Ah, and so, I just want to make sure. Again, part  
4 of the goal here is to really make sure we are  
5 planning for what we need to do. I know that the  
6 tax incentives effort is part of the housing plan  
7 to make sure we're really getting the value we need  
8 and protecting New Yorker's at the times of those  
9 expiration, so you, you've heard we have a lot of  
10 goals and things we want to do together and the  
11 main thing I think Council Member Vallone put it  
12 well is to be able to get going and get started on  
13 them and so, um, I'm confident, whether it's  
14 through this task force or some other structure we  
15 figure out with you that we'll find a way to do it  
16 but the need is urgent, uh, and we've got to be  
17 able to move forward in a real timely coordinated  
18 insistent way. Um, and that's our goal and it  
19 sounds like it's yours as well. Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Thank you Council  
21 Member. Council Member Treyger?

22 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Thank you  
23 Chair, um, welcome. Uh, I just want to have a  
24 couple, uh, two main points, uh, to raise today.  
25 Um, number one, the engagement process between HPD

2 and local council members. Now I guess I'm in a  
3 unique position, uh, from my colleagues and that my  
4 district there are a number of HPD-owned lots,  
5 particularly in Coney Island. Um, and I do want to  
6 publicly thank, uh, Mr. Press for, uh, being  
7 responsive to concerns and issues that we've raised  
8 already with regards to some interest in some of  
9 those HPD lots. Um, I understand that you know, we  
10 are a capitalist society and there are people who  
11 look to make money, but I also am of the belief  
12 that we in government have an obligation to address  
13 the needs of our families here, residents here  
14 today. Um, I guess I join the chorus by saying I  
15 have a very high number of senior citizens living  
16 in my district. We have NORCs as well and there is  
17 a tremendous demand, tremendous demand for senior  
18 housing and I am a new council member but the way I  
19 have seen things happen in the past, is that it was  
20 not the needs of people that were being addressed  
21 by the government it was the needs of people  
22 looking to make money constantly when it came to  
23 development projects. But where I have seen senior  
24 housing, people for the most part are very happy.  
25 If you are familiar with the Regina Potras senior

2 on Cropsey Avenue, which is a state funded program,  
3 they have a lot of on-site services. There's in  
4 Coney Island, they have one, uh, New York Senior  
5 Foundation where they have in the building, they  
6 have spaces for people to have, uh, medical visits  
7 in senior centers. You almost create that one-stop  
8 shop for seniors all in one structure, all in one  
9 building, sort of like what we're trying to do with  
10 schools, those community learning school models.  
11 That is where the demand is. That is where the  
12 needs are. So when we engage about HPD City-owned  
13 land, what is HPD, is HPD, the question I'm asking  
14 here, is HPD simply an input agency that says ok a  
15 developer comes to HPD and says we have plans to do  
16 this? or are you really going out there engaging  
17 with the local council members, with the  
18 communities saying, here are the needs here, we  
19 have to go back and before the project comes up,  
20 we're going to engage the local community and say  
21 "well you know what, this does not fit the needs of  
22 the community, there's a demand here for senior  
23 housing," so if you could just speak to the  
24 engagement process how HPD engages local council  
25 members with regards to these developments.

2 JORDAN PRESS: So can I, historical  
3 perspective I guess, um, HPD was tasked over the  
4 last many years with disposing of City-owned  
5 property, thousands upon thousands of parcels and  
6 so a lot of the development that we've worked on  
7 over the last 15 years, I would say, has been  
8 related to where the, where those parcels were.  
9 Um, when some members say to us, you know, well why  
10 not in my district, it might be because that's not  
11 where the parcels that we had City access to. So  
12 that's, that's one part of the answer. Um, I think  
13 that, as I was mentioning earlier, um, a big part  
14 of the plan and the commitment of the Mayor and the  
15 Commissioner and City Planning and other agencies  
16 has been to engage more at the local level, uh, to  
17 identify what the best locations are. Um, as you  
18 noted though, there are some market conditions at  
19 play here. Um, in terms of being able to put  
20 affordable housing where we can feasibly put  
21 affordable housing. The lot has to be there, the  
22 interests from whoever the property owner needs to  
23 be there, um, so we are limited to a degree by  
24 market forces.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: I just feel  
3 that, you know, HPD I think has more power than it  
4 realizes in a sense, um, and the more engaged HPD  
5 is with the local council members and the  
6 communities and their needs, I think the better  
7 outcome we will reach. I never like to be  
8 surprised and that's something that, you know, goes  
9 for most of my colleagues here. Um, we don't want  
10 to be hit last second with some sort of development  
11 project where we had absolutely no input in and  
12 they are saying well, the administration or someone  
13 wants this. I am not governed by the  
14 administration ones, I am governed by the needs of  
15 my constituents so, um, and I know there is a  
16 demand for additional senior housing and I  
17 shouldn't be left to negotiate or to pressure  
18 mobilize constantly for additional senior units,  
19 but I will, we will fight aggressively to make sure  
20 we get more senior units built into our housing  
21 plans. The second question I have is regards to  
22 emergency preparedness and resiliency efforts. Um,  
23 where we do have senior housing, um, there is a  
24 clear break down of emergency preparedness and  
25 evacuating, uh, seniors when it comes to, um, came

2 to emergency storms and Sandy. When we're talking  
3 about building senior housing and preserving senior  
4 housing, is HPD having conversations with OEM, what  
5 are the conversations about, making sure that these  
6 seniors are protected, they're living safe, they're  
7 prepared, they know what to do in the event of  
8 emergency. We know what their medications are, if  
9 they are on life-saving devices, are there any of  
10 those conversations taking place that you're aware  
11 of?

12 JORDAN PRESS: I, I, I don't want to  
13 provide any incorrect information so let me get  
14 back to you on that?

15 DFTA REPRESENTATIVE: I can respond by  
16 saying that we have a dedicated department at  
17 Department for the Aging just doing Emergency  
18 Planning. Um, we were quite involved during  
19 Hurricane Sandy. Since that time, the City came  
20 out with a plan, the New York Academy of Medicine  
21 is releasing a plan so there have been many  
22 stakeholder meetings including our aging providers,  
23 um, and we know as people are building back, for  
24 example, JASA, you know that they're relocating  
25 generators to top floors and making the kinds of

2 changes that we hope will be preventive in the  
3 future. So I think there were many, many lessons  
4 learned and I think we're putting a lot of  
5 protocols in place.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: So are there  
7 conditions placed in, hopefully we, we get to a  
8 point where we're building additional senior  
9 housing but if we're building senior housing in  
10 areas prone to flooding or emergencies are there  
11 now conditions in place to make sure that those  
12 buildings are resilient?

13 JESSICA KATZ: Um, yes there are so  
14 every time HPD does a project we do an  
15 environmental review and that includes the flood  
16 planning review to figure out what measures come  
17 into place in order to make the buildings resilient  
18 once we build them.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: Okay and so in  
20 the conversations with OEM goes through DFTA, is  
21 that correct?

22 [OFF MIC] We have our own liaison with  
23 OEM, um, with OEM and the Department for the Aging.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: I just,  
25 [OFF MIC] We don't necessarily..

2 COUNCIL MEMBER TREYGER: the point I'm  
3 just raising and sharing is just important that you  
4 know, is that right after Sandy there were  
5 literally I would say probably hundreds of seniors  
6 stranded. Um, some were just dropped off by  
7 hospitals, just left there and some were left in  
8 high rise buildings to fend for themselves with no  
9 help, uh, no elevators no lights and staircases,  
10 nothing. So, we're going to, you know, I guess my  
11 committee separately will look at this separately  
12 and working with Aging but I jus...I, I urge you to  
13 have those talks with people who build senior  
14 housing and who monitors senior housing that there  
15 are plans and protocols in place to care for these  
16 people to know that they exist, to care for them,  
17 know what their needs are in the event of a crisis  
18 or an emergency. I never want to see happen again  
19 what I saw after Sandy to the seniors that were  
20 just stranded in high rise buildings and dropped  
21 off at hospital doors. Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Thank you, uh, just  
23 a follow up question, um, in terms of the Mayor's  
24 Housing Plan, I mean how creatively are you looking  
25 at in terms of meeting the needs of seniors, uh,

2 with issues like in micro-units, um, units that  
3 seniors or the resident, not the senior the  
4 resident can age in place, um, so that we can meet  
5 the needs of seniors without just focusing only on  
6 senior housing.

7 JESSICA KATZ: Um, we completely agree.  
8 The part of the, um, so in a new construction  
9 building we're always building accessible housing  
10 so the folks can do, folks can age in place  
11 regardless of what their accessibility needs are.  
12 Where we're providing a loan for preservation we  
13 can't always make the building 100% accessible but  
14 we try to use our resources to improve the  
15 accessibility of the building as much as possible  
16 so that folks can, again, age in place wherever  
17 possible and then on the zoning question, um,  
18 micro-units, uh, that's why we want to talk about  
19 the zoning code as a whole. There is a section of  
20 the zoning code that speaks specifically about  
21 senior housing that we should fix and make it more  
22 cost effective and improve that to make it more  
23 enticing for developers to create senior housing  
24 but then there's also aspects to the zoning code

2 overall that favor larger apartments that don't,  
3 um...

4 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: That can also go in  
5 to generational housing. I mean you have families  
6 who, which is a great, uh, yeah, which is a great  
7 situation if they have grandparents staying with  
8 them and they can be taken cared-of, it meets a  
9 certain need so that could also be taken into  
10 consideration.

11 JESSICA KATZ: Yeah that's, there's  
12 two, that's why the zoning conversations really  
13 need to be held as all one piece where there's the  
14 senior housing is tracked specifically and then  
15 there's also what changes can be made to the zoning  
16 code in the general way that improve development  
17 that would reduce the need for parking in areas  
18 where seniors don't necessarily use parking spaces  
19 that create a better incentive for developers to do  
20 affordable and to senior housing.

21 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: And what also, I  
22 mean the City Council has always supported, uh,  
23 home sharing program and is that something also you  
24 should take a look at to see how you can expand on  
25 it where senior, you know, can have a roommate or,

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2 or someone staying with them, sharing the housing  
3 at the same time, you know, helping them.

4 KAREN: Right, um, we very much agree..

5 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Oh Karen if you talk  
6 we got to swear you in.

7 KELLY TAYLOR: Sorry. Can you please  
8 raise your right hand? Do you affirm to tell the  
9 truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth  
10 and answer the council members questions  
11 truthfully?

12 KAREN: Yes I do.

13 KELLY TAYLOR: Thank you.

14 KAREN TAYLOR: Karen Taylor with the  
15 Department for the Aging. Um, regarding home  
16 sharing, I think that's an area we would also like  
17 to look at a lot more broadly. We have a very  
18 successful small, but successful home sharing  
19 program at the New York Foundation, which is funded  
20 through and most of you probably heard about it  
21 because I know they do a lot of work with their  
22 council members in various districts. Um, and  
23 it's shown that home sharing can be a great success  
24 if it's done properly and so that's definitely

25

2 something that we're looking into and expanding as  
3 well as much as we can.

4 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Good, and, and one  
5 last question I have to, I mean we're talking about  
6 preserving affordable housing, also protecting our  
7 seniors, one issue that the city council has been  
8 raising with advocates is this whole down-sizing  
9 issue in these, um, buildings, private buildings  
10 that was once Mitchell Lama building and now, you  
11 know, because of the cuts, uh, federal funding that  
12 HPD is getting seniors to down-size and some of the  
13 seniors, they live in a one bedroom apartment.  
14 They've been there, they age in place, right? And  
15 now they're forced to down-size to a studio  
16 apartment. I mean, the council, together with the  
17 borough president we have asked for a moratorium,  
18 do we really want to have special consideration for  
19 seniors that it should not be at this stage of  
20 their life that they can be traumatized by forcing  
21 to move, and at the same time, frustrate us if  
22 that, with the whole budget cut, the owners are  
23 still getting rent increases through the voucher.  
24 They're not sharing the pain, only the seniors are  
25 being force to share the pain, so we're asking HPD

2 to really take a hard look at this and not, you  
3 know, do what you're doing, because I, these  
4 seniors are aging in place and that's what we want  
5 them to be able to do and so by forcing them to  
6 downsize to studio apartments it's really going to  
7 create a big havoc and that goes against what the  
8 Mayor is trying to do in his housing plan for our  
9 seniors.

10 JORDAN PRESS: We've been put in a  
11 terrible situation by federal budget cuts, um, and  
12 I know we spoke about this issue previously in, um,  
13 you know, we'll continue to, you know, keep an open  
14 dialog with you about it and, um, advocate  
15 certainly with our federal officials who provide  
16 that funding, uh, so that we can run the most  
17 generous program possible.

18 CHAIRPERSON CHIN: Yeah, I will  
19 continue dialog but as much as possible you really  
20 have to take into consideration of the, you know,  
21 the trauma these seniors are going right now and  
22 they want some assurance that they'll be protected  
23 because they're aging in place and this is going to  
24 happen to more seniors, uh, in all the  
25 bo...subsidized building, housing that the City

2 built, because a lot of seniors are living in those  
3 subsidized housing or a voucher, project based  
4 Section 8 or whatever, I mean they're all over, the  
5 seniors are everywhere, uh, so we got to make do  
6 whatever we can to protect them so definitely  
7 together with DFTA, inter-agency, you have to do  
8 something to stop this, um, this downsizing that is  
9 really not right and not fair to the seniors so,  
10 um, any other questions that we should? Whatever  
11 question we didn't get to we'll send to you and  
12 we'll continue this dialog because um, it's not  
13 just on the legislation but we're also really  
14 interested in working with the Mayor, the  
15 administration to develop and build and preserve  
16 affordable housing for seniors. So this is just  
17 the beginning of the dialog and I'm going to ask,  
18 uh, Council Member Vallone, to continue, uh,  
19 chairing the meeting and someone call the next  
20 panel and I thank the administration for coming,  
21 uh, today, and uh, we look forward to working with  
22 you on this.

23 [OFF MIC] Thank you.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Okay our next  
25 panel will be Lindsay Goldman, James Jimmy Arnold,

2 Christine Hunter, and John Tynan. Everyone can  
3 come up and identify yourselves whoever wants to  
4 testify first, and it's going to be a three minute  
5 clock. So good morning, if you could please, uh,  
6 take turns and identifying yourselves in whoever  
7 wants to testify first, that's why.

8 [OFF MIC]

9 LINDSAY GOLDMAN: Thank you for the  
10 opportunity to address the committee, my name is  
11 Lindsay Goldman and I'm representing the New York  
12 Academy of Medicine, NYAM is an organization that  
13 advances the public health and has been working to  
14 meet the needs of people in cities since 1847. Our  
15 current priorities are healthy aging, chronic  
16 disease prevention and the elimination of health  
17 disparities. NYAM in partnership with the City  
18 Council and the Mayor's office founded and  
19 implemented the Age Friendly New York in 2007 which  
20 utilizes the WHO policy framework for active aging  
21 to ensure that older people can remain vital  
22 participants in a community. Safe and adequate  
23 housing is a core component, um, of the policy  
24 framework and it's essential to the well being of  
25 older people. Housing can negatively and

2 positively impact physical and mental health. We  
3 have considerable evidence to indicate that. We  
4 applaud the City Council for taking up this issue  
5 and we offer the following evidenced-based  
6 recommendations as you embark on your work. First  
7 we ask that you consider the range of functional  
8 capacity, immigration status, and English  
9 proficiency when evaluating policies, practices and  
10 programs for safe and affordable housing. Second,  
11 we ask that you solicit input from older adults in  
12 addition to their service providers and advocates  
13 and that you see older adults as a source of  
14 solutions for affordable housing. Third, we ask  
15 that you prioritize access to the physical and  
16 social supports required to maintain a healthy  
17 lifestyle and to continue to age in community by  
18 prioritizing keeping older adults in their  
19 neighborhoods by using housing to strengthen  
20 connections for formal and informal support systems  
21 through the promotion of service coordinators,  
22 multi-generational housing, tenant organization and  
23 communal space and ensuring access to environmental  
24 modifications within the home as well as within the  
25 neighborhood. Finally, we ask that the task force

2 make a priority of the disaster resilience of senior  
3 housing as was previously mentioned, NYAM recently,  
4 uh, completed a one year study of the impact of  
5 Hurricane Sandy on older people and within that  
6 study we found that landlords really need to be  
7 supported in developing emergency plans that  
8 include the formal partnerships that will be  
9 required with the non-profit healthcare and faith-  
10 based sector to meet the needs of older people in  
11 disasters. Again, we thank the council for taking  
12 this issue up and we offer our assistance in  
13 conducting any research, policy analysis or serving  
14 as a neutral convener of stakeholders.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: And the legal  
16 side of me also says thank you for the reference  
17 guide you put on the last page. First one I've  
18 seen of those, thank you.

19 CHRISTINE HUNTER: Thank you, um, and  
20 good morning, my name is Christine Hunter, I'm a  
21 principal at Magnusson Architecture and Planning in  
22 New York City and a member of the Design for Aging  
23 Committee of the New York, AIA NY Chapter. The  
24 Design for Aging Committee for AIA, New York  
25 Chapter, aims to increase public awareness of the

2 needs of seniors in an urban environment and to  
3 create, an age-friendly New York City by promoting  
4 design that accommodates those needs. We feel that  
5 the creation of a Senior Housing Task Force,  
6 working to improve the City in ways that enable  
7 independent seniors to live safely and comfortably  
8 in their neighborhoods and apartments, i.e., to age  
9 in place, is an important tool in creating an age-  
10 friendly city. For the past four years, in  
11 conjunction with many of the other city-wide  
12 efforts that have already been mentioned, and, and  
13 some of them involving NYAM as well, uh, our  
14 committee has been exploring multiple issues of  
15 aging in place within a dense urban environment.  
16 While we certainly don't have all the answers, we  
17 have submitted a memo to the council with a number  
18 of specific goals and suggestions. I'll mention  
19 just a few. We feel that they're consistent with  
20 the Mayor's recently announced housing plan and  
21 would help New York's burgeoning senior population  
22 to remain active and engaged and aging with  
23 dignity. Given that most of the City is fully  
24 built out, and that most both sites for funding new  
25 construction are limited, I'll start with two

2 suggestions related to existing buildings and while  
3 this includes the building stock that's already  
4 afford..., that's specifically affordable, it also  
5 refers to much of the private housing in the City.  
6 First, because over half of the City's rental  
7 apartments are in walk-up buildings and it's not  
8 feasible to make them all fully-accessible, study  
9 ways to improve them incrementally in order to  
10 allow aging residents to remain safe and  
11 comfortable for as long as possible. This might  
12 include development of a modestly-priced tool kit  
13 involving upgraded lighting, safer hand rails, grab  
14 bars, improved intercoms, etc., that could private  
15 owned and incentivize private owners to easily  
16 upgrade their buildings. Second, explore ways to  
17 incentivize private building owners to allow senior  
18 residents to move within their existing buildings  
19 and/or immediate neighborhoods, potentially to  
20 apartments on lower floors or in more accessible,  
21 um, settings, or if by mutual agreement, to smaller  
22 units without unaffordable rent increases. With  
23 regard to both new and existing buildings we  
24 encourage review of existing code provisions on  
25 handicapped accessibility. With regard to better

2 serving frail residents who are not necessarily  
3 wheelchair-bound and who's needs may change  
4 unpredictably as they age. We also encourage  
5 modifying existing zoning and low density  
6 neighborhoods to allow for "granny units" to be  
7 added either in separate buildings or incorporated  
8 within an existing house. And for new multi-family  
9 construction, consider modification of existing  
10 zoning such as the quality housing regulations to  
11 incentivize senior friendly elements in all new  
12 multi-family buildings, such as seating near  
13 elevators on all floors, small gathering places,  
14 hand rails on corridors, power assisted entry  
15 doors, etc. Lastly, in all buildings, explore the  
16 used development and implementation of affordable  
17 technology that will allow home-bound seniors to  
18 communicate with their families and friends, as  
19 well as with their medical service providers. Um,  
20 there have been some very innovative ritual senior  
21 centers that have been pioneered by non-profit  
22 organizations within the City and we feel that  
23 these should be a priority, should be to make these  
24 available to a wider population at a, um,  
25 affordable price and we feel that that's very

2 achievable. Um, the technology is there and it can  
3 make a huge difference.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Thank you  
5 Christine, if you could save the rest for questions  
6 and some of the responses trying to keep to our...

7 CHRISTINE HUNTER: Yes, I'm sorry...

8 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: ...we have many  
9 panels today...

10 CHRISTINE HUNTER: No, I'm done, our  
11 committee themes are similar to those of the Senior  
12 Housing Task Force and we'd like to be as use...,  
13 useful as possible to the Task Force going forward  
14 to facilitate our mutual goal of a more age  
15 friendly environment in the City. Thank you.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Thank you.

17 [OFF MIC]

18 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: You have to  
19 press play.

20 JAMES ARNOLD: Sorry, start over. Good  
21 morning, my name is James Arnold, I'm on the  
22 Executive Council of AARP for the State of New  
23 York. This is a small member of body of members  
24 who are volunteers and we act like the Board of  
25 Directors for the State of New York and I'm here

2 today to testify on behalf of 750,000 members of  
3 AARP who reside in the five boroughs of New York  
4 City on the topic of affordable housing. As a  
5 leading advocate of the 50-plus population, with  
6 our members here in New York City in over 2.6  
7 million members across the state, AARP is committed  
8 to ensuring that all New Yorkers are able to live  
9 with the best quality of life as they age. Last  
10 year AARP commissioned a study of the 50-plus  
11 population across the five boroughs to gain a  
12 deeper research-based look at this key segment, the  
13 increasing population growth and the challenges and  
14 opportunities facing them. The research surveyed  
15 registered voters 50 years and older and not just  
16 at AARP members. It was no surprise that concerns  
17 around housing ranked very high in the minds of New  
18 York City residents in that age cohort. Included  
19 with the testimony I'm presenting this morning is  
20 an excerpt from our research which will be  
21 published and released, uh, later this month and  
22 you have two pages front and back, which are  
23 excerpted from that research. This document helps  
24 illustrate the points I will make today and much of  
25 the information is broken down by boroughs. The

2 lack of housing and increases in stabilized rent  
3 threatened economic of 50-plus New Yorkers. In  
4 order to meet the needs of this changing over  
5 population, New York City's housing market will  
6 require innovative solutions. Currently, two-  
7 thirds of the New York City's housing stock is  
8 rental properties and of those, the majority is  
9 either rent-stabilized, rent-controlled, or part of  
10 other regulated rental programs. Similarly, two-  
11 thirds of 50-plus New York City voters rent their  
12 homes and with even larger majorities, renting and  
13 three out of the five boroughs, and among black and  
14 Hispanic resident voters. According to the New  
15 York City Rent Guideline Boards, 2013 housing  
16 supply report, rental housing availability remains  
17 tight. With the city-wide vacancy rate just 3.12%  
18 in 2011, an overcrowding remains a problem despite  
19 recent housing initiatives to help reduce the  
20 affordable housing shortage. Further, in June  
21 2013, the New York City Rent Guidelines Board voted  
22 to raise stabilized rents between 4% and 7.75%  
23 beginning in October of 2013. In their remarks,  
24 board members assert that this hike was unavoidable  
25 in the face of increasing fees for building owners,

2 while acknowledging that it would force some rent  
3 stabilized tenants to choose between paying their  
4 rent and paying for basic necessities. As a  
5 percentage of income, rate hikes have a significant  
6 implication for older adults who rely on fixed  
7 incomes below the city average. We know that when  
8 seniors move their new home choice is most  
9 determined by financial reasons and a lack of  
10 availability. You will see a graph on the first  
11 page of the included research that illustrates that  
12 point. Despite ongoing efforts to alleviate the  
13 affordable housing shortage in New York City, the  
14 issue continues to provoke anxiety with people 50-  
15 plus voters. Large proportions of renters and  
16 owners alike are highly concerned about being able  
17 to afford the cost of living in New York City as  
18 they age. Fifty-plus voters unanimously agree that  
19 aging in a once current home or community is  
20 important yet there is a 50-50 split in the same  
21 respondents who plan to stay in New York City or  
22 think they will have to age in another city or  
23 another place. New and innovative housing ideas  
24 are needed to implement a sustainable solution to  
25 meet a demand in safe-guard affordability,

2 particularly for older residents. AARP supports  
3 the creation of the Senior Housing Task Force as a  
4 first step in addressing this growing need for  
5 affordable housing options in New York City that  
6 also takes into account the needs of residents as  
7 their needs change so that they may remain in the  
8 community and age in place. Thank you for this  
9 opportunity to testify and please be assured we  
10 look forward to working with the Task Force as it  
11 progresses.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Council Member  
13 Lander?

14 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: So, I just want  
15 to say thank you for all the work that you've done  
16 to push us. I think the reminder that we have to  
17 think about resiliency in the way and not just, you  
18 know, for hurricanes but for heat waves which, you  
19 know, have really even been, you know, more  
20 dangerous in many ways for seniors across the  
21 country is, is, is very good and all the tested,  
22 the work that you've done over the years keeping  
23 that front and center, that was the spirit of this,  
24 of this legislation and I think our work, so, I  
25 just want to say thank you and ask specific

2 questions about, at this point a long, uh, agenda,  
3 but the goal is to create a space to where we could  
4 really advance this together so I want to say thank  
5 you for that.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Before we do  
7 the next panel, James, Christine and Lindsay, thank  
8 you very much. Is there anything you'd like to add  
9 based on the testimony you heard this morning from  
10 the deputy, uh, staff that was here for the Mayor  
11 from different agencies because sometimes there's  
12 something that's brought up that you didn't have in  
13 your original testimony? Well, that's good, it's  
14 like a teacher asking for righteous questions and  
15 there's no questions. What I like, especially  
16 Christine, is the three aging in place ideas, um,  
17 and I think the tool kit incentivizing building  
18 owners has to be realized because a lot of this is  
19 being asked and we have to provide realistic  
20 expectations on both sides, uh, and the co-  
21 provisions so I'd like you to expand on those as we  
22 go further with the task force also okay?

23 CHRISTINE HUNTER: Thank you.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Thank you very  
25 much.

2 CHRISTINE HUNTER: Okay.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Okay, our next  
4 panel, Leo Asen, Bobbie Sackman or "Dear Bobbie",  
5 John Napolitano, and Gary Gutterman.

6 [OFF MIC]

7 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: And we still  
8 have some more panels so I'm going to try and keep  
9 that three minutes. If you have a long testimony,  
10 try to summarize because we're going to not be able  
11 to finish it.

12 [OFF MIC]

13 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: I just want to  
14 apologize to this wonderful and esteemed panel of  
15 all friends in advance. I'm glad it looks like you  
16 have mostly written testimony. We will be eager to  
17 work with and follow up with you budget season,  
18 it's such an important hearing, we wanted to push  
19 forward with it immediately but it creates.

20 UNKNOWN WOMAN'S VOICE: That's our,  
21 that's our packet.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER LANDER: Super, thanks.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Hi, if you can  
24 all identify yourselves and anyone who wants to  
25 testify first that's fine.

2 LEO ASEN: Good morning my name is Leo  
3 Asen and I am Chief Innovation Officer at Self Help  
4 Community Services in New York. Our brief comments  
5 are focused on the importance in providing housing  
6 with services as essential ingredients to maintain  
7 the wellness, quality of life and overall  
8 independence of seniors living in affordable  
9 housing. Self-help Community Services is a non-  
10 sectarian not-for-profit organization dedicated to  
11 maintain the independence and dignity of seniors  
12 and at-risk populations through housing, home  
13 healthcare, and social services. Self-help  
14 currently serves over 20,000 New Yorkers and 23  
15 community-based sites throughout New York City. In  
16 1964 Self-help built the first senior rental  
17 housing project constructed of a non-profit  
18 organization in New York. Self-help's portfolio  
19 consists of nine buildings. The buildings range in  
20 age from one to forty-nine years old and includes  
21 923 units that 1,236 residents call home. 70% -  
22 80% of residents are Medicaid eligible and the  
23 residents speak more than a dozen languages and  
24 dialects. Self-help's goal is to put residents'  
25 ability to safely age in the community by making

2 available a range of services to meet their  
3 evolving needs. Services are made available if and  
4 when needed, from community-based providers subject  
5 to resident choice and preference. Residents  
6 require different services as they age. Residents  
7 may initially be independent and benefit from  
8 wellness and prevention programs. As they age and  
9 their health declines the frailty level increases.  
10 They may benefit from congregant meals assistance  
11 maintaining departments, self-care medication,  
12 medication management to ultimately needing  
13 assistance with managing personal care. Self-help  
14 has clear located housing units within its  
15 innovative senior center and with its Alzheimer's  
16 respite program. The Charles B. Wong Community  
17 Health Center, a federally-qualified health center,  
18 will be co-located in our newest building to  
19 provide preventative and primary health care to  
20 residents and the surrounding community in 2015. A  
21 critical element of the self-help system is the  
22 relationship and trust between the resident and  
23 social worker that helps residents overcome  
24 barriers, to utilizing services. The use of  
25 client-centered technology can help to prolong

2 independence through wireless sensor wiring  
3 systems, self-help kiosks for self monitoring  
4 chronic health issues, learning to use a computer,  
5 and using the self-help virtual senior center to  
6 minimize social isolation. Self-help are in, Self-  
7 help's newest housing unit in Flushing, Queens was  
8 built technology-ready. Finally, there is a need  
9 for research and program evaluation to provide the  
10 concrete evidence necessary to assess outcomes and  
11 the economic value of housing with services  
12 programs. Thank you for your time and for allowing  
13 me to speak with you today. It is our hope that a  
14 senior housing task force once established, will go  
15 forward and propose changes to the laws, rules,  
16 regulations and policies, where appropriate to  
17 improve the lives of New York's Seniors.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Clearly a  
19 timed professional, Leo. [laugh] Thank you.  
20 Bobbie?

21 BOBBIE SACKMAN: Hi, almost a good  
22 afternoon.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: We're getting  
24 there.

2 BOBBIE SACKMAN: Bobbie Sackman,  
3 Council of Senior Centers and Services. I'm  
4 actually not going to read the whole testimony,  
5 just try to highlight some point if I could? Uh,  
6 CSCS has a housing committee which we have quite a  
7 number of members here today, we represent about 25  
8 senior housing providers across the City that for  
9 decades have both developed and operated senior  
10 housing. They represent an upwards of 15,000 units  
11 of housing for low income seniors across the five  
12 boroughs. We, um, so we represent the many of the  
13 organizations that are the non-profits, that are in  
14 the business that are doing this and we hope to be  
15 able to bring to the table their, their knowledge,  
16 um, which is very intimate because as you might  
17 know, housing financing is, can be very  
18 complicated. We, we, also, um, want to do a survey  
19 of parking lots. The 202 buildings, has always  
20 been a requirement of parking lots and ironically  
21 it might be giving us a way of having land and so  
22 CSCS plans to do this survey to find out, at least,  
23 you know, what's the best estimate of the number of  
24 units of senior housing that would be feasible to  
25 build and what are the zoning changes that are

2 needed? I know you raised very good points earlier  
3 Council Member Vallone about going to local  
4 communities in need of zoning changes. My  
5 understanding is that land is about 30% of the cost  
6 and of course finding land in New York City is  
7 gold. I guess it's priceless. We will need zoning  
8 changes. In your packet you actually have a,  
9 there's a hand out there that sort of gives some  
10 general zoning recommendations, we will be drilling  
11 down on that. HPD represented, if, we are working  
12 really closely with HPD and I have to say they,  
13 they have been very responsive to senior housing  
14 in, in this plan and we believe moving forward.  
15 Um, the question about service coordinators wasn't  
16 fully answered. HUD does fund some service  
17 coordinators nationally, but most of the building  
18 202 or other financed senior housing, they do not  
19 have service coordinators, they have existing, um,  
20 practice that both HPD and HDC does not allow  
21 providers to put the cost of the, uh, service  
22 provider, I'm sorry, yes, the service coordinator  
23 in the operating budget which means they all have  
24 to run around and get grants and other ways of  
25 funding it. There is no City funding stream,

2 whether it will go through DFTA or elsewhere. So,  
3 the point being, there's no established policy for  
4 service coordinators and if somebody is moving in  
5 at aged 70 or so and they're still more  
6 independent, then we want them to stay there. This  
7 is just somebody who can help coordinate services  
8 as somebody ages in place. Um, we're also  
9 targeting in our paper, which is in your packet, we  
10 believe that this is a major ground-breaking paper.  
11 Again, we used the knowledge of, of all these  
12 organizations and their staff. We targeted a  
13 particular group of seniors in general. These were  
14 people that were above the Medicaid level but they  
15 don't have a lot of money. If you have social  
16 security, your income is, averages \$14,700 a year  
17 so we'd have Medicaid redesign, we have "New York  
18 New York" and these are the seniors that are not  
19 eligible for those funding streams to get housing  
20 with supportive services. We need a new program.  
21 We need something developed that brings in housing  
22 with services, that brings in this group of seniors  
23 in particular. Um, and, and, of course the crux of  
24 this is also going to be to find a rental subsidy  
25 for it. This is the group that really, in some

2 ways, it's like a case management problem. The  
3 people above Medicaid have little or nothing to go  
4 to or long waiting lists to sit on. And I just  
5 want to make one final, um, comment on Intro 337.  
6 It is in our testimony that we welcome the concept  
7 of the task force but we would like to take a  
8 second look at how broadly-based it is, um, and how  
9 it could have the unintended consequence of so  
10 broadly-based that we lose sight of who we're  
11 targeting and what the focus is with seniors and  
12 what the outcomes are, and, and to make sure that  
13 we truly know the road we want to go down and how  
14 we can work with the issues.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Bobbie you  
16 have a time frame on the parking lot surveys?

17 BOBBIE SACKMAN: I can't sit here and  
18 say honestly a time frame but we're looking at  
19 months not years. I just don't know how long it  
20 would take. First of all we're, we're also in the  
21 process of, um, hopefully getting, we're trying to  
22 get some funding for it, we're trying to figure out  
23 how to do it but we're have actually identified,  
24 um, somebody who can help us do it and, you know,

2 hopefully we're talking more about months, but I  
3 can't tell you...

4 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: We'd like to  
5 coordinate with you on that based on what the  
6 knowledge we have of the districts and the  
7 community boards and existing lots that may fit  
8 within that. I think what we were talking about  
9 earlier, if this is going to move, I think your  
10 help will be critical, so.

11 BOBBIE SACKMAN: Okay great that will  
12 be great. Thank you.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Thanks.

14 GARY GUTTERMAN: Thank you Council  
15 Member, uh, Vallone, um, for inviting me to speak  
16 today. My name is Gary Gutterman, I'm the Chief  
17 Housing Officer and Met Council on Jewish Poverty.  
18 For more than four decades Met Council has been a  
19 first line of defense for New Yorkers in need  
20 fighting poverty through comprehensive social  
21 services. Since 1985, when we opened our first  
22 housing development in the Bronx our services have  
23 included affordable housing because we believe that  
24 a safe and affordable home is a key element in  
25 helping someone out of poverty and we continue to

2 build and operate housing for senior citizens. We  
3 have over 1,500 units of affordable housing, um,  
4 with another 287 in development at 26 site in every  
5 borough and this includes 717 units of HUD 202  
6 Housing and 488 units of inclusionary housing in  
7 Manhattan and Brooklyn. And what we've done with  
8 the inclusionary housing program is, um, that we  
9 devoted all of those units with the authorization  
10 of the division of human rights of the state to  
11 senior citizens and, uh, we think that is a great  
12 need in the City and we will continue to work in  
13 the inclusionary housing program. Um, of the  
14 202's, we did a recent project that we call Council  
15 Tower VI that has been held out as a model and was  
16 mentioned in these hearings today, and it is a  
17 model because it was a winning formula the  
18 collaborators in the project. Those being HUD,  
19 which got a very good site, um, being built by an  
20 experienced sponsor that could leverage the gap  
21 funding necessary to complete the job, HPD was able  
22 to get the building built with largely federal  
23 money and NYCHA land, free land. This was built on  
24 the Pomonok Campus of NYCHA in Queens and they were  
25 able, and HPD threw in some home money needed to

2 complete the gap funding and then NYCHA was able to  
3 move under occupied seniors to free up units in  
4 their Pomonok development and other development  
5 across the City. All of our developments have on-  
6 site staff who look after the residents' needs.  
7 Having on-site needs staff is essential to address  
8 a variety of residents needs as they age including  
9 preventing isolation and injuries as well as  
10 connecting to appropriate medical care. As a  
11 holistic social service agency our residents also  
12 have access to all Met Council services, including  
13 crisis intervention services, food pantries, snap  
14 enrollment and other extended services. All of  
15 which, we give great thank to the New York City  
16 Council for helping us provide. Having 15 years of  
17 housing experience at Met Council myself, I  
18 consider the hardest part of my job has been to  
19 hear the daily requests I get for housing and the,  
20 um, the need to refer people to waiting lists and,  
21 uh, those, many of those waiting lists are closed  
22 because there are so many people on them. Um, I  
23 refer the, um, the committee to, uh, the  
24 recommendations I put in my testimony and I thank  
25 you very much and the ability to serve here.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Thank you.

3 JOHN NAPOLITANO: Sorry, good  
4 afternoon. My name is John Napolitano and I'm here  
5 to talk about to you about the issue of senior  
6 housing. Uh, through my involvement with the  
7 advocacy of CSCS and the Senior Housing Providers  
8 Committee, while also serving in my role as  
9 Director of Community Development and Planning for  
10 HANAC. Um, as you know, Mr. Chairman, of HANAC  
11 currently serves over 25,000 clients annually, a  
12 large segment of whom are seniors and we've been in  
13 the Western, Queens community since 1972. For the  
14 past 20 years we've, uh, uh, we've expanded, uh,  
15 involvement in the sponsorship of affordable  
16 housing for seniors and have sponsored the  
17 development of 350 units encompassing three  
18 buildings and had a fourth project in the pipeline  
19 that is set to break ground, uh, next summer in  
20 Corona, Queens. One of the projects that we  
21 recently complete, HANAC-PCA Senior Residents on  
22 33<sup>rd</sup> Street in Astoria, received 2,743 applications  
23 for 65 available apartments and if you take the  
24 ratio of applications to, uh, uh, available  
25 apartments, uh, and this is concluded by *The Daily*

2 News, you have a better chance getting into Harvard  
3 than you do, uh, landing an apartment at that  
4 building, and, uh,...

5 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: The reason I  
6 bring this up now is I remember the battle..

7 JOHN NAPOLITANO: Yeah...

8 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: At the  
9 community board at that location, with the parking  
10 lot, and all the other questions that were brought  
11 up and that was like World War Three and yet once  
12 it was built, the demand went through the roof.  
13 That's why I said, understanding the battles and  
14 the hurdles that are going to be coming and trying  
15 to bring that to a head before they happen, I'm  
16 going to give you extra time. I appreciate you  
17 mentioning that as an example, because I think,  
18 especially for council members, having those living  
19 examples of what's going to come as a result of  
20 this task force is important, so go ahead.

21 JOHN NAPOLITANO: Thank you. Uh, and  
22 just additionally, one of the tenants who did apply  
23 for an apartment, uh, was profiled in *The New York*  
24 *Times* article on April 30<sup>th</sup> about senior housing.  
25 Her name is Norma Delarosa and Ms. Delarosa lives

2 in an apartment with her husband, uh, and they pay  
3 a rent of \$1,176, where their combined monthly  
4 income is \$1,580, so you can see they are  
5 encountering quite a severe rent burden and right  
6 now she had to be placed on the waiting list for  
7 that building, which swelled to 3,700 in just 19  
8 months. Just to give you the sense of the demand  
9 in our community. Um, and I just leave you off  
10 with this, um, last tidbit. Just to underscore the  
11 Delarosa's situation, I think speaks to the huge  
12 demand, uh, and trying to address also speaks to  
13 the advocacy efforts of the CSCS, uh, senior  
14 housing providers committee, which is to advocate  
15 for the, uh, production, preservation and, uh,  
16 reform regulation of senior affordable housing and,  
17 um, you know, we applaud the administration's  
18 efforts, uh, for this, um, the housing plan that  
19 they put forward and also, uh, appreciate the  
20 council's, uh, intent with this introductory bill.  
21 Um, moving forward we really believe, uh, that we  
22 can work together to make New York City a more  
23 "Senior Friendly City" to age in place. So, thank  
24 you.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Well on a  
3 personal note, I mean there's Chairs in senior  
4 centers and now acting chair for today, I want to  
5 thank your groups because as a council I don't know  
6 what we would do without your advocacy continuously  
7 and always being here and I know Bobbie, I mean,  
8 there's been so many hearings prior to this one as  
9 the council members are all scurrying to do our  
10 budget and we're all fighting today to make sure  
11 these initiatives, but it's not enough and  
12 expansion of case management is wonderful, and  
13 getting existing few bucks here and there for meals  
14 is portable, but talking about affordable housing,  
15 um, expanding advocacy on every level for seniors  
16 as these numbers explode through the roof and the  
17 realities of what landlords and tenants and seniors  
18 will be facing in the current years. We thank you  
19 especially, with Self-help in my district, I don't  
20 know what we would do without the Self-help on 26<sup>th</sup>  
21 Avenue and your new site in Flushing. Um, it's  
22 overwhelmed and if anyone dare to touch the  
23 programs, the facilities there, there would be not  
24 a minor revolution but a large one. So it just  
25 goes to show how we're all dependent on all these

2 services. Thank you very much urban. Okay, our  
3 next panel, and I thank you guys for staying in  
4 those three minutes, we have Kay Boonschaft, Brian  
5 Sullivan, Elizabeth Esser-Stuart, and Camilla  
6 Sojen. And any World Cup updates would be  
7 appreciated. All four of you if you could  
8 introduce yourselves and we can start from left to  
9 right. Go ahead, once that light's on then you  
10 know.

11 KAY BOONSHOFT: Good afternoon, my name  
12 is Kay Boonshoft and I'm a Director of Community  
13 and Government Relations at Jewish Home Life Care,  
14 um, and appreciate this hearing. Um, we are  
15 pleased to be a member of this CSDS Coalition for  
16 Senior Housing. Jewish Home comprises of the broad  
17 integrated network of senior housing, nursing  
18 facilities in the Bronx, Manhattan and Westchester  
19 and a wide array of community-based services  
20 throughout the Greater New York region. Uh, in  
21 2013, we served over 12,000 clients. Um, our  
22 organization places significant emphasis on serving  
23 clients wherever they choose to live with the goal  
24 of supporting independence, human dignity, and high  
25 quality of life. Consequently, the provision of

2 senior housing is an essential component of our  
3 services with the goal of helping older adults to  
4 age in place for as long as possible. A Jewish  
5 Home owns 479 senior housing units in the borough  
6 of the Bronx and provides services to four NORCs  
7 within the five boroughs. Our campus in the Bronx  
8 includes Kittay House, a Mitchell Lama Independent  
9 Living Facility with 295 apartments, a new Medicaid  
10 assisted living program building that we just built  
11 is beginning to be occupied comprising of 72 units  
12 and three Section 202 Housing of 184 units in  
13 total. Um, I think that, um, just to make this  
14 brief, that we really do appreciate the task force  
15 being formed. We're interested to know how, um,  
16 the seats on that task force will be, um, divided..

17 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: So are we.

18 KAY BOONSHOFT: Um, yeah. We are, um,  
19 so I think we're really enthusiastic about, um,  
20 about that plan, um, just support not only housing  
21 but how senior, um, services and programs fit with  
22 housing. Um, we very much support, um, identifying  
23 sources for, um, service coordinators and senior  
24 housing. It really does make a difference in  
25 allowing people to stay and age in place. It does

2 make a difference and it saves the whole system  
3 money. And, um, we also are very interested in  
4 expanding NORC programs. Um, when the Department  
5 of Aging was here they talked about looking into  
6 the funding that was just allocated for three-year  
7 contracts that most often are, end up being six-  
8 year contracts. That means that a program has a  
9 long time to wait for City funding and, um, that  
10 might be something we would want to look into as  
11 well. Um, so we're grateful for the opportunity to  
12 be here and have this discussion and thank you for  
13 your time.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: It's nice to  
15 hear that those are the same arguments that we were  
16 making, um, with the commissioners, with DFTA and  
17 on the Mayor's side too. Everyone talks about the  
18 success of the NORCs but yet the funding has cut  
19 the program is another four or five years before  
20 another RFP comes out. Many neighborhoods couldn't  
21 put in, because they couldn't meet the requirements  
22 of the NORC itself and yet everyone says "aging in  
23 place" and what that example of aging in place is  
24 to stay with the dignity within your own home. So  
25 I think expanding the NORCs, expanding the funding

2 for the NORCs is critical, so we appreciate your  
3 comments.

4 KAY BOONSHOFT: Thank you.

5 BRIAN SULLIVAN: Good afternoon, my  
6 name is Brian Sullivan, I'm a senior staff attorney  
7 at MFY Legal Services. MYF provides free legal  
8 services to residents to New York across a broader  
9 range of civil legal issues. We prioritize  
10 services to vulnerable and underserved population  
11 such as older New Yorkers and each year we serve  
12 more than 2,000 New Yorkers who are aged 60 or  
13 older and sort of the unique problems that older  
14 New Yorkers cut across the range of services we  
15 provide. You know I'm a housing attorney and that,  
16 I work in single room occupancy units and there is  
17 a large number of seniors in single room occupancy  
18 units and so we're talking to HPD about enforcement  
19 issues earlier, and making sure that these units  
20 are preserved and in good quality, for example, is  
21 a key issue for us. Our main goal, and I think the  
22 main piece we have to add to this conversation, is,  
23 is we're here for preservation. Aging in place is  
24 something that's come up a bunch of times. That's  
25 what we want to do, we want to keep people where

2 they are, we want to preserve affordable housing.  
3 Um, so to that end we just got a few policy  
4 recommendations we'll make, um, I think there was a  
5 good discussion earlier about the "SCRIE" program,  
6 the Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption Program.  
7 One of the problems that we see is that people  
8 don't necessarily know about the program or they  
9 find out about the program when their rent has  
10 already gone up to a fairly high level, so to  
11 increase outreach, to make sure that, um, eligible  
12 New Yorkers know that this exists, take advantage  
13 of it quickly so that the rent isn't too high by  
14 the time they've locked it in at a good rate. Um,  
15 similarly with, um, with outreach to make sure  
16 seniors know about reasonable accommodations in,  
17 and rights they have under the Fair Housing Act,  
18 um, the New York State Human Rights Law and New  
19 York City Human Rights Law, um, if you need  
20 wheelchair accessibility to remain where you are,  
21 if you need hand rails, whatever it is, there's a  
22 number of accommodations that people are legally  
23 entitled to they don't necessarily know about, and  
24 even if you know about could be challenging to  
25 secure without an attorney, um, just because it is

2 complex to navigating that system. Um, and I  
3 should say the same thing about "SCRIE" actually.  
4 Relatedly, home care services that enable older New  
5 Yorkers to stay in place, um, you know, outreach  
6 and expansion in those services and to really at  
7 this point, accessing these benefits, even when  
8 they are out there can be difficult, civil legal  
9 services are important in that respect so, you  
10 know, are those sort of crisis situations that will  
11 come in is when there's an eviction or something  
12 like that. But there's, there's more that we can  
13 do as well. Um, we can do benefits assessments,  
14 make sure you're getting your senior citizen rent  
15 increase exemption, making sure you're getting  
16 whatever benefits from HRA that you're entitled to  
17 from the Federal Government and so increasing civil  
18 legal services will make sure that whatever breaks  
19 up this council, or excuse me, this committee is  
20 going to be able to accomplish, I'm sure it's a lot  
21 of great stuff. Make sure that seniors can  
22 actually take advantage of that.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Brian, do you  
24 see any existing community programs that we could  
25 stand behind or need to create to bring this

2 information? I think what I have learned in my  
3 first six months is that most of the information  
4 that I have learned in these hearing rooms, my  
5 district has no idea.

6 BRIAN SULLIVAN: You're right.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: And I think  
8 the average person across the 51 districts doesn't  
9 know and I think my goal is to bring that  
10 information back to the districts so obviously  
11 asking the partners here to come, they always say  
12 "yes" but is there anything going now that you can  
13 say that this is working successfully?

14 BRIAN SULLIVAN: Sure, so we do  
15 outreaches in a number of different districts. We  
16 got something with Community Board 2 right now,  
17 where we set up at different locations in Community  
18 Board 2 to individual consultations, "Know Your  
19 Rights" presentations and we're, we're perfectly  
20 happy to do it and expand that in other areas as  
21 well, um, in terms of broader initiatives we'll  
22 have to get back to you, but I know we'll, we'll  
23 get involved with, um, exactly that sort of  
24 outreach you're talking about.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Well one of  
3 the things that I'm thinking about was as we do the  
4 mobile council locations, which I always find  
5 successful because a lot of seniors can't come to  
6 our offices, maybe we can partner at some of those  
7 sites so that in the heavy populated areas we will  
8 know that's going to be an issue where they can't  
9 access you. As attorneys those are the things that  
10 pop into my head as bringing those services and I  
11 know Council Member Chin is Chair has put in the  
12 bill for extending legal services for seniors on  
13 evictions.

14 BRIAN SULLIVAN: Yeah, you know in  
15 that...

16 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Going to,  
17 Mendez, I keep saying Chin but it's Mendez, we all  
18 signed on to it...

19 BRIAN SULLIVAN: Thank you for that as  
20 well, um, and going to, you're right, going to the  
21 people is absolutely a key thing so it is something  
22 we will definitely be interested in.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Thank you.

24 ELIZABETH ESSER-STUART: Hi thank you  
25 for having me, uh, Council Member Vallone and

2 staff, good morning, thank you for the opportunity  
3 to speak about Intro Number 337 and Local Law to  
4 Create a Senior Housing Task Force and how the City  
5 can expand and preserve affordable housing options  
6 for seniors. My name is Elizabeth Esser-Stuart and  
7 I am the Special Projects Coordinator and Legal  
8 Help, a division of the New York Legal Assistance  
9 Group. NYLAG is a non-profit law office dedicated  
10 to providing free legal services and civil law  
11 matters to low income New Yorkers. I am joined  
12 today by Camilla Sojen, Associate Director of  
13 Housing Law in NYLAG's general legal services  
14 division. We commend all those who have worked on  
15 this law and any efforts to address the housing  
16 needs of seniors in New York City and strongly urge  
17 its passing. Housing is a critical issue for many  
18 New Yorkers, but especially seniors. As baby  
19 boomers age, the elderly population on a fixed  
20 income will grow and these problems will become  
21 even more acute. As a free legal services  
22 providers, provider, we see how the seniors are  
23 affected by the threat of or actual loss of housing  
24 on a daily basis. As this body is acutely aware  
25 this problem is particularly severe for elderly low

2 income people with serious health problems. Many  
3 seniors with incomes that were once sufficient are  
4 struggling to remain in their homes and pay their  
5 medical bills. Not only do they have to deal with  
6 the health problem itself but the expense of the  
7 health problem. The stress and the uncertainty of  
8 facing eviction exacerbates their deteriorating  
9 conditions. To mention just a few examples NYLAG  
10 just recently assisted an elderly client who  
11 suffers from advanced COPD who is residing in a  
12 rent stabilized apartment with her disabled son and  
13 was sued in Housing Court by her landlord for  
14 nonpayment of rent. After numerous court  
15 appearances NYLAG and opposing counsel reached an  
16 agreement that the client was actually owed, um,  
17 intelligible sizable rent credit in the amount of  
18 about \$1,850. The landlord's case was dismissed by  
19 the judge. However, the client was terrified of  
20 losing her housing and may will have, but for our  
21 intervention. Frankly, it is unconscionable in our  
22 City that individuals who have contributed to  
23 society cannot retire in relative comfort, but must  
24 worry about their housing. As such, we commend all  
25 of you again, for those who are working to address

2 this problem. If we could make one suggestion, we  
3 would further urge you to add a member to the  
4 committee who is familiar with City Finance and who  
5 can audit or appropriately review any proposals.  
6 Although more housing is gravely needed, endeavors  
7 to develop housing often ends up very profitable  
8 for private investors and should be fully  
9 investigated and explore their independent  
10 financial analysis before it is approved. Also, we  
11 urge that the Commissioner of Health and Mental  
12 Hygiene be allowed to be a man or a woman or  
13 transgender or any gender. No that is a lie, it  
14 just has his or her, yeah him.. [laugh]

15 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: The analogy is  
16 good as long I think whoever it is as long..[laugh]

17 ELIZABETH ESSER-STUART: Of course we  
18 also strongly urge the funding for legal  
19 representation for all income, all low income  
20 seniors in Housing Court as a relatively  
21 inexpensive measure to preserve affordable housing.  
22 In 2013 NYLAG assisted thousands of individuals and  
23 families with housing issues. New York City  
24 Housing Court is notoriously complicated and  
25 difficult to navigate. This burden should not be

2 placed on low income seniors to handle alone. In  
3 fact, all low income seniors should be entitle to  
4 full representation in any housing proceeding for  
5 exactly the reasons that you mentioned, um, there  
6 are more benefits that are available and it  
7 shouldn't just be in crisis mode. We would also  
8 urge this task force once formed, to further  
9 explore subsidizing senior housing programs like  
10 "SCRIE" and Section 8, we realize that the later is  
11 often dependent on funding from the Federal  
12 Government and hope we can work together to make  
13 sure such programs are fully funded so that seniors  
14 can afford their rent on an on-going basis. Thank  
15 you.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Well, I thank  
17 the panel and I also both you and Brian in for  
18 providing those critical legal services something  
19 hopefully you will take part of. If I submitted a  
20 request for additional senior task force, but for  
21 the more specific purpose, for looking at elder  
22 abuse and the need for guardianship and protection  
23 within APS and I think your roles will be critical  
24 on that coming up on another area the City must do  
25 better in fighting for those who fall through the

1 COMMITTEE ON AGING 113

2 cracks, don't take the steps to sort of protecting  
3 themselves, find eviction. Landlords can prey on  
4 that ability to having a 911 brought in and have  
5 that person sent to the hospital and they return  
6 back to the apartment and they start an eviction  
7 proceeding and the next thing you know they never  
8 needed a guardianship but they have no place to go.  
9 So that was my world prior to sitting here so I  
10 always thought, you know, we're going to fight for  
11 that. Do you want to add something?

12 [OFF MIC]

13 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: You have to  
14 identify yourself.

15 CAMILLA SABINE: My name is Camilla  
16 Sabine from the New York Legal Assistance Group as  
17 well. I just wanted to point out that NYLAG  
18 already has what we call a "Mobil Legal Help  
19 Center", a basically big van with three offices on  
20 it where we go into the community on a regular  
21 basis to do intakes and such, and so, I mean,  
22 certainly, I'm sure that unit would be happy to  
23 talk about outreach, you know, in a way that it  
24 already exists.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Perfect.

1 COMMITTEE ON AGING 114

2 CAMILLA SABINE: And we also have an  
3 elder law project that deals with guardianship, so  
4 we focus not just on the housing part of things,  
5 but we would be happy to talk with the council or  
6 the committee, or yourself about, uh, any of those  
7 issues.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Yeah, I would  
9 like to expand on that. I think there's a need for  
10 community guardians and for partnerships because a  
11 lot of times the courts don't have anyone to put  
12 the individuals into a proper facility or to care  
13 for a person or a group that needs to fight for  
14 them, so, thank you very much.

15 CAMILLA SABINE: Thank you.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Okay, out last  
17 panel? Uh, Ray, Raymond Kozma, Daniel Johnson,  
18 Cordett Duff and John Tynan. I think we called  
19 John before but John's back. See what happens when  
20 you step out of the room John?

21 [OFF MIC] I was here.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: We did that on  
23 purpose, we waited for you to go out.

24 [OFF MIC]

25

1 COMMITTEE ON AGING 115

2 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: So good  
3 afternoon, if each person could identify themselves  
4 and I guess we'll start from your right, my left.  
5 Hi John.

6 [OFF MIC] Just press the red button?

7 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Yeah, if that  
8 red button is not lit then we can't hear you.

9 JOHN TYNAN: Okay I got it.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: There you go.

11 JOHN TYNAN: John Tynan from Brooklyn  
12 Catholic Charities.

13 RAYMOND KOZMA: I'm Raymond Kozma from  
14 Integrity Senior Services on Staten Island.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Good afternoon  
16 Ray.

17 CLAUDETTE DUFF: Claudette Duff from  
18 Integrity Senior Services Staten Island.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Is that on  
20 Claudette? Just want to make sure the mic is on.

21 [OFF MIC]

22 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Yes, good  
23 thank you.

24 CLAUDETTE DUFF: Claudette Duff,  
25 Integrity Senior Services, Staten Island.

1 COMMITTEE ON AGING 116

2 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Good afternoon  
3 Claudette.

4 DANIELLE JOHNSON: Danielle Johnson,  
5 Integrity Senior Services, Staten Island.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: John, we'll  
7 start with you.

8 JOHN TYNAN: In 1975, uh, Father  
9 Sullivan and Councilman Vallone..

10 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: I know that  
11 name.

12 JOHN TYNAN: Stood in front of the  
13 Astoria Housing and we buil..., and with tremendous  
14 hostility from the community about building, what  
15 would be Catholic Charities first senior building,  
16 the Catherine Sheridan Apartments on 31<sup>st</sup> Road and  
17 23<sup>rd</sup> Street. It took a great deal of courage  
18 because they were not well-received initially but  
19 they, they held their ground and eventually got  
20 built and it is a model now over 40 years of what  
21 senior housing can do for a community. I say that  
22 in a matter of courage as this is the same kind of  
23 courage needed today because for us to develop more  
24 senior housing, Catholic Charities has developed  
25 over 2,100 units of senior housing in Brooklyn and

2 Queens. Much of it, uh, based on re-using church  
3 owned property like the Catherine Sheridan, um,  
4 some with City property like Monsignor Campbell in  
5 Astoria that again, Councilman Vallone helped us  
6 get. Uh, but to do more housing, we have to change  
7 some of the zoning codes which you mentioned before  
8 and we have to up-zone some areas, or specific  
9 sites for seniors, the other issue that I think we  
10 support very much, we have a lot of parking lots in  
11 our senior buildings. We own over 25 senior  
12 buildings in Brooklyn and Queens. We're not  
13 parking lot attendants. We are senior citizen  
14 housing persons who provide great social services.  
15 Only 7% of all of our tenants use, own cars, so...

16 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: I think that  
17 is a very important fact that is often misused at  
18 the hearings prior to the creation of these  
19 facilities that there is not enough parking, not  
20 enough parking. So again, your testimony is going  
21 to be very important as we push forward on this,  
22 but go ahead, keep going.

23 JOHN TYNAN: Right, so we're in a sense  
24 supporting the, um, council's senior services, a  
25 call for action, we're working with them, but, and

2 we support basically the idea of focusing on senior  
3 housing, whether the model is the task force,  
4 whatever. I support a little bit what I mean,  
5 Council Man Levin said and you said also, Council  
6 Member Vallone, that we ought to get going at it.  
7 You know, I think we have enough knowledge, now we  
8 have to get going, we have to build these units and  
9 I think we have a great, uh, uh, ability to build  
10 these units in a not-for-profit world. Um, and we  
11 should go about doing it, uh, because, uh, you  
12 know, we have huge waiting lists on our 202's and  
13 someone mentioned it could be over a hundred  
14 thousand if you collected them all. And I think  
15 that's a modest number because, you know, even at  
16 Catherine Sheridan Apartments, when you get over a  
17 thousand on the waiting list, what's the point of  
18 keeping the waiting list? You know, it could be  
19 2,000 it could be 3,000. You know I'm saying if  
20 you cut it at a certain point just because it's  
21 unmanageable not because it was the seniors don't  
22 need the housing. So I think we have to work a  
23 little harder together, we have to show the same  
24 courage that Father Sullivan showed in those days  
25 to accomplish what we need to o today. Thank you.

2 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Thank you  
3 John. I think I know the honorable mention.

4 [OFF MIC]

5 CLAUDETTE DUFF: Good morning I want to  
6 start out by thanking the City Council on two of  
7 you that's left, thank you for hanging in there  
8 with us and, uh, we came all the way from Staten  
9 Island so we ran into a lot of traffic but I'm glad  
10 that you stayed to hear us speak. Um, I spoke in  
11 front of this, um, City Council many times and  
12 after Super Storm Sandy regarding the lack of  
13 preparedness for seniors and, um, and today we're  
14 here with one of the solutions that our agency came  
15 up with by creating a non-profit and just after  
16 Super Storm Sandy the social workers from our  
17 agency, Integrity Senior Services, went to our  
18 local shelters to volunteer. On the second day I  
19 was asked to oversee the placement of all evacuees  
20 60 and above. At the time I had no idea that what  
21 I was agreeing to because our agency is to provide,  
22 um, case management and mental health counseling.  
23 Um, we never really focused on the housing part. I  
24 had no idea, um, the shortage of senior housing and  
25 to those placed in that position. Um, therefore

2 after having doors slammed in my face, unreturned  
3 hundreds of calls, um, I was extremely frustrated  
4 and, um, the last thing that happened was that one  
5 of the local hotels started throwing the seniors  
6 out because they had pre-booked rooms and they  
7 wanted them out and they had no place to go so out  
8 of sheer frustration, um, I started looking outside  
9 of the box and I found a very large home that was  
10 in disrepair and at the time thousands of  
11 volunteers was coming all over this country to  
12 volunteer on Staten Island and I was ab..., given  
13 permission by the owners to renovate it and, um,  
14 and put our seniors in, and it happened very  
15 quickly, in five days we were able to start taking  
16 seniors out of the hotel and putting them into this  
17 house, which is a beautiful house. Um, out of  
18 that, out of the storm senior housing was created,  
19 which is a non-profit. Um, we want to talk a  
20 little bit about the background of the whole idea  
21 of, uh, um, of group homes and, um, Raymond will  
22 talk a little bit about that.

23 RAYMOND KOZMA: The devastation that  
24 was caused by Sandy revealed a large segment of  
25 the senior population that was very fragile,

2 just holding on, people suffering with mental  
3 illness and especially with dementia with no  
4 family and no income and pretty fragile  
5 population. The parallel analogy in my mind  
6 went back to the Willow Brook problem, when  
7 publicity was given on that problem on how the  
8 abuse of the children with developmental  
9 disabilities was brought to the public, it was  
10 this outcry and eventually Willow Brook was  
11 closed. There was federal legislation passed  
12 protecting the rights of those with  
13 disabilities but the group home idea was also  
14 developed. The group home allowing a small  
15 number of individuals with disability who could  
16 not live on their own to live together in a  
17 private residence within the local community  
18 and here they would receive appropriate  
19 assistance, supportive services and supervision  
20 that would protect their welfare and foster  
21 their independence and inclusion into the  
22 larger committee. This idea of a small group  
23 residence for seniors is an expanded expansion  
24 on the group home model. The small group  
25 residence for seniors is a private residence in

2 the local community for seniors who need  
3 assistance to help them with age-related  
4 ailments that had impacted their activities and  
5 daily living. It is an effort to create a more  
6 resident-centered environment, one that is more  
7 home-like, less institutional or hospital-like.  
8 It is a place where the physical, medical,  
9 mental, social and emotional needs of each  
10 senior are attended to with care and  
11 compassion, allowing each senior to have the  
12 fullest measure of independence and well being  
13 as possible. So the parallel was the original  
14 of group homes for the children with  
15 developmental disabilities at the one end of  
16 the spectrum of the human life cycle, seniors  
17 at the other end of the cycle of the human  
18 development, especially those with ailments and  
19 mental health issues and dementia. A small  
20 group residence is a vision of another resource  
21 that's filling a niche in housing options and  
22 can be offered to seniors and provides  
23 appropriate levels of care and support that  
24 respect the dignity and the uniqueness of each  
25 individual. So this is some of the basic

2 thinking behind the formation of a specific  
3 house that Danielle can now talk about in more  
4 particular detail.

5 DANIELLE JOHNSON: Hi, good afternoon,  
6 thank you for having us. I'm going to speak about  
7 our out of the Storm Senior Housing and Claudette  
8 mentioned our story. I'm just going to reiterate  
9 that. In 2012, after the devastation of Super  
10 Storm Sandy, a large number of people, including  
11 seniors, lost their homes. Seniors who had been  
12 evacuated found themselves in temporary shelters,  
13 on the couches of relatives or sent to live in  
14 hotels. Temporary emergency shelter had given way  
15 to a permanent solution so the need for affordable  
16 senior housing was recognized and the concept of  
17 shared residence for seniors was developed. By  
18 November 15, 2012, less than a month after Super  
19 Storm Sandy, devastated Staten Island, Out of the  
20 Storm Senior Housing opened its doors to its first  
21 home, located in the Tottenville section of Staten  
22 Island. In March 2013, we opened a spacious ranch-  
23 style home in Doggin Hills on Staten Island. Over  
24 the years to come, we intend to establish more  
25 homes. Our mission, Out of the Storm Senior

2 Housing is a non-profit organization whose mission  
3 is to provide seniors with a family life,  
4 affordable and stable living arrangement. Our  
5 private homes are located in residential  
6 neighborhoods and provide a warm, comfortable and  
7 safe living environment. Because the residences  
8 are private homes within the community, the stigma  
9 of institutionalization is removed. With the  
10 dependable routine and stability provided by the  
11 home, the senior residents enjoy as much  
12 independence, dignity, companionship and peace of  
13 mind as possible. Our homes - each home has a  
14 unique characteristic and provides a warm,  
15 comfortable and family-focused atmosphere. Each  
16 senior has his or her own private room and can  
17 furnish it with their own belongings. Common areas  
18 of the home, such as the living room, family room  
19 and outside areas are shared by all. Each home has  
20 a full-time, live-in, home manager who is a  
21 certified nursing assistant fully insured and  
22 bonded. Additional trained professionals assist  
23 the home manager in providing personal care,  
24 housekeeping, healthy and nutritious meals,  
25 medication management and socialization

2 opportunities. The security provided by a full-  
3 time housing staff helps to establish a dependable  
4 routine and stability that adds to the peace of  
5 mind and the well being of the residents. Our  
6 Volunteers - next to our precious residents, our  
7 dedicated staffs are our greatest assets. Our  
8 partnerships with community organizations,  
9 businesses and ordinary people provide well-needed  
10 time and resources to help keep the costs low for  
11 our residents.

12 CLAUDETTE DUFF: In closing, um, we see  
13 endless possibilities for our senior housing ideas.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: So do we. I  
15 like everything you just said.

16 CLAUDETTE DUFF: Huh?

17 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: That was me,  
18 the voice from beyond. I said so do we, I like  
19 everything you just said.

20 DANIELLE JOHNSON: Thank you.

21 CLAUDETTE DUFF: We have real estate on  
22 brokers willing to work with us. So, they're  
23 really excited about giving us homes. Um, we see  
24 communities such as the LGBT Communities, who have  
25 long been advocating for senior residence, um,

2 having more of a possibility with our model. With  
3 three or four people that can form a home.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: So how many  
5 locations do you have now? I know you mentioned  
6 Tottenville, but how many others do you have?

7 CLAUDETTE DUFF: That is not, only two.  
8 This is the second one we just did.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Do you have  
10 any issues with zoning limitations?

11 CLAUDETTE DUFF: No.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Because you  
13 mentioned private homes, I would think that's

14 CLAUDETTE DUFF: There is zero  
15 administrative cost. It is managed by a volunteer  
16 board and the residents actually pay their rent to  
17 the homeowner and, and, everything, there is no  
18 zoning because it's, um, a family of three or four  
19 people.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: There may be  
21 something we look forward to, to be aware of a  
22 future problem, maybe one or two, because I can  
23 certainly see one deciding to, there's always one  
24 on the block, right, that's going to file a  
25 miscellaneous complaint saying that there's too

2 many people using this facility and it's a great  
3 opportunity but I think when we're talking about  
4 zoning and putting protection going forward with  
5 these we may want to include some type of  
6 protection for a group or a home like you were,  
7 that's within a residential community that doesn't  
8 fall subject to an existing department of buildings  
9 requirement. I think...

10 CLAUDETTE DUFF: When we first started,  
11 we reached out the Lawyers Alliance and they did  
12 research for us and guide us and according to them,  
13 there were no zoning.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: No, I'm trying  
15 to help you. I'm just trying to short cut  
16 something that may arise in the future.

17 CLAUDETTE DUFF: Yeah but definitely,  
18 thank you so much.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: I just see  
20 that all the time and someone tries to do the right  
21 thing and someone's out there to protect their own  
22 interest and they file a complaint.

23 CLAUDETTE DUFF: Okay, thank you so  
24 much.

1 COMMITTEE ON AGING 128

2 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: So I'm  
3 interested in expanding and doing more about what  
4 you do. I think it's a great opportunity and John,  
5 do you have any locations that are on target for  
6 you as a possible site? I should have asked that  
7 of the panel before you two.

8 JOHN TYNAN: We're very active as you  
9 know, uh, Council Member. We tend to focus on  
10 church properties owned by the Catholic church who  
11 is not being used anymore of the original purpose  
12 like the school or a playground so we're pretty  
13 active looking all over Brooklyn and Queens with  
14 the Bishop to see if we can find sites that will  
15 allow us to use. We've been very aggressive. I  
16 think over 25 properties in Brooklyn and Queens are  
17 used for affordable housing by Catholic Charities  
18 on diocesan property.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: We would like  
20 to help you in that endeavor so if there is a list  
21 or a possible list, we'd like to know.

22 JOHN TYNAN: I'll get that to you.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: Thank you very  
24 much.

25 GROUP: Thank you.

1 COMMITTEE ON AGING 129

2 COUNCIL MEMBER VALLONE: And with that,  
3 I believe we can conclude our hearing today and  
4 thank you everyone for staying through.

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7 [gavel]

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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. 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.



Date: 06/25/2014