

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON RECOVERY AND RESILIENCY JOINTLY
WITH THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING

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February 28, 2017
Start: 1:11 p.m.
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HELD AT: 250 Broadway - Committee Rm
16th Fl

B E F O R E: MARK TREYGER
Chairperson

RITCHIE J. TORRES
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Rose Mendez
Margaret S. Chin
Donovan J. Richards
Carlos Menchaca
Eric A. Ulrich
Steven Matteo
James G. Van Bramer
Vanessa L. Gibson
Donovan J. Richards
Laurie A. Cumbo
Rafael Salamanca, Jr.

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

Sheila Smalls, Resident Leader
O'Dwyer Gardens

Shirley Aikens, Resident Leader
Carey Gardens

Wanda Feliciano, Resident Leader
Unity Towers

Deborah Carter, Resident Leader
Grayson Houses

Loretta Brumfield, Resident Leader
Coney Island Houses

Linda Harrison, TA President
Haber Houses

Joy Sinderbrand, Vice President
Office of Recovery and Resilience
New York City Housing Authority, NYCHA

Deborah Goddard, Executive Vice President
Capital Projects
New York City Housing Authority, NYCHA

Lavon Chambers, Executive Director
Greater New York LECET

Karen Blondell, Resident of Red Hook Houses
Member Fifth Avenue Committee & NY Rising

Inez Robinson-Turpan
Appearing for TA President Patricia
Campus Plaza Housing 2, Lower East side

Charlene Nimmons, Resident & Resident Assoc. Leader
Wyckoff Gardens & Found & Executive Director of
Public Housing Communities

Claudia Coger, Resident
Astoria Houses

Edward Tyrie, President
Gowanus Houses Resident Association

Robert White, Resident, Red Hook East Houses
Member Tenant Association
Member Outreach Team for the Recovery to Resiliency

Paul Mankowitz, Chair
Soil and Water Conservation District

Jasmine Copen
NYCHA Resident

Michaela O'Connell, Community Outreach Team
New York City Housing Authority, NYCHA

Catalina Singleton, Resident
Astoria Houses

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[sound check, pause][gavel]

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Good morning

everyone. I'm City Council Member Ritchie Torres. I chair the Committee on Public Housing, and I'm proud to be joined by the outstanding Chair of the Committee on Recovery and Resiliency, Mark Treyger, and the subject of today's hearing is Sandy Recovery and Resiliency projects in NYCHA developments. We will start with an opening statement from Council Member Treyger, and then proceed directly to our first panel.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you. Good afternoon. I'm Council Member Mark Treyger, Chair of the Committee on Recovery and Resiliency and proud representative of the 47th Council District including, of course, Coney Island. I am grateful to be joined by my colleague the outstanding Council Member Ritchie Torres, Chair of the Committee on Public Housing. Today, our committees will be holding our third joint hearing on the progress of Hurricane Sandy recovery work at NYCHA developments. Three years ago almost to the day we held our first hearing in the community center at Carey Gardens in Coney Island, the first ever City Council hearing

1 held on site at a NYCHA development. To highlight
2 the unacceptable conditions of provisional heating
3 assistance. With the advocacy of residents like
4 tenant association leader Elma Joiner who has since
5 passed away, that brought the issue into focus.
6 After that hearing, the malfunctioning boilers were
7 replaced, and nearly two years ago this city and the
8 federal government announce a \$3 billion FEMA 428
9 Grant to help rebuild 33 developments in Brooklyn,
10 Manhattan and Queens. However, as Council Member
11 Torres and I revealed at our second joint hearing in
12 April 2015, only one development's grant had been
13 formalized. It would take until September 2015,
14 three years after Hurricane Sandy devastated our
15 coastal community for FEMA and NYCHA to finalize the
16 project worksheets for all developments. As the
17 fifth anniversary of Sandy approaches, only one
18 development has been finished the Lower East Side
19 rehab spots. The remaining Sandy impacted residents,
20 nearly 60,000 in total are still waiting for their
21 lives to be made whole again to have a safe and
22 comfortable home again. With nine impacted
23 developments in my district, I keenly feel the
24 frustration of my constituents who want to return to
25

1 their normal lives. Many community centers in my
2 district were damage, forcing non-profits, youth
3 programs and senior support services to compete for
4 space. While I truly appreciate the impressive work
5 that NYCHA's Disaster Recovery Community Outreach
6 Team has done to keep residents and TA presidents
7 apprised of update. Early over-competence and the
8 lack of observable progress have led to tensions in
9 these discussions. At our last hearing, two of my
10 colleagues were told that ground would be broken on
11 their developments in the late summer of 2015. Those
12 developments are still in their procurement stage.
13 It is difficult as a non-resident to feel confident
14 in the current projections that all work will begin
15 by the end of 2017. The Sandy Recovery Projects at
16 NYCHA are incredibly complicated, multi-agency grant
17 agreements involving NYCHA, the New York State
18 Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services,
19 FEMA and to a lesser degree, HUD and OMB. The
20 completion of projects requires coordination between
21 many city agencies and a myriad of private
22 contractors. I do not seek to attach blame to any
23 one party. However, I believe that we owe it to the
24 residents to engage in a serious and frank dialogue
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1
2 about the status of recovery work today including
3 whether Section 3 targets for local hiring are being
4 met. I would again like to thank Chair Torres for
5 joining with me to advocate on behalf of our fellow
6 New Yorkers, all of the members of the committees on
7 Recovery and Resiliency and Public Housing, the
8 committee staff, my staff, the staff of Council
9 Member Torres. Most important of all the resident
10 leaders who have traveled long distances and taken
11 time from the busy schedules to come and share their
12 experiences today. Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So in keeping with
14 the Public Housing Committee's tradition of call
15 residents first, I would like to call the first
16 panel. We have Sheila Smalls for O'Dwyer Gardens,
17 Shirley Aikens from the Sandy—from Carey Gardens
18 [background comments], Wanda Feliciano from Unity
19 Towers, Deborah Carter from Grayson Houses, Loretta
20 Brumfield from Coney Island Houses. [background
21 comments, pause]

22 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I just wanted to
23 announce that we've been joined by Council Member
24 Steven Matteo.

25

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And Council Member
Margaret Chin.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Oh, yes, sorry.
[pause]

SHEILA SMALLS: Good afternoon. My name
is Sheila Smalls. I'm the Resident leader at O'Dwyer
Gardens. I'm here to speak on the progress going on
at O'Dwyer Garden, and a specific incident that
occurred that I shared with my Councilman Mark
Treyger a couple of days, and he was like will you
come back and let us know what had happened. What
happened was, you know, Dwyer Gardens really are
still in the design phase. We only saw one design so
far, and are not even close to the second design. No
one has told us anything. So we don't think we'll
see any type of work in O'Dwyer Gardens any time soon
because we've not even seen the second design. Back
to the work ethic. What happened was they called us
down for a meeting at the office and the manager, and
we were complaining about the scaffolds. So what
happened was they had a worker come. His name was
Egor, and he was in charge of the scaffolding
companies that were coming in. They were going to
take the scaffolds down, and then with other

1 scaffolds. My theory was in the interim if you're
2 going to leave scaffolds not up that means you're
3 leaving my residents in danger. So they said that
4 they would agree to do a back to back. Okay so what
5 they—I asked them if they would hire some of my
6 Section 3 workers, and they said absolutely not that
7 they have to be in the union, and if they were not in
8 the union, they could not hire them. Now, mind you,
9 this is the beginning of the process, and this was
10 approximately in December. Okay, so what happened
11 was I spoke to a gentleman they don't want, and he
12 was with the contracting agency. He spoke very
13 little English, and I just walked over to him. It
14 was a whole group of them, and I was like, Excuse me,
15 are you in a union, and he was like, "Huh?" And is
16 and union and he said no. So, I went to Egor and I
17 said how you have all these people working here and
18 you don't have one person from my development working
19 here, and they're here making money, and why can't my
20 residents make money? And he said, Okay, bring one.
21 That gave me a red flag. Now, you're telling me
22 bring one, but at the beginning when I asked you for
23 30% of workers that are supposed to be there, you
24 told me no they have to be in a union. So something

1 is very fishy there, and again I have an OSHA Card.
2 I went to the class. I lead by example. I'm not
3 going to tell my residents anything that I would not
4 do. So I went to the class. I got my card, and this
5 is a Metro Card to get me on the train, okay, so far
6 that's all that's done for me. I've just had it.
7 That's my testimony. Thank you. [background
8 comments, pause]

10 SHIRLEY AIKENS: [off mic] I have 20
11 copies here. Okay. [on mic]. I do have other
12 copies over here to be given out. Yes. Hello, my
13 name is Shirley Aikens. I would really like to thank
14 our Council Member Mark Treyger for inviting
15 residents from his district to come out for testimony
16 at this time. At this time I'd just like to read my
17 testimony as I go along, alright? My name is Shirley
18 Aikens. I'm the Resident Leader for Carey Gardens.
19 Super Storm--excuse me--Super Storm Sandy, as we all
20 know, was very devastating for many people, but for
21 residents living in Carey Gardens we are still left
22 in the aftermath. Four years later nothing as yet
23 has been done to rebuild. The much needed problems,
24 which would include ground floor apartments in my
25 developments. Playgrounds where our children continue

1 to play on the slides, on the bars, and also there's
2 a sprinkler that is on the ground in that playground
3 that don't work due to the fact that sand and sewage
4 was built up. The smell, the mildew and mold lingers
5 and all tree developments, which holds 680 some units
6 of Carey Gardens. And also within the community
7 center, which doesn't have, you know, working water
8 fountains, and also the smell of mold and mildew, and
9 the water came up to nearly six feet. My community
10 Center is a two-level community center, which is the
11 largest center in Council Member Treyger's district.
12 Carey Gardens PL the daycare center and the
13 development as well continue to have leaky roofs
14 where water comes into the residents' apartments from
15 the top floors. The Willett benches that is placed
16 and for the development at the time was never
17 replaced. They were never cleaned from the feces and
18 the sand, but NYCHA found a way to paint over it.
19 These benches now they are badly deteriorated. As I
20 spoke to you, Council Member Treyger, about them, you
21 know, yes they are deteriorating. We have splinters
22 that's nagging it to the residents that's sitting on
23 the outside, and the seniors now, you know, of course
24 they have to use caution on the backside to they
25

1 won't get splinters neither. Our entrance doors,
2 which is very, you know, deteriorated, that is very
3 bad. It's hard to lock the doors. The peeling of
4 paint, the smell of mildew coming from the mail
5 boxes, which is also deteriorating. Paint is also
6 coming off the walls within the mailboxes in the
7 lobby and crawls spaces as well. I find it
8 ridiculous where these portable borders that are
9 placed in my development they are still installed
10 after all these years and costing millions of
11 dollars. These board-these borders are no-not-excuse
12 me-they are very noisy. There's smoke that come out
13 of it. Many residents complained that they have been
14 sick from it and they also have sleepless nights as I
15 do myself, and I live on the tenth floor, and I can
16 hear the noise coming from these borders. The heat
17 inside the apartments to reach up to 100 degrees.
18 Inside my apartment I had someone come in to test the
19 temperature in my apartment, and it read 98% degrees,
20 which is very hot and very uncomfortable. Some
21 residents had complained that they had got burned,
22 had asthma attacks, nose bleeds and I for one has had
23 seven nose bleeds. [bell] Due to Sandy, it is very
24 unbearable for my residents to live. All one has to
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1 do is look up to the windows and see all open
2 windows. There have many meetings with our Council
3 Member and Assembly Member and at this time no
4 contract work has been done. So Carey Gardens was
5 awarded at least \$1 million from FEMA. The residents
6 need to know when will would the work being. I thank
7 you for my testimony. [pause]

9 WANDA FELICIANO: Hello, my name is Wanda
10 Feliciano I'm Resident Leader of Unity Towers. I'm
11 one of the ones that the contractor started in my
12 development. I do not have any problems with the
13 contractors because they're very nice. They're doing
14 what they have to do. What I'm really upset about is
15 that the methods that you are having to take over the
16 NYCHA properties I don't think is fair. The trailer
17 has been in my back or back of my building for almost
18 four months. It's not their fault. I don't really
19 know who to blame at his moment, but we are stuck
20 with permits and licenses and all that. Within four
21 months they haven't did anything but case the trees
22 in. As you know, a lot of you know, my building is a
23 single building and I only have the back of my
24 building. I do not have a front. So my people don't
25 have nowhere to go, and it's very hard to go in the

1 back of the building now because there's nowhere to
2 sit with the gates around the trees. I do believe
3 that when you do the buildings in Coney Island, maybe
4 before you move them in that quick, you could start a
5 lot of the processing on getting your permits and
6 everything before you take over the property, and
7 other residents they have--the other resident leaders
8 they have bigger property than me. So they could go
9 across the street or they could go around to another
10 building. I don't. The contracts are very nice.
11 They're very--they're good. A gain, witness Smalls
12 about the union working that was really a big, big,
13 big problem. We cannot get none of our residents to
14 work in our buildings. It's--it's--it's a big fight.
15 We don't understand what happened. We've been having
16 meetings for two years with Mark, and we were told
17 all of a sudden on my fifth meeting we were told some
18 lady named Laura Gibbons came and she told us no, no,
19 no you can't do that. You can't do, which is not
20 good. My residents don't like seeing other people
21 come to my property and work when they can't, and I
22 don't think that's right because if you take care of
23 your own house, you'll keep it clean. You got other
24 people coming in and doing your work, they're going
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2 to say oh, well, let them sweet it. I don't. Well,
3 let them clean it. I don't have to, but if you do it
4 yourself, they will take care of it, and I do believe
5 the process needs a little tweeting because like I
6 said I'm the—I'm—I'm one of the only ones I think
7 that is having work done in Coney Island and it's
8 just not happening. Again, it's not the contractor's
9 fault. It's not that. I go to them progress
10 meetings all the time, and they do show me that
11 they're waiting for this. They're waiting for the-
12 the littlest thing they have to get a permit [bell]
13 and it's just aggravating, you know. So I think you
14 need to regroup and see what you can do before you
15 put any more contractors on site and take over the
16 properties of—of ours with trailers and all that
17 other stuff, and then don't do nothing. Thank you.

18 DEBORAH CARTER: Good afternoon. I'm
19 Deborah Carter, Resident Leader for Grayson Houses.
20 I want to first start off with the work that has been
21 done. My—my development has not yet been started by
22 the standing project or what you call it. But I'd
23 like to say that the initial work that was done in my
24 development was really horrible. The contractors
25 that NYCHA had to come in and do the work on the

1 first floor apartments are now falling apart. I want
2 to say also that I think it was very disrespectful
3 for the--the initial work that was going to be done in
4 our developments, we were told after the fact and not
5 to include us on the work that was going to be done
6 until a later date, afterwards. I thought it was
7 really--I mean it's so many people that are coming at
8 us at one time or another to talk to us concerning
9 our developments and not only talking to us to
10 concern our developments, but demanding that is such
11 should be done. I think that it's a total disrespect
12 that we were not at the table when these decisions
13 were being made that you would ask us in our
14 developments being TA presidents for a very long time
15 what is needed into our developments, and then
16 afterwards, after you did the initial work then you
17 would ask us I mean throw it at us and tell us this
18 A-B-C-D has been done. I don't think that the
19 inclusion of the workforce concerning the jobs in our
20 development Workforce 1 and all the other initiatives
21 that NYCHA has thrown together and threw at us is
22 working for our residents. Our residents go to these
23 jobs. They'll be calling all sorts of names, and I
24 think it is remiss that NYCHA should have prepared
25

our residents for these jobs. It should have been a preparation for these young people or people at hand to work, to go to work with this—with these initial jobs the contracts are not taking. In my development I have not one resident that work in my development under the contract and work. Now, from the beginning it was said in the 964 banks that it was 30% of 5% of our residents should be working in our developments. Now, you bring to us local unions and then retract what you are saying or how we're supposed to go about things, and now you're not wanting to hire our residents. You're bring in outside people into our residents, into our developments that don't even live in our developments and it's causing all kinds of frictions with our residents. We live there and we have to deal with this every single time you bring some people from outside into our development. I think it was unfair. I think it was a trick that—that was performed to our residents, and I really, really, really would consider that maybe NYCHA needs to sit down with the resident leaders and find out what it is we need in our development. We have a 100—I have \$183 million--

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: [interposing] In the
interest of time I'm going to ask you to conclude.
Okay, great. Thank you.

DEBORAH CARTER: Okay.

LORETTA BRUMFIELD: Good afternoon. My
name is Loretta Brumfield. I'm the resident leader
for Coney Island Houses. First, I would like to say
back in 2014, the summer of 2014, the Mayor came to
Coney Island Houses and he promised us from Sandy--
Super Storm Sandy had a press release, and I was
asked to speak and tell my story, and we were
promised that we was going to be the--our own
development. Coney Island Houses was going to be one
of the first developments redone, and we was going to
be the development that everybody can see, and
everybody can see that what Super Storm Sandy money
was going to do for Coney Island for anybody who
lived in Zone A, and Coney Island Houses was going to
be the development. This is what Mayor said out of
his mouth because I was there and I spoke. We still
have nothing, and I'm still there, and I'm still
speaking. So I know for a fact that nothing has
happened. As the TA President, which I wasn't then.
I was just a resident then. So he didn't promise me

1 anything because I was the TA president then because
2 I wasn't. I was just a resident. So now I'm TA
3 president. I was—I received a letter that 8 to 10
4 people will be—were able to get jobs in our
5 development. Nobody in our development has a job.
6 They started masonry work meaning just the brickwork
7 with all of that (sic) and nobody from my development
8 works there not even nobody from Coney Island works
9 there. I'm not even saying just Coney Island Houses
10 residents. Nobody from Coney Island period was
11 there. At least 50 to 60 workers that's there every
12 single day. Nobody from Coney Island works there,
13 but every single day there's 50 to 60 workers
14 outside. There's nobody from Coney Island period.
15 Not just Coney Island Houses. There's nobody from
16 Crazen (sic) is there. Nobody from the small
17 developments here. Nobody from Coney Island is
18 there. So we were promised 8 to 10 workers. Then
19 the stipulation came. Then it was they had to be in
20 a union, but I know personally to get in a union you
21 have to pay to get into a union, but you cannot pay
22 to get in a union if you do not have a job. So I
23 know personally you can get in a union without paying
24 to get in a union if someone sponsors you, but they
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1
2 are not going to sponsor you if you don't show them
3 that you can work. If you have a OSHA Card that
4 means that you took the class. So at least give them
5 a chance to show you that they ca do the work and
6 maybe the contractor will hire them, and once they
7 hire them and see that they can do the work, give
8 them that six-week period to see if you want to
9 sponsor them. Then you keep them and put them in a
10 program. I'm saying this from experience because my
11 son did that. Somebody sponsored him and now he's in
12 a union, but he's one of the lucky few, and he
13 doesn't even work in Coney Island because he can't
14 get a job in Coney Island. So he has to go all the
15 way to Queens, but if they were hiring in Coney
16 Island like they promised us in Coney Island, he can
17 be in Coney Island. So that's what I'm saying. I'm
18 saying it from experience. I'm not talking just to
19 be talking. I'm talking from what I know and where
20 I've been and where I live because whether this
21 contract—the heat is so hot in those apartments.
22 Look I'm on eight. I'm burning up. The people in 10
23 is cold. So there's something wrong. I'm—there's
24 something wrong. They need to fix it. People are
25 sick every single day. There's something wrong.

1
2 People are coughing. I'm a survivor. I don't—I'
3 don't want to be sic again. We have to see what's
4 going on. It's something—it's--it's—it's nasty
5 discussing things in this basement. I went down
6 there with the contractors. Mold. I don't want to
7 be sick again from these things. That's the best
8 stuff down there. They need to—they need to get
9 these things out of there.

10 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Thank you for your
11 testimony.

12 LORETTA BRUMFIELD: Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I want to
14 acknowledge Council Member Rosie Mendez from the
15 Lower East Side and today is Rosie's birthday. So
16 happy birthday to Rosie.

17 COUNCIL MEMBERS: Happy birthday, Rosie.

18 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And I know Council
19 Member Treyger has a question for the panel so--
20 [background comments, pause] Alright.

21 LINDA HARRISON: Good afternoon. My name
22 is Linda Harrison. I'm the TA President, the newly
23 elected TA President as of January this year for
24 Haber Houses. My—my experiences with Sandy I'm act—
25 I'm actually going to read my letter that—that they

1 asked me write according to the—the questions they
2 wanted. My experiences with the Sandy Recovery Team
3 is very short. I've only bee living at Haber Houses
4 for about three years now, but—but in—but I've been
5 active as a resident with the various meetings for
6 about a year and a half. My interface with any
7 recovery program personally started in 2015. As a
8 resident of Haber Houses in Coney Island I attended
9 two informational meetings at Carey Gardens and Haber
10 Houses about the FEMA renovations to affected
11 resident structures and replacement of boilers and
12 their projections to begin the recovery process.
13 After taking on the role of Resident Leader at—in
14 2016 at Haber Houses, I was involved in information
15 on the planning meetings at the Carey Gardens
16 Property Management Office for an eminent projects
17 specific to Haber. Through this process, the NYCHA
18 recovery outreach personnel kept me informed by phone
19 and in person and—and attended, and I even attended a
20 couple of the resident meetings. The Sandy recovery
21 team contract—contacted me weekly via phone calls
22 regarding the heat and hot water issues in Haber.
23 They also emailed me regarding the permanent repair
24 work that is supposed to take place at Haber. At
25

1 all-- [coughs] Pardon me. At all times I felt my
2 input was important to the staff. Furthermore, the
3 preliminary work at Haber was completed without
4 significant issues to speak of. The team made sure
5 we were given plenty of notice to prepare for the
6 electrical shut-down and elevator shut-downs. We
7 were please at the installation of the new electrical
8 conduits that went into all three buildings.
9 Moreover, Sandy Recovery Team went above and beyond
10 the call of you office by demonstrating the care and
11 generosity towards the seniors with the Thanksgiving
12 drive that they did. We were able to assist some of
13 the neediest develop--neediest residents in our
14 development that season. We do appreciate the Sandy
15 Team for taking an active interest in our community
16 at Haber. They attended the installation ceremony of
17 the TA President Executive Board December 19. And we
18 do look forward to working closely with the team as
19 the larger recovery resiliency work takes place. We
20 do have a bid in for more work to be done an three of
21 our developments. At the same time we're having our
22 senior center redone. They are going to be doing
23 some reconstruction work in the first floor. We were
24 advised and the bidding is taking place as we speak
25

1
2 now, but for the most part like I said my-my
3 participation with Sandy is-is rather short, but the
4 experience that I've had has been very positive.
5 Everything that was supposed to be done as per the
6 meeting was accomplished and is still being done.
7 Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Thank you for your
9 testimony. We've been joined by Council Member
10 Rafael Salamanca from the Bronx, and I know Council
11 Member Treyger has a question.

12 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Yes, just first of
13 all I just want to thank all the resident leaders for
14 schlepping all the way out from Southern Southern
15 Brooklyn all the way out there to City Hall. Really
16 appreciate your leadership and your presence. I'd
17 also not that many of these, actually all of resident
18 leaders attend-we have quarterly NYCHA breakfasts
19 with my office and-and they take great time out of
20 their schedules to attend and to provide very
21 important feedback and I do want to note that NYCHA
22 officials regularly attend and I-I appreciate their
23 participation. But what the audience, what my
24 colleagues have just heard is raw emotion. This is
25 just-this is just true. This is raw emotion that is

1 coming out of their hearts. This is not something
2 that is strategized or planned. This is something
3 that is just pure emotion. They have to respond to
4 their residents when they have monthly meetings come
5 to them complaining about some apartments are piping
6 hot and some apartments are freezing cold. Sometimes
7 there's hot water for a shower. Sometimes there's
8 not hot water for a shower, and in government you
9 know we—we deal with a lot of heavy policy and
10 substantive steps, and we don't have time to get
11 locked into that bubble. Some folks just want to
12 have heat on a cold night. Some folks just want to
13 have hot water to shower at night, and so we're still
14 dealing with this issue over four years post-post the
15 storm and lastly I just want—want to note that there
16 was a solid commitment made by the higher ups about
17 hiring and local hiring to make sure that residents
18 in our community don't just witness recovery, but
19 they are participant in that recovery. And that is
20 something that we have to hold firm on, and I
21 appreciate all of your engagement, your commitment
22 sure the residents are the ones that are involved in—
23 in doing this—those with the skills and
24 qualifications in--in doing that work. So I just
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1
2 want to just commend all of for your leaders for
3 your—for your emotion for your passion and dedication
4 to this work. And just to kind of just go through
5 very quickly, in each of your developments what is
6 happening with regards to Sandy work, if anything has
7 happened? I know Deborah Carter you mentioned that
8 there was some initial work in the beginning, some
9 apartments that were damaged, but as far as
10 introduced developments, everyone still has a
11 temporary boiler. Is that correct?

12 DEBORAH CARTER: [off mic] Yes, sir.

13 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right, and everyone
14 is still waiting for the big work to begin.

15 DEBORAH CARTER: [off mic] Yes.

16 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right and some—some
17 buildings I think contracts are out to bid and some
18 are still in design and—and clearly as we've read
19 before, as we've heard before, by now everyone should
20 have been seeing major work begin. And we are not
21 going to stop until this work gets done and gets done
22 in a fair and just way for the residents of our
23 community. So I just want to thank you again for
24 being here.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Great. Thank you so much for your testimony. We're going to proceed to the next panel, the New York City Housing Authority. Testifying on behalf of the Housing Authority is Deborah Goddard who is the Executive Vice President for Capital Projects and Joy Sinderbrand who is the Vice President of NYCHA's Office of Recovery and Resilience. [background comments, pause] And can you please raise your right hand. Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in your testimony before this committee, and to respond honestly to Council Members questions?

JOY SINDERBRAND: Yes, I do.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Alright, you may proceed. [pause]

JOY SINDERBRAND: Chairs Ritchie Torres and Mark Treyger, members of the Committees on Public Housing and Recovery and Resilience and other distinguished members of the City Council, good afternoon. I'm Joy Sinderbrand. I'm the Vice President for the Office of Recovery and Resilience, and joining me today is Deborah Goddard.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: [interposing] Can you speak closer to the mic there.

1

2

JOY SINDERBRAND: Sure.

3

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Yeah.

4

JOY SINDERBRAND: Like this?

5

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Yes, and Project as
6 much as you can.

7

JOY SINDERBRAND: Sure. It sounds very
8 loud to me. So I don't know.

9

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay.

10

JOY SINDERBRAND: Joining me—

11

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: [interposing] You're
12 much closer than we are so—

13

JOY SINDERBRAND: [laughs] Joining me
14 today is Deborah Goddard, Executive Vice President
15 for Capital Projects. Thank you for this opportunity
16 to update the Council on our work to rebuilding
17 stronger and more resilience than ever from the
18 devastating impacts of Super Storm Sandy. We are
19 repairing and fortifying a total of 219 buildings
20 home to 600–60,000 residents and demonstrating what
21 can be achieved when government and partners work
22 together to overcome a historic catastrophe. The
23 size and scope of our efforts are unprecedented with
24 the largest grant ever awarded by FEMA of \$3 billion
25 we're re-imagining what our buildings look like and

1 how they operate, improving residents' quality of
2 life and protecting our developments from weather
3 emergencies for generations to come. As we move
4 forward with large scale multi-hundred million
5 projects, we continue to engage residents in the
6 process and connect them to vital economic
7 opportunities. There's a tremendous amount of work
8 underway. Shovels are in the ground all over the
9 city. To date, NYCHA has spend \$490 million and
10 hired 164 residents for the recovery work. In the
11 past year major construction has begun at seven
12 developments to repair 43 buildings, projects
13 totaling more than \$536 million and benefitting over
14 7,400 residents. By the end of the year, we expect
15 to begin major construction at every Sandy impacted
16 development. This isn't run of the mill repair work,
17 and it wouldn't be possible if we hadn't fought so
18 hard for every dollar possible from FEMA. We're
19 replacing roofs and vital infrastructure, putting in
20 new electrical systems and boilers, installing
21 standby generators to lessen the test back-up power,
22 flood proofing our buildings, completely renovating
23 hundreds of damaged first floor apartments,
24 installing exterior safety lighting and updating
25

playgrounds, common areas and community facilities.

Construction work kicked off in 2015 with the initial repair and recovery work completed at 23 developments replacing electrical wired and abating asbestos, the work that must be done before major construction can begin. Today, in addition to the major construction in progress at 43 buildings at 7 developments the work of advertising and awarding contracts and security permits is underway for 15 developments.

That includes our largest and most complex effort:

Red Hook East and West, a \$440 million project where roof replacement is currently out to bid. Our Sandy

Recovery Program is driven by dedication to the community at every turn. We want every dollar to make the greatest impact. Thanks to our negotiation

with FEMA and support from partners like Senator

Schumer, we were able to nearly double the size of

the grant we received from \$1.8 billion to \$3

billion. NYCHA's developments have not seen an

investment of this magnitude since their inception.

With this funding, we're not only repairing the

damage from Sandy, but are also investing in measures

that will safeguard buildings from future storms and

improve residents' quality of life. For instance,

1 we're not simply replacing damaged boilers, but are
2 now housing the new energy efficient boilers in new
3 elevated buildings to protect it from flooding, a
4 significant improvement that will go a long way in
5 preventing interruption of heat and hot water service
6 to residents in consort with other renovations such
7 as flood barriers and site restoration to mitigate
8 flooding. The standby generators that will provide
9 residents with back-up power run on natural gas,
10 which is cleaner than diesel fuel, and we're
11 strengthening the community centers as we repair
12 their damage. For example, at Surfside Gardens,
13 we're outfitting the community center with flood
14 preventing measures and back-up power while
15 rehabilitating the kitchen, walls, ceilings and
16 doors. We expect this work—we expect to complete
17 this work by the fall. We're also flood proofing and
18 installing back-up power at Ocean Bay Apartments,
19 Oceanside's Community Center while replacing the
20 damaged floors, walls, ceilings and light fixtures.
21 We're guided by our Next Generation NYCHA vision of
22 safe, clean and connected communities for New
23 Yorkers. That means preserving and improving our
24 buildings after the disaster instead of abandoning
25

1
2 them, which has been the case in other cities such as
3 New Orleans and Galveston, Texas. In addition, NYCHA
4 is using the lessons learned from the Sandy Recovery
5 Program to create guidelines for resiliency measures
6 across our portfolio. Last year, the Red Hook Star
7 Newspaper described a meeting with residents to
8 discuss Sandy Recovery plans at Red Hook Houses as
9 the best NYCHA meeting ever. This article described
10 the real improvements slated for the development
11 including ground floor retail, and renovated and
12 consistent exterior lighting, which incorporated
13 feedback and suggestions from residents at previous
14 meetings. More recently News 12 Brooklyn covered a
15 workshop we held at Red Hook Houses in partnership
16 wit the non-profit Kaboom so youth and adults alike
17 could provide input on the redesign of the
18 playgrounds there. We believe that the public
19 advocates, elected officials, and most importantly
20 residents must be involved in the process of
21 rebuilding after Sandy. Since 2014, we have
22 participated in more than 1,500 community events and
23 meetings, resident association meetings, development
24 family days, job fairs and designs based on some
25 NYCHA residents. Council Members Treyger, Council

1
2 Member Treyger and Council Member Menchaca, who is
3 not here, stood with us in many of these events, and
4 we're really grateful for your support. We've also
5 made nearly 60,000 phone calls, posted over 115,000
6 flyers in Sandy matters including job opportunities.
7 We established a Sandy Community Outreach Team to
8 create two-way child communication between NYCHA and
9 residents on all things Sandy, and more than half of
10 the 24-person team residents. Freddy Melendez, a
11 NYCHA resident who lives in Coney Island is a proud
12 member of the team. He said, "I love my job. I love
13 working with people. We take care of the
14 developments that are affected by Hurricane Sandy.
15 We go out to those affected areas and talk to the
16 resident. We want to hear them out." Job creation
17 is another significant silver lining in the storm's
18 cloud and NYCHA is working hard to connect residents
19 with life changing career opportunities associated
20 with the recovery and resilience work. Of the more
21 than 400 people employed so far about 250 were hired
22 as part of Section 3 program far exceeding the
23 program's requirements that are at least 30% of new
24 hires for federally funded projects of low-income
25 residents of the community. More than half of the

1
2 Section 3 hires, 164 individuals are NYCHA residents
3 who have been connected to jobs as laborers,
4 electricians, asbestos handlers, security guards,
5 administrative employees and more. Even though only
6 10% of the recovery funding is subject to Section 3
7 hiring requirements, NYCHA decided to apply the
8 hiring guidelines to the entirety of the work to
9 recreate as many opportunities as possible for
10 residents. NYCHA secured \$1.4 million from HUD to
11 create a pre-apprenticeship program that will connect
12 up to 100 Sandy impacted residents to union jobs and
13 membership. NYCHA released a Request for Proposals
14 in September 2016, but did not receive responses from
15 potential partners to develop the training and job
16 placement programs. We revised and reissued the RFP.
17 The response is due by March 7. We're eager to get
18 this program up and running to provide residents with
19 another pathway to greater economic mobility.

20 Vladeck Houses resident Gaston Escavedo is
21 benefitting from a similar apprenticeship program
22 with the International Brotherhood of Electrical
23 Workers Union. He's installing lighting at Sandy hit
24 developments including at Coney Island and Red Hook,
25 and said that it feels great to work on Sandy

1 recovery for other NYCHA residents. It feels like
2 I'm doing something positive for the community. To
3 keep the public at large informed of our progress, we
4 putting our work on the map literally. Launched in
5 2015, the Interactive Sandy Transparency Map,
6 available on our website, provides information about
7 all the recovery and resiliency work underway and
8 planned at each Sandy impacted development. It
9 includes details like the scope of work, project
10 phase, estimated funding levels, new timelines,
11 renderings and findings (sic) to the details. We're
12 making history bringing NYCHA buildings into the 21st
13 Century and protecting this precious resource of
14 affordable housing for generations to come. While
15 we're cementing New York's reputation with the city
16 that we build with resiliency, we're improving
17 residents' quality of life and creating career
18 opportunities that transform lives and lift up
19 communities. Recovering from a storm of Sandy's
20 magnitude is neither easy nor quick. Sandy brought
21 significant destruction to 219 buildings, and we've
22 always endeavored to repair the damage and build back
23 right in a way that benefits our communities and our
24 city to the greatest extent possible. We have more
25

1
2 work to do, but are pleased that we're on track to
3 have major construction started at all impacted
4 developments by the end of this year. Thank you to
5 the Mayor, members of the City Council, our federal
6 representative, residents, community leaders and
7 other partners for helping us bring to fruition the
8 largest construction project in NYCHA's history. I
9 thank you for your ongoing support as we continue to
10 move forward and rebuild. Thank you. We're happy to
11 answer any questions you have.

12 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Thank you. I will
13 ask a few questions and I'll get back to Mark
14 Treyger. I guess I will first—my first question I
15 guess concerns the Donald Trump Presidency, and the
16 long shadow that it will cast over the budget of the
17 Housing Authority. What impact, if any, will the
18 Trump Presidency have on the \$3 billion FEMA Grant?

19 JOY SINDERBRAND: So we have signed
20 agreements with FEMA and HUD for the Sandy Program,
21 and I know of no mechanism that would allow the
22 federal government to call back to find governed by
23 those agreements. Certainly any risk that exists
24 outside of—of what's precedent would not just affect
25 NYCHA, but would affect every major city in the

1
2 country and every state in the country, and so it
3 would be a much larger issue than--than just this
4 program.

5 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And you said you're
6 not aware of any mechanism.

7 JOY SINDERBRAND: Right.

8 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Has there been
9 research? Has your legal division inquired into any
10 possible means of revoking, reducing or other
11 altering the FEMA grant. There is really no
12 precedent that we're aware of that would allow the
13 federal government to do that.

14 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay. Is--is the
15 FEMA grant sufficient to meet the recovery and
16 resilience needs of the 34 developments?

17 JOY SINDERBRAND: We are very confident
18 that the budget we have will allow us to do the
19 program that we've committed to FEMA to doing. The
20 scope of work has been defined, and that was how the
21 grant was negotiated.

22 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And do you
23 anticipate that these developments will be--over
24 budget at all or--?
25

1
2 JOY SINDERBRAND: Right now, we have
3 funds to complete the—the scope of work that we’re
4 required to complete. There is a very competitive
5 construction market out there right now, and we’ve
6 been fortunate that we’ve had enough interest and
7 competition on—on our bids to keep prices in line
8 with—with our cost estimators. Inasmuch as there is
9 a surprise at the end of the day, and—and the dollars
10 come in under, we would work with FEMA to spend those
11 dollars within the scope that will allow the work at
12 impacted buildings that weren’t funded under the
13 original program.

14 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay, but do you
15 anticipate that any of the projects will go over
16 budget?

17 JOY SINDERBRAND: Go? I’m sorry, did you
18 say go over?

19 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Over budget.

20 JOY SINDERBRAND: So right now we have
21 designed to the dollars that we have. So if there—if
22 there are projects for whom the cost estimates are
23 not accurate for whatever reason, we’ve budgeted in a
24 small contingency to allow for that.
25

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay, because I have one example. We have a breakdown of the contracts to Coney Island 1. The value of the FEMA Grant is about \$40 million, but the value of all the contracts is \$59 million meaning that the project is \$18 million over budget. So how are you going to fill that gap?

JOY SINDERBRAND: So, the auspices of the Sandy Program are slightly different from a typical FEMA grant in that the--the program is treated as--as kind--as a bucket. And so inasmuch as we are able to come up with additional competition on other sites that allow the funds to be--to be--to come in under, we're allowed to use those funds for sites that have come in over .

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Coney Island was under construction so there's--what competition are you referencing?

JOY SINDERBRAND: We have 15 other projects that are within the procurement process, some of which are--are very advanced.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I'm referring to Coney Island 1. So there's a \$15 million gap. I'm asking how you're going to fill it. I'm not--

1
2 JOY SINDERBRAND: So that—that funding is
3 partially from the contingency for that project and
4 partially bids and other projects that came in under
5 estimate

6 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So, you—what you're
7 telling me is that this is going to be offset by
8 projects that will be under budget?

9 JOY SINDERBRAND: So it's offset by two
10 things. One is the project contingency. The second
11 is the program's contingency and the third is that
12 there are other projects that come in under budget.

13 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And that's something
14 that you don't know for sure. You're hoping that
15 that will be the case?

16 JOY SINDERBRAND: Well, in the case
17 today, it's actually we are on track for both—we are
18 on track both under to come in on time.

19 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Will each NYCHA
20 development receive the level, the funding levels
21 originally committed to it?

22 JOY SINDERBRAND: The way the program
23 works is we're committed to FEMA to produce the
24 scopes of work for each development within the \$3
25 billion pot of money. So while the project

worksheets included in estimated scope—estimated cost
to those projects, the program is what's FEMA funded.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So there will be
transfer of funds I imagine across developments,
across projects?

JOY SINDERBRAND: If—if there are
projects for which the contingency cannot cover the—
the overages, then yes there will a transfer.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay, and when there
is a transfer of funds, do you notify the local
elected officials, the local tenant association?

JOY SINDERBRAND: As each project is
award all of that is public information, and we are
up front about the—the—the awards what they came in
at finally. In fact, they're available on the Sandy
Transparency Map and website. So at any time you can
click in and see what executed contracts are there.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I know these—these
are minute details. So do you make a point of
proactively reaching out to the local elected
officials and your tenant association leaders and
telling them there's been a change in the funding
levels for your development. We're going to allocate

1
2 less than we had originally promised rather than
3 depend on your tenant to go to the Sandy Tracker?

4 JOY SINDERBRAND: Typically we—we talk to
5 TAs on a weekly basis and we go to all resident
6 association meetings, and keep us up to date on what
7 contracts have been awarded and I don't know for
8 certain that we talk about the dollars at those
9 meetings--

10 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay.

11 JOY SINDERBRAND: --but we are happy to
12 be—we're happy to be upfront about it and put it on
13 the website.

14 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: They're willing to
15 notify, not just put it on the website, but directly
16 notify local elected officials and NYCHA tenant
17 association leaders about changes in funding levels
18 for their projects?

19 JOY SINDERBRAND: Inasmuch as you want
20 any particular research (sic) we're happy to share
21 them.

22 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I'm—I'm—that's—it's
23 either a yes or no question.

24 JOY SINDERBRAND: Sure yes.
25

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: A yes. Okay, great. I have a question about timelines. It seems to me the right starting point for the recovery is September 2015 when NYCHA and FEMA finalized the project worksheets, and a year a half went by, and only one out of 33 or 34 developments has been complete, and the one that has been complete was probably among the easiest to complete. I mean the perception among residents and elected officials is that the recovery is proceeding at a slow pace. And so I guess my question is why is taking so long? Why was only project complete within essentially a year and a half timeframe?

JOY SINDERBRAND: So let me start with today. What I can say today is we are committed to starting every project before the end of this calendar year and are well on our way to do that with seven started and 15 in the paternal (sic) process several of those close to starting. NYCHA started work on the development immediately after the storm with emergency repairs and then following that, 23 developments did what we've been calling preliminary construction work. That's the—the crawl space abatement, the boiler demolition, the asbestos

1
2 abatement and renovations completed now at about 250
3 first floor permits. One of the challenges that--
4 that, you know, Council Member Treyger referred to in
5 terms of the complications of design. We are trying
6 to mitigate that by carving up the bigger and more
7 complicated projects so that elements that are ready
8 to go aren't delayed. And an example of this is the
9 Red Hook roofs. Those are out to bid today. So the
10 entire of the--the entirety of the Red Hook projects
11 is very complicated, and it is hard to bring across
12 the finish line in its totality, but we can carve off
13 the roof and start them as soon as the bids come back
14 next month. And so that's the kind of work that
15 we're trying to do now. It's the--

16 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: [interposing] But
17 the Red Hook is the most complicated of all the
18 projects.

19 JOY SINDERBRAND: Uh-huh.

20 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: What I want to know
21 is why in the last year and a half was there only one
22 project complete out of 33?

23 JOY SINDERBRAND: We're really setting a
24 precedent here, and this is something that's not just
25 a precedent for NYCHA. It's the precedent for the

1 region, and arguably the country. What we're asking
2 the Design and Engineering teams to do has
3 effectively never been done, and the idea of
4 retrofitting buildings is work that FEMA was
5 encouraging and working with us to do, but which FEMA
6 was new to also. You have to remember these sites
7 have to be designed not just individually the site—I
8 know you're very familiar with all of the
9 developments, but they range from one building to 30
10 buildings on 40 acres, and so each site has to be
11 designed building by building to take into account
12 the building's infrastructure, its orientation, its
13 height above sea level, and this is all using
14 elements that are new to the design community.

16 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I have a question
17 about the—there are six developments that are
18 currently in the construction phase.

19 JOY SINDERBRAND: Uh-huh.

20 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Right, you have
21 Oceanside in Queens, which is projected to be
22 completed in the third quarter of 2017. You have
23 Astoria, Carlton Manor and Coney Island 1-B, all of
24 which are projected to be completed in the second
25 quarter of 2018, which is more than year from now.

JOY SINDERBRAND: Uh-huh.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Coney Island 4 and 5 are projected to be completed in the fourth quarter of 2018, which could be two years from now. Bayside is projected to be completed in the second quarter of 2019, which is more than two years from now, and this how long the development in the construction phase will take, not to mention those in the design phase and the procurement phase. Like what's the timeline for completing all the projects, all the 33, completing construction of the 33 Sandy affected developments?

JOY SINDERBRAND: For a typical project, you know, on the drawing board we would say it's an 18 to 36-month project.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Just the at-what-by what-by what point-at what point will everything will be done, approximately?

JOY SINDERBRAND: Well, I'm-I'm trying to give you some some-some framing because the fact is this strategy of phasing the projects in order to get those started sooner, means that we are-we are effectively less certain of what I can say as a final end date except that when I put a project up to bid,

1
2 I can give you a firm date on that project. So for
3 the projects that are awarded, I have a phasing plan,
4 but know it off the top of my head. (sic)

5 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: [interposing] And
6 you have no projection? Because we--everything has
7 uncertainty like costs estimates--

8 JOY SINDERBRAND: [interposing] Sure.

9 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: --have uncertainty.
10 Scope has uncertainty, and there's no projected
11 timeline for the completion of all the 33 projects?

12 JOY SINDERBRAND: We have projected that
13 we save the projects in the strategy we're using now
14 and has the latest phase beginning early next year
15 that's the worst--that the worst of--the worst case
16 scenario has 18 to 36 months from the last phase
17 starting. So that would be 2021. That said, we're
18 pushing everything as fast as we can, and so what I
19 can tell you--

20 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: [interposing] To
21 2021? So residents who have been waiting since 2012
22 will see all of these developments complete by 2021?
23 Is that--?

24

25

1
2 JOY SINDERBRAND: That's not what we're
3 aiming for. That's our--by now what our worst case
4 scenario is.

5 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: What's the best case
6 scenario?

7 JOY SINDERBRAND: The best case scenario
8 is that are able to put many projects up to bid
9 concurrently on the same site without inconveniencing
10 residents to--to any extent, and we are able to push
11 the construction industry to move faster than they
12 have on this type of project in the past. But this
13 not something that I can project without having asked
14 the construction manager for a particular site what
15 the constructability and phasing would be for that
16 site.

17 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Otherwise 2021?

18 JOY SINDERBRAND: Right now we're looking
19 at 2021 as the worst case scenario.

20 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I have a few more
21 questions about the capital process, and then I'll
22 hand it over to Council Member Treyger. Yes and we
23 have Council Member Menchaca for Red Hook. How long
24 is the--it's design, procurement and construction,
25

1
2 right? Is that—are those the three phases of the
3 capital process?

4 JOY SINDERBRAND: Yes, they are.

5 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: How long is the
6 design process?

7 JOY SINDERBRAND: So this is not the
8 typical NYCHA design process and I want to emphasize
9 that because the precedent setting piece here means
10 that as opposed to a typical one trade or one element
11 project like the roof replacement or a façade repair,
12 we are talking about multi-phase, multi-trade and
13 sometimes multi-hundred million dollar scopes that
14 are actually done in iterations. And so we're working
15 on putting together a design building by building,
16 site by site that includes an element that the agency
17 does not have design guideline written for. And so
18 we have to work both within the agency and with our
19 oversight agencies to make sure that the design will
20 meet the guidelines required, and that's why you're
21 seeing designs—designs stretching out for longer than
22 they used to.

23 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Nowhere did I hear
24 an answer to my question. [background comments] So,
25 how-how long is the design? Is there a range. Like

1
2 you gave me the reasons for why it might take a long
3 time. I'm asking for how long it will take.

4 JOY SINDERBRAND: We will have designs
5 done for every building, for everybody, for every
6 development.

7 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: For each—for each of
8 them, is there a range for each development so that I
9 have a sense of how long the procurement—the capital
10 process takes.

11 JOY SINDERBRAND: Yeah, what I can say
12 today is that we're going to be able to start it at
13 each development, but I have not gone back to look at
14 the start date for each development to say how long
15 it took to date. That's—that's why I--

16 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: [interposing] So you
17 don't know on the design, and you couldn't tell me
18 procurement either, how long that procurement phase?

19 JOY SINDERBRAND: Well, the procurement
20 phases are actually much more guided because we're
21 going through the standard major process, and so—so
22 it's, you know, that's—that's a much more typical
23 confident (sic) although it depends a bit on the
24 questions that we get from the potential bidders on
25 whether or not we have issued any--any extension.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So what's the time-timeline for procurement?

JOY SINDERBRAND: So for procurement that would typically give us a four to six-month period, and that-that is a standard that is somewhat dependent on the complication of the project.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And the construction phase I imagine varies, but can you give us a time range or--?

JOY SINDERBRAND: So the 18 to 36-month range assumed a project being bid in its entirety and starting construction at one time. It did not include this phased approach that I was talking about.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So the design phase is indefinite, procurement is four to six months, construction is 18 to 36 months, and then there's a lag time between the issuance of the letter of the award and the actual start of construction, right?

JOY SINDERBRAND: Right, the-the permitting phase.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And how long is that phase?

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2 JOY SINDERBRAND: Again, it depends on
3 the site. In some cases we're also going for mayoral
4 override with that as a different element, a then
5 typical project. So I would say give yourself two to
6 four months typically and then it depends on the
7 complication of the project.

8 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I noticed your
9 website indicates that there are three phases right,
10 the design phase, the procurement phase, the
11 construction phase.

12 JOY SINDERBRAND: Uh-huh.

13 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: But suppose you have
14 a capital process—the capital project that's in that
15 pre-construction period between—between procurement
16 and construction. How do you—how do you classify it
17 on your fact sheet? Do you classify it as
18 procurement or construction? Because that's not clear
19 from your fact sheet.

20 JOY SINDERBRAND: If we've issued a
21 notice to proceed then it would be classified as
22 construction, and you're differentiating between
23 preliminary construction and active construction?

24 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: No, I'm--

25 JOY SINDERBRAND: The permitting phase?

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I mean I think I
just wanted construction as--

JOY SINDERBRAND: [interposing] Oh, no
because they have--

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: --as construction.
So if you're not--

JOY SINDERBRAND: Right, if they're
permitting in automatic construction then we haven't
included them in the seven. So that--that would be
more like a wrangler or someone that's, you know,
that's--that's really getting--

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: [interposing] But I
only see--on your website I only see three
designations, three classifications and it's design,
procurement and construction.

JOY SINDERBRAND: Uh-huh.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: But there are
projects that are neither in procurement nor in
construction, pre-construction.

JOY SINDERBRAND: Got you.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So how do you
classify that on this--on this--on your website.

JOY SINDERBRAND: On the website I
believe those are put into the--or stay in the

1
2 procurement phase until they got grant, but anything
3 can occur. (sic)

4 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So even when the
5 contractors has been selected, and the letter of
6 award has been issued, you still classify that as
7 procurement even though the procurement process has
8 ended?

9 JOY SINDERBRAND: I would have to check.
10 I-I remember--

11 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: See my concern is
12 that NYCHA could be classifying pre-construction as
13 construction.

14 JOY SINDERBRAND: Uh-huh.

15 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Because you're
16 promising us that all construction will begin by the
17 end of the year, I'm concerned that includes pre-
18 construction projects, which is not--

19 JOY SINDERBRAND: Got you.

20 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: --construction.

21 JOY SINDERBRAND: That was not the
22 intention of--of what I was--I don't mean to--

23 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: [interposing] If you
24 can--if you can--if you get that clarification--

25 JOY SINDERBRAND: Sure.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: --I would appreciate that. Council Member Treyger.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you, Chair. So I just want to begin by just saying that I think that the level of community outreach has been very good as far as attending basically all of my meeting in my district and being very visible at many of the residents' family days and meetings, and I--and I truly do appreciate that because that has been a big difference from the last administration to this. That level of outreach has significantly increased, and I want to begin by--by saying that. But I think that what we're hearing in terms of execution--execution has been unsatisfactory. Mayor--the Mayor de Blasio--Before I go into the announcement of the \$3 billion grant, the scope of work that has been handed out to all of the resident leaders in my district I imagine that was handed out to resident leaders in Red Hook and other districts as well. Is that scope of work, that scope of work was a part of the MOU--am I correct--with FEMA? Is that correct?

JOY SINDERBRAND: Correct.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right. So, is--when my colleague--when--when my co-chair is talking about

1
2 whether or not there are sufficient funds for these
3 projects and shifting of money around, in this cope
4 of work, is—is this a legally binding document that
5 you have with FEMA that you have to actually complete
6 what was promised to every single resident leader
7 that was impacted by Sandy?

8 JOY SINDERBRAND: We are required, yes we
9 are required to complete the scope of work that we
10 committed to do for FEMA.

11 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So everything that
12 they have in their possession because NYCHA gave each
13 resident leader a document saying this is the scope
14 of work: New roof, back-up generator, new boiler,
15 community center if it was damaged by Sandy will get
16 repaired, renovated. All the, you know, all the
17 infrastructure, the plumbing, electrical work that is
18 guaranteed to them, is that correct?

19 JOY SINDERBRAND: The scopes of work that
20 are on the Sandy website those reflect the—the
21 commitments to FEMA. I'm not sure which documents
22 specifically people have in hand, but those websites
23 on both points are the scopes of work and are
24 exactly. (sic)
25

1
2 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: They have in their
3 hand the--the scope of work that NYCHA presented that
4 was agreed upon with FEMA with regards to even the
5 layered access cameras and--and lighting. There is a
6 whole big package of stuff that was presented to the
7 resident leaders by your predecessor Mike Rosen, and
8 that is what we are expecting to be completed at
9 these developments, but--but what I am hearing is that
10 there is a possibility that some projects will go
11 over budget, and you are still obligated from what I
12 understand to complete these projects. So where does
13 that money come from if you're over budget? Is
14 there--is NYCHA going to tap into its own resources?
15 Can--can this--can this be explained to us?

16 JOY SINDERBRAND: So I should emphasize
17 that we do not anticipate going over budget. We've
18 been working very hard to make sure that the designs
19 are aligned with the budget available for each
20 development, and--and have allocated a lender
21 contingency for each development and a contingency
22 for the program to allow for some of those overages.
23 One of the efforts that we've been making in
24 particular is to work with the construction industry
25 and do outreach, to go above and beyond what might be

1
2 typical for—for a program down to cold calling. But
3 presenting at conferences, presenting at industry
4 events, asking contractors to recommend other
5 contractors and have people who never worked with
6 NYCHA before get involved, and that's increased the
7 number of bidders on each RFP from a handful to a
8 typical six to twelve. So we're really getting a lot
9 of competition.

10 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I just have to say
11 that that probably should have happened way in the
12 beginning, not now. We lost of valuable precious
13 time. I know my colleague who has to leave soon it's
14 also her birthday and—and I want to just say Council
15 Member Mendez, the birthday girl, you certainly—your
16 district is also heavily impacted by this storm, and
17 your leadership has been very much visible, and we
18 appreciate that, and please I'll it over to you.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Thank you. I've
20 had several developments impacted and the work that
21 was completed as Chair Torres said was one of the
22 smaller buildings in my district, two buildings, 54
23 units, and while the work was completed, all winter
24 long we've been plagued with heat and hot water
25 problems that your management has had to resort to

1
2 using the temporary boiler at different points during
3 this winter. So, now, granted this is not a typical
4 NYCHA building. These are old tenement buildings
5 that came into NYCHA's possession, but I'm alarmed
6 that we're still having those problems at LES-5 and
7 then I worry about the bigger developments throughout
8 the city as well as the bigger developments in my
9 district of how this work is going to get done, and
10 that we can ensure that all those systems are then
11 working properly.

12 JOY SINDERBRAND: So, we are very
13 committed to ensuring that the systems are up to par
14 before we remove the temporary boilers, and—and at
15 this stage three of the four boilers are functioning
16 as they should. It's—it's one boiler that we want to
17 make sure for certain that there are no further
18 issues before we remove the temporary boilers.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: What would be the
20 issue with a new boiler?

21 JOY SINDERBRAND: I mean I can't speak to
22 the technical issue. I've—it's—what I can say is it
23 has to do with an interaction between a potential
24 pump that was placed on top of the boiler, and so
25 we're having the manufacturer of the boiler and the

1
2 installer come in and make sure that it's ready to go
3 without any further problems.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: So in all of
5 these developments no matter when the work is
6 completed, the temporary boilers will be kept on site
7 until we get through winter to ensure that there are
8 no heat and hot water issues at those developments?

9 JOY SINDERBRAND: We don't anticipate
10 having to keep boilers from additional heating
11 season. In order to provide that kind of level of
12 care, we can do the testing and we can do the—we can
13 do the consistency testing for the boilers even
14 during the non-heating season to make sure that they
15 are doing the heating and the hot water temperature
16 at the right levels even during a non-heating season.
17 Sorry I don't want to—I don't—we don't want to rush
18 removal. So we certainly don't want to retain the
19 temporary boilers once we can ensure that the boilers
20 are up to par.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Okay, thank you
22 very much and apparently having a birthday does have
23 its privileges today.

24 JOY SINDERBRAND: It does.
25

COUNCIL MEMBER MENDEZ: Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Yes, my colleague also had the year before a song performed for her by Council Member Williams at the Land Use Committee as well. Yes, we've also been joined by Council Members Donovan Richards and Eric Ulrich. I want to proceed with--with some questions and yes. The--the Mayor and Senator Schumer announced the \$3 billion grant from FEMA to NYCHA in March of 2015, almost two years ago. Yet, according to NYCHA only \$122 million of this money had been drawn down so far from FEMA, about 4% of the funds. Why has so little been drawn down from this grant?

JOY SINDERBRAND: So I want to emphasize that the--the work has not been paid for just from the FEMA grant. So the \$490 million worth of work that's been completed to date involved several sources of funding. It was from insurance proceeds. Some of it is from HUD funding CBBDR (sic) and then some it is FEMA at cost. So it's a reimbursement funding stream and then the funding from the \$3 billion grant is paid partially on a--basically a funded basis. So when we execute a contract 50% of those funds are

1
2 available to NYCHA. So as we continue to execute
3 these construction contracts, we'll continue to get a
4 draw down from that funding.

5 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: But of the \$122
6 million, what has that been spent on?

7 JOY SINDERBRAND: SO the FEMA funds that
8 \$122 million represents partially that funding of 50%
9 of construction contracts. So some of that is money
10 in NYCHA's bank account to pay for the ongoing costs
11 of construction.

12 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So the reason why
13 we're--there is some frustration here is because there
14 are sites you have listed here that are under
15 construction, sites that I drive by everyday on my
16 way home, and I think that we have a disagreement
17 over what construction actually means. You know, I
18 was--I--you know, in my hearings over Build-it-Back,
19 Build-it-Back would cons--would--would constitute a
20 construction start if a house had a fence around it
21 with no work happening, and we disagree with that.
22 In my view that's not a start. That's just a fence
23 around a house. The house has no work going on. So
24 for example by--I know that we had an--an event where
25 we did a groundbreaking by Surfside, but what

1
2 actually is happening there because we don't see any
3 major work happening at that site. So, when—how do
4 you define major work? How do you define preliminary
5 work? Because when you tell residents that they're
6 having construction at their developments and I hear
7 from them, I—I—I'm not seeing that. What is your
8 definition of a construction start?

9 JOY SINDERBRAND: So the \$122 million is
10 associated with construction work, and it's also
11 associated with the program management of the project
12 as a whole. So moving all 33 projects forward as
13 well as the individual construction projects. What I
14 refer to as preliminary construction there are
15 actually—there were separate contracts for the—the
16 work at the 23 developments. Those were executed
17 previously and those are separate and apart from the
18 seven developments that we've—we've talked about as—
19 as full construction starts. And you're right, we
20 would like to have things move forward as quickly as
21 possible, and I know one of the—the residents leaders
22 mentioned early in the—the process of permitting and—
23 and waiting to getting all of our ducks in a row, and
24 we're working with DOB to really speed up that
25 process for our sites.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So, the—the issue for us is that we were told that in the—in the waiting period before FEMA and NYCHA agreed on the amount and the scope of work, that—that NYCHA was taking measures to work on design even before the MOUs were signed. Is that correct?

JOY SINDERBRAND: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: That's what we were told in the past.

JOY SINDERBRAND: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So, what happened with those—with that predesign work, and why are we still stuck in design? I mean—I mean it's taking four or five years to design? I mean what is the—why is there still projects still in the design phase when we were told two or three years ago that stuff was in design?

JOY SINDERBRAND: [pause] This is—this just unlike any project that has ever been done before in New York. I don't have any other way to say it than we don't have a blueprint to go from. We are literally creating the guidelines that landlord around New York City are going to look to when they

1
2 choose how to protect their residents? [background
3 comments]

4 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Yeah. [gavel] I-I
5 will absolutely agree with you that Sandy was an
6 unprecedented storm, and there's no question about
7 that, but it also required an unprecedented amount of
8 cooperation between all of us of government, and I
9 remember at our first hearing back at Carey Gardens,
10 and-and by the way, I want to-I want to strongly
11 credit this Council and this body because I believe
12 it was this body and the members of our committees
13 and the Speaker and her support that really brought
14 this issue to light. And I want to thank the
15 residents that came out, and mobilized really
16 hundreds of people. They are really-they are the
17 champions in this-in this effort. I know sometimes
18 some politicians like to request a conference and say
19 they did it all, but these are the people that
20 actually got this work done. But it's-it's hard for
21 us to understand that four or five years of-of this,
22 you know, design work is still going in circles. It-
23 it-it just should not take-granted, understood that
24 this is-this is a massive scale project. This is a
25 significant grant. It just-it strikes me as odd that

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2 it takes four or five years to design especially when
3 we were told three years ago that design work had--had
4 begin, and we were told that there was some rift
5 between the local federal government about what
6 should start first, design or the--or the money in the
7 MOU and--and NYCHA took--took a proactive approach and
8 said we will start design even without the MOU
9 signed. But my concern is that if design is going to
10 be four, five, six years, how long will construction
11 be, four, five, six, seven years. And so, I--I again
12 repeat that we don't want to hear any more about
13 residents who are saying that they have no heat, hot
14 water on the coldest days. We don't want to hear
15 about them saying that they have no hot water to take
16 a shower. This the basic stuff for government, and--
17 and so I have to just--I have to ask this: The--the
18 chain of command and accountability how high up at
19 City Hall for example is someone checking in to say
20 what's happening with NYCHA Sandy recovery? Is there
21 someone that, you know, beyond, of course, the NYCHA
22 Chair, are there meetings going? When is the last
23 time you heard from a Deputy Mayor or the Mayor
24 checking in what is the status of this work?

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2 JOY SINDERBRAND: Well, we work very
3 closely with the Mayor's Office of Recovery and
4 Resilience and they--and, though, and they act as the--
5 the Mayor's oversight of the program, and we also
6 work closely with City Hall both on a regular basis
7 to update them, but also to--to navigate any of these
8 challenges that you've been referring to with other
9 agencies to move any bottlenecks that slow down.

10 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Well, is it--can you
11 give us who they are that you speak with?

12 JOY SINDERBRAND: Right, so--so Jenny
13 Vishi (sps?) just started. So I'm not sure if you've
14 spoken to you yet, but we met with her because our
15 last meeting was maybe two weeks ago.

16 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And what was--what
17 was the--what was discussed? What was the result of
18 that meeting?

19 JOY SINDERBRAND: So that meeting was to
20 go over the status. We--we do a top-down approach
21 program overarching status and then project by
22 project where things are, and then we talk about any
23 particular issues on the kind of granular funding
24 level to moving things along, and then on the bigger
25 program priorities into our seats. (sic)

1
2 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I have a couple—I
3 have a series of questions, but I know my colleagues
4 have questions as well, but I just have a—a couple of
5 more. Has NYCHA been contacted by the—the U.S.
6 Homeland Security Department with regards to any
7 potential audits or pre-audits of—of any of these
8 FEMA dollar?

9 JOY SINDERBRAND: Yeah, we are regularly
10 working with HUD and HUD IT. We are currently
11 working with HUD IT now.

12 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Well, HUD deals
13 with HUD money--

14 JOY SINDERBRAND: [interposing] Well, you
15 said Homeland.

16 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --but-but with
17 regards to the auditing of FEMA dollars I believe
18 that's sometimes conducted by Homeland Security.

19 JOY SINDERBRAND: I am not—I'm not
20 currently in discussions with Homeland Security, but
21 we do work with FEMA and FEMA IT as well.

22 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And—and what has
23 been discussed so far? Have—have they conducted an
24 audit so far of these dollars? Are there any
25 discussions that we should be privy to?

1
2 JOY SINDERBRAND: Well, FEMA IT is—I
3 don't think we've been asked about it right now, but
4 I—but we have an auto tracker and I can certainly
5 share whatever is allowed publicly to share about
6 what we—what audit could wait. (sic)

7 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I know that NYCHA
8 signed an MOU with DOI I believe in 2015, is that
9 correct?

10 JOY SINDERBRAND: Yes.

11 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Has—and that was to
12 assign integrity monitors to monitor any complaints.
13 Have there been any complaints or active reports or
14 active investigations that we should be aware of?

15 JOY SINDERBRAND: We work closely with
16 DOI and the—and the third-party integrity monitors,
17 which you're talking about, and many active
18 conversation I believe under the purview. I'm not
19 sure if they're public.

20 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: But have you been
21 contacted by them with regards to get information
22 about a particular complaint?

23 JOY SINDERBRAND: Oh, yes, we regularly
24 provide information whenever they ask.
25

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So there--there are
some current inquiries by DOI and these monitors?

JOY SINDERBRAND: I believe they are
currently active although I'm just not sure what I'm
allowed to talk about under their purview.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: This is something
that we're going to--we're going to follow up on
because we--we do need to hear more--more about this,
and with regards to the FEMA dollars, that is not
subject to DOI. That's my understanding. Is that--
who is the--is--is there an integrity monitor
overseeing the--the FEMA money?

JOY SINDERBRAND: So, the FEMA money goes
through the State--

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Correct.

JOY SINDERBRAND: --and so we are--we are
under oversight of DISYS (sic) and the State IGM and
also FEMA IGM. (sic)

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Is there an MOU
with the state with regards to integrity monitors?

JOY SINDERBRAND: There's an MOU with the
State I don't know if we're paying for a third-party
integrity monitor or if it's a standard--if there's a
standard or not.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And do you know if
there's any active inquiries—

JOY SINDERBRAND: [interposing] I don't
know.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --that the State
reached out to inquire about any investigations or
misuse of funds?

JOY SINDERBRAND: We're—we're frequently
audited by—by these agencies, but they're not
considered necessarily active investigations. It's
an over—it's a typical oversight where they ask us
questions about our processes and programs and then
we give them the information they requested.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Because I think if
there's any issues that are—have come to your
attention or complaints that have been made that—that
are serious are serious in nature, but also are
holding up major projects. We—the Council should be
aware of it because certain reforms might need—might
have to be made.

JOY SINDERBRAND: I don't think we have
anything like that.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: But in the interest
of time my colleague Council Member Richards has some
questions.

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Thank you.

JOY SINDERBRAND: Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Maybe I should
move over. I'll move over. Okay, how are you?

JOY SINDERBRAND: Fine, thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Just a few
questions. So, and I want to thank the chairs for
their leadership. It just feels like we've been
doing this for s long. We'll be happy today that
everything is done. You know, we have to 2021 done
right. [laughs] So I think the chair was--was
speaking to something that we frequently still are
dealing with especially in the Redfern Houses and I
hate to keep bother Brian Honan every Sunday or
Saturday. You know, the poor guy has no life on the
weekend. So, but we are seriously still dealing with
heat and hot water issues there. Can you give me an
update on where we're at with Rockaway Developments I
particular, and I know we started some work at Ocean
Bay Houses and if you can just run through.

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2 JOY SINDERBRAND: Sure for—for the
3 Rockaways, in construction we have Causey (sp?)
4 Oceanside and Bayside referenced in procurement and
5 then East 41st and Hammill are completing the design
6 process.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: And when you
8 say construction so what does the particular work
9 going on?

10 JOY SINDERBRAND: So I didn't bring--

11 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: [interposing]
12 Okay.

13 JOY SINDERBRAND: --which site right now.
14 I'm sorry. I'll have to get back to you.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Okay, alright
16 get back and—and I—and I do want a second the chair
17 in saying I want to thank you for the work and
18 communication with our office and certainly coming
19 out to all community meetings when we call. There
20 are some concerns. I know I just heard from the
21 developers working on Ocean Bay in particular and I
22 know RAD is going on there now. There were some
23 questions around so REES is overseeing all the job
24 hiring stuff, correct.
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JOY SINDERBRAND: [background comments]

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For the-I'm-I'm--

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COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: For-for local
hires on these projects. So REES with the--

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JOY SINDERBRAND: [interposing] We work
with-we work with REES--

8

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: [interposing]
Okay.

10

JOY SINDERBRAND: --and the staff
addition and send additional staff to REES just to
supplement the-the workers.

13

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: So one of the
issues that's coming up, and I think we were hearing
several cases of this. It's just something and I
look forward to a phone conference or something on
this eventually on residents who are actually on
REES's in a development who going through REES, and
then are being told that they're not NYCHA residents.

20

JOY SINDERBRAND: Okay.

21

COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: But there's
some mix-ups going on there. I do appreciate the
local hiring that is going on. I think we would like
to see more solid data on who's being hired on the
projects.--

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JOY SINDERBRAND: Okay.

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JOY SINDERBRAND: [interposing] Okay.

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COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: --and I don't know if everybody else is encountering this in their district as well. Sandy is an opportunity as well, right, and with billions of dollars coming in, we want to make sure our local residents can maximize opportunities especially with job opportunities. So, I wanted to bring that to your attention. I don't know if you have any response on that.

20

21

22

JOY SINDERBRAND: As in woke up in front of a car (sic) I haven't heard that issue before today. So I'd like to address that.

23

24

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COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Okay, and then lastly just on--and I know this is a question. So when work begins especially I'm always worried about

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2 residents who live on the first floor. Will they--
3 what is the plan for relocation if any individuals
4 have to be relocated?

5 JOY SINDERBRAND: So we are--we've worked
6 very hard, and this is part of the design process to
7 make sure that we're not impacting and creating
8 permit relocations issues, and so at this point there
9 aren't any anticipated permits for relocations.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Okay.

11 JOY SINDERBRAND: And we're working to
12 protect the first floors so they can be occupied
13 throughout.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: So you believe
15 all the work that can happen--

16 JOY SINDERBRAND: [interposing] There are
17 many--

18 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: --people can
19 remain in their apartments, and at the very worst and
20 not just the first floor. It's just that it's
21 usually.

22 JOY SINDERBRAND: [interposing] No, no,
23 certainly. You know, there--there may be times due to
24 construction activity that there--there might be a
25

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2 need for a temporary-- You know, when I say
3 temporary I mean for the day that the--

4 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: [interposing]
5 Okay.

6 JOY SINDERBRAND: --work (sic) is
7 occurring, but we don't anticipate any permit (sic)
8 relocation, because four doors (sic) are very limited
9 in the departments in Red Hook that--that wouldn't be
10 impacted.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Okay, my last
12 question, and you anticipate. Can you just go
13 through the design? So you said Red Fern is in
14 design and--

15 JOY SINDERBRAND: Redfern is in
16 procurement.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: In procurement.

18 JOY SINDERBRAND: East 21st and Hammill
19 are in design, and we would start construction on
20 those by the end of the year.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Okay.
22 Alrighty, great. Well, thank you. I look forward to
23 continuing this conversation. Happy to see works,
24 you know, definitely happening in a district, but we
25 want to make sure we keep this open dialogue going

1
2 and that we're communicating with residents. Not to
3 say that we're not doing it but all levels as we go
4 through this. So thank you.

5 JOY SINDERBRAND: Thank you.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER RICHARDS: Thank you,
7 Chairs.

8 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Council Member
9 Menchaca.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Thank you.

11 Thank you to the chairs for your leadership on this
12 question, and I can get a--just a show of hands. How
13 many of you here reside in NYCHA? Wonderful. Thank
14 you all for being here, and I know we're going to
15 hear your voice as well. So thank you just for--for
16 that. The first thing I want to do is--is kind of ask
17 some kind of basic questions that I think we could
18 walk through, but I want to--I want to just
19 specifically to you Joy about the responsibility.
20 What is the responsibility of NYCHA to communicate to
21 its--to its residents about the Sandy Projects?

22 JOY SINDERBRAND: Well, we've been taking
23 communication as one of our top priorities and that
24 includes the--the phone calls to the--to the presidents
25 to the resident meetings on an ongoing basis and then

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2 certainly the design of space that I know you've been
3 able to attend some of. And this is in the--

4 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: [interposing] I
5 think all of them.

6 JOY SINDERBRAND: --what does that mean?

7 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: I-I think all
8 of them, but--

9 JOY SINDERBRAND: Yeah, there really is
10 an element of boots on the ground that--that our
11 community outreach team has--has gone above and beyond
12 to make themselves available by phone and in person
13 beyond just the--the formal meetings, and we take it
14 very seriously because, you know and as much as we
15 can explain to people what's going on we can avert
16 any misunderstandings that--that might happen in the
17 future.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: And how do you
19 measure that success of saturation of information
20 that is so--as delicate and important and complicated
21 as--I think I've been every--every design conversation
22 and meeting. How--how do you measure that success?

23 JOY SINDERBRAND: Well, one measure of
24 the success for us is the ability to incorporate the
25 feedback that we get. You know, we--we use an

1
2 example, you know, in Coney Island is just the
3 placement of--of the boiler plants at Coney Island
4 Houses and that placement determination seems done by
5 the residents of Coney Island Houses, and--and does
6 not--every site doesn't have that exact same kind of
7 anecdote but--but certainly, you know, the playground
8 charrette that was one chance for us to see an input
9 and we look forward to incorporating that in put into
10 our designs, and so--so certainly input is one of our,
11 one of our big success stories.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Thank you for
13 that, and I--I just want to underscore yes, I think
14 that's right. There's been a lot of feedback loops
15 and there have been changes to the design that I've
16 seen awesome. How about the other part of the
17 question, which is how--how do you measure the amount
18 of information that's going into a population like
19 say Red Hook where we have Red Hook East and West,
20 the second largest development in the entire city,
21 and the large development of Sandy projects in the
22 entire portfolio for Sandy projects. How are you
23 measuring that saturation information in--in my
24 constituents in Red Hook.

1
2 JOY SINDERBRAND: No, I suddenly hear
3 from the people at the design meetings a level of
4 understanding about the project that is really
5 extraordinary, and one of the, you know, one of the
6 exciting things about working on this program is
7 that--that residents are so engaged that it's not
8 just something happening around them, but they really
9 are invested and listening and providing that
10 feedback and then coming back again to make sure that
11 the feedback was incorporated. And so to me that
12 shows that that the messaging is really--is really
13 coming through.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: So I guess I'm--
15 I'm just going to make a statement and move onto
16 some--some other questions, but I feel like we're not
17 doing enough right now to get this critical
18 information to as many people as possible, and I'm--
19 I'm just asking a larger question about residents who
20 are here, Council Members that are here representing
21 NYCHA and whom--whom ever else has to be part of this
22 team to be able to get more information out to more
23 people. And I just don't think we're doing a good
24 job, and I'll put myself in that--in that--in that
25 category. I think we need to get more out there, and

1
2 we need to figure our ways to be creative and
3 innovative in this particular year, but we are
4 experiencing. And I'm just talking about this stuff
5 that's coming down this White House, a lot of
6 misinformation and getting out there and--and
7 aggressive, and being able to measure that success
8 about people. Thinking about this as a campaign,
9 almost like a campaign. How many people did we talk
10 to? How many doors did we knock and get information
11 out there and be able to say and come back to me and--
12 and the Chair and say this is--this is what we've
13 done.

14 JOY SINDERBRAND: You know one of the
15 things that--that we did change on the Transparency
16 Map is that we put up when we asked questions about
17 the program and--

18 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: [interposing]
19 So what's it called, the Transparency?

20 JOY SINDERBRAND: The Sandy Interactive
21 Transparency Map from the NYCHA--

22 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: [interposing]
23 Oh, those are outlined. That's outline toolkit.

24 JOY SINDERBRAND: And, you know, we--we
25 were hearing questions from and individual one on one

1
2 basis to the Outreach Team, and then at meetings and
3 realizing that that information shouldn't be limited
4 to the same people who could attend the meeting at
5 that time. And so those are, those answers are
6 memorialized and posted to the website so that at any
7 time someone can--can click on it and find them.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Got it. So
9 maybe next time we can figure out a way that you're
10 measuring that--that piece because I think the--the
11 fact that we're not measuring it now doesn't sound
12 like you have a certain sense of numbers or how many
13 people--how people are called and how many people are
14 coming and--

15 JOY SINDERBRAND: Oh, well, I--I do know
16 how many people. We--so we made 60,000 phone calls,
17 posted 150,000 flyers--

18 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: [interposing]
19 Awesome. That's what I wanted to hear. That's great

20 JOY SINDERBRAND: --attended 1,500
21 meetings. You know, and then the question is well it
22 is--is--is that enough? And we can always do more, and
23 we appreciate, you know, the--the efforts that you've
24 made to connect us to community groups and
25

1
2 organizations that—that want to be a part of—of
3 getting the information out.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Great and that—
5 that leads to a couple other pieces and I'm just
6 trying to make some connections here. One is in Red
7 Hook and Gowanus you have historic ground field, and
8 I kind of want to get a sense from you about what
9 the—the impact is on the development project itself
10 and how you're taking that into consideration as you
11 design and build.

12 JOY SINDERBRAND: Certainly—certainly and
13 then Gowanus and in Gowanus in particular we're
14 building in cooperation with DEP. They're—they're
15 our funding partner there so we can include an
16 additional scope of work on our bioswales. We follow
17 all the—the scoping and permitting criteria when it
18 comes to any potential environmental issues, and for—
19 for the sites that have those issues, that it's
20 certainly we follow all the—the requirements, but we
21 are not often seeking into areas that have that
22 particular element because the goal is to get—to get
23 the official work (sic) above grade. So if our work
24 is above grade and we are not disturbing—disturbing
25 those elements we might not—we—we would not

1
2 necessarily be-be creating a condition that's
3 different from today.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Okay. Okay, I-
5 I think I'm going to-I guess I'm-I'm concerned about
6 the answer. I think-I think we'd like a little bit
7 more. If you can give a little bit more about that
8 because I think what you're saying is it just doesn't
9 seem like it's going to be a problem, but I think an
10 work in-in Red Hook, especially Red Hook where we
11 just found led and so many other-other elements in
12 our-in our ball fields, and that's a whole other
13 part. That's all-that's in the Parks Department, and
14 they're-they're taking care of it \$110 million just
15 appeared from the Mayor. Thank you, Mr. Mayor, and
16 that's happening. But I guess what I'm saying is I
17 think we're going to want a little bit more of a
18 response, and I'm hoping that folks on the ground
19 here that are from NYCHA can talk a little bit more
20 about what they want to see, but I'm not satisfied
21 with the answer. So if you want to just come back a
22 little bit more, with some more, but I have-I have
23 some questions.

24

25

1
2 JOY SINDERBRAND: Sure. I meant that's
3 global answer. Show me on a site-by-site basis. I
4 would want to add to that.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: [interposing]
6 We're talking about Red Hook.

7 JOY SINDERBRAND: Well, with Red Hook, we
8 are going through the environmental investigation
9 process, and so once information is available from
10 that process then I can know based on the scope of
11 work that we're doing what mitigation-specific
12 mitigations we will have to complete, but that-that
13 process is no completed.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Got you and
15 that's because the work is in just design-designing
16 the land or--

17 JOY SINDERBRAND: That's because--because
18 we're still in the design process and we're
19 finalizing what the site distribution and the lily
20 pad design would be. So inasmuch as we're adding
21 clean fill on top of--on top of grade, we wouldn't be
22 disturbing any of the elements below grade.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Okay. This is
24 going to be great to bring to the next design
25 conversation, and I think we're going to have--you're

1 going to hear it from—from residents here, but I
2 think this is going to be an important thing as we
3 get closer and out of design and into construction.
4 So let's go into construction. I want to talk a
5 little bit about—about jobs and unions and really
6 understanding how—how both the opportunities under
7 PLA are giving both union work, which we love in so
8 many ways, but also binging in Section 3 and how
9 that's working as a plan, as a larger plan. You can
10 stick Red Hook because it's also a massive plan as
11 well, and I think the larger you go, the more
12 difficult it's going to be to kind of create a plan.
13 So how—how—how are you to day preparing for the job
14 entry for compliance to Section 3, HUD Section 3, on
15 Sandy projects?
16

17 JOY SINDERBRAND: Okay, and you know, the
18 HUD Section 3 and the PLA really exists side-by-side.
19 So both of these require and this exists for our
20 contractors that it really starts from before the
21 contract is even awarded. So during the procurement
22 process the contractors are required to make a
23 commitment for Section 3 hiring from the hires. Then
24 before the contract is executed we negotiate an even
25 higher commitment than what was in the RFP, the RFP

1
2 process. On a month-by-month basis invoices are
3 reviewed to see if the contractor is either meeting
4 or exceeding those hiring goals, and if they are not,
5 do not, we work with them to create even more of a
6 pipeline and connection between the folks who are
7 interested in work and who are qualified for the open
8 positions.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Okay. I'm
10 think I'm hearing—I'm hearing some—some rebuttals
11 from the—from the audience [background comments] and
12 thank you—thank you for not—not—not vocalizing that,
13 but we're hearing, we're seeing some hand signs over
14 here about that. So, I—I think there's some concern
15 there as well. So let's figure out how we—we start
16 addressing that in a very public way and transparent
17 way. In—in Red Hook that's going to be something
18 we're going to be bring to, and actually it's kind of
19 in conversations and other bills right now like 1447
20 and others that are really pushing this question
21 forward about access to jobs, and that's important
22 not just to us in the City Council, but to the people
23 on the ground right now that—that deserve those jobs.
24 The next question is on mold. So, there's a real
25 connection here to the delay in timeline and I'm

1 really—I'm really glad you got a lot of push from our
2 Chair Torres on this, and the timeline the lag in
3 timeline for—for delivery. We're—we're in the middle
4 of design right now and I get it, and you're—you've
5 responded, but essentially there's a real bad mold
6 problem here, and I'm trying to think about how—how
7 you can—how you can kind of reconcile this—this issue
8 of timeline. But also consider the fact that mold is
9 expanding in ways that because of the Sandy damage,
10 is—is causing a lot more on the ground health
11 implications where people like seniors who never had
12 asthma never before, they're now experiencing this in
13 a—in a—in a high—in a dramatically increased rate.
14 And so how, how are you—how are you kind of bringing
15 the—responsibility of NYCHA Sandy projects to this
16 question?

18 JOY SINDERBRAND: So we are really
19 excited to be able to replace 185 roofs through the—
20 the FEMA funding. FEMA determined which buildings
21 were all for roof replacement. So we are working
22 closely with the Capital Projects Department to make
23 sure that—that there's coordination with roofs that
24 we're replacing, you know, instead of being funded
25 by—by the Mayor's Initiative. In Red Hook

1
2 specifically we actually carved out the roofs from
3 the major project so that they can start as soon as
4 possible, and they're out to bid now, and inasmuch
5 as-as roofs are forced to have water (sic) and
6 changing, we're hoping to get that worked on as
7 quickly as possible.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Okay, and again
9 back to communication because we're not communicating
10 that to people. People don't-people are not making
11 any of these connections, and this is why we need to
12 measure our success and the saturation of this
13 information to the people on the ground because this
14 is (1) the information is not getting out there, but
15 (2) I think-I think we need to really redouble our
16 efforts to deal with the mold issue right now as the
17 timeline continues to extend for other reasons that
18 are going to arrive just because this is how it
19 works. Projects have been delayed over and over
20 again--

21 JOY SINDERBRAND: [interposing] Uh-huh.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: --and-and so I
23 just-we-we're going to need some real action here on-
24 on-on the-on the immediate urgency of-of the mold
25 issue in our developments. And-and maybe this will

1
2 be my-my last question, but-but we're talking about
3 the RAD and Next Gen Capital Projects, and I think
4 one of those for example might have been-clarify it
5 if I'm wrong-the senior centers they got moved from
6 Walcott Street over to next to the Miccio Center that
7 we're in the middle of right now in--

8 JOY SINDERBRAND: [interposing] Yes.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: -- in
10 construction brought in some of that Sandy money,
11 and-and so I guess I'm I'm-I'm a little confused with
12 some of the RAD and the Capital Gen-Next Gen projects
13 that are now classified under Sandy. So can you-can
14 you help clarify that a little bit for us, and-and-
15 talk-talk to that point?

16 JOY SINDERBRAND: So, there is the
17 investment in the-the senior center was actually
18 capital dollars FEMA did not-did not fund the-the
19 senior center construction through the fourth--

20 COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: [interposing]
21 Hold on. I just want to-want to talk that there are
22 no Sandy dollars in the senior center?

23 JOY SINDERBRAND: The-yeah the senior
24 center was not deemed a Sandy impacted building, and
25 so it was not a Roof or 428 Fund.

COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Okay.

JOY SINDERBRAND: But that—but as you said, the program—project is moving well along, and—and we’re—we’re close to completion on that. That—within the—the Ocean—the Ocean Bay RAD deal, FEMA was—the FEMA scope of work for that development we are still committed to completing, and we are using some—we are using some FEMA dollars for that. I’m not sure that it’s a boilerplate for any future—for any future negotiation or—or project set up.

COUNCIL MEMBER MENCHACA: Okay, and I just want to say thank you to you, to your team, to Brian, to his team. You always—you always show up. You’re always doing the good work. We’re never satisfied and we shouldn’t be because we want to do—we want NYCHA to do better everyday and thank you to the Chairs for this very, very important hearing.

JOY SINDERBRAND: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Well, thank you, Council Member Menchaca. I have a—a few more questions, and—and I would love clarification on whether pre-construction falls within the procurement category or the construction category, but I do have—

1
2 I do want just status updates on--on each of the
3 projects that are in the construction phase.

4 JOY SINDERBRAND: Uh-huh.

5 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So Bayside is set to
6 be complete more than two years from now. Do we know
7 it's in the construction phase? What's the stat--
8 what's--what's the status of the construction?

9 JOY SINDERBRAND: No, I'm going to have
10 to get back to you with the--the granular construction
11 updates, but I'm happy to send a bullet point list
12 for every development.

13 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay, okay. With--
14 just in the future if you--when we have a hearing if
15 you can just have updates prepared for each--

16 JOY SINDERBRAND: [interposing] Okay.

17 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: --project that would
18 be appreciated. Council Member Treyger spoke about
19 the Integrity Monitor, third-party monitors.

20 JOY SINDERBRAND: Uh-huh.

21 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I don't know if
22 there was any mention of a report. Are these
23 monitors producing reports about--?

24 JOY SINDERBRAND: The--the findings of the
25 audits I know if those are considered public record,

1
2 but we—we all participate. We do participate in
3 many—many other community reports. [background
4 comments] When—when there are concerns about a Sandy
5 site, the—the concerns are raised to us. I don't
6 know what the form of that report is in terms of--

7 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: [interposing] Is
8 there a written report evaluating the progress?

9 JOY SINDERBRAND: We'd likely find—we-we
10 would receive—we could receive findings if there are
11 issues that need to be resolved, and then we would
12 work with the idea to resolve.

13 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: And in what form do
14 you receive those findings?

15 JOY SINDERBRAND: We receive letters.

16 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: You—you receive it
17 in letters?

18 JOY SINDERBRAND: In letter format.

19 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: So those are the
20 closest—that's the closest approximation of the
21 report that evaluates the findings?

22 JOY SINDERBRAND: On the—it came from the
23 Department of Investigation.

24 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Whoever—whatever—
25 whatever the source of the third-party monitor?

1
2 JOY SINDERBRAND: So, from the HUD IG--
3 right, from the NYCHA IG, I receive findings in the
4 form of a letter. From HUD there have been find--
5 there are reports. Just not sure if they're-if
6 they're reports that are-are NYCHA's to share or
7 whether they belong to OMB or basically being-being
8 audited.

9 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay, and what would
10 lead you to believe that you're not at liberty to
11 share those reports?

12 JOY SINDERBRAND: I just don't know the
13 protocol IG Reports, and whether public documentation
14 or whether they're part of the federal-federal
15 documentation. I'm-I'm just not sure, but I can get
16 back to you.

17 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay, and if we-and
18 if you can verify, if we were to verify that those
19 reports can be released to the public domain, are you
20 willing to share them with the public, put-put them
21 on your website?

22 JOY SINDERBRAND: I believe if they're-if
23 they are public, that they are already on the
24 website. I just-I receive them-I don't get another--
25 [background comments].

1

2

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay.

3

4

JOY SINDERBRAND: Is that--so they're on
there?

5

6

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay, and you're
willing to--is it available on your website or is--
where are those reports available?

8

9

10

11

12

JOY SINDERBRAND: They're not on our
website because they're--they not always or it's
directly on NYCHA. Sometimes the audits of other
agencies that--that deal with NYCHA, but inasmuch as
we can make them available, we're happy to.

13

14

CHAIRPERSON TORRES: I--I would just
encourage you for the sake of transparency--

15

JOY SINDERBRAND: Sure.

16

17

18

19

20

21

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CHAIRPERSON TORRES: --because I--I know
you have you have your fact sheets. Every agency has
its talking points, but I think it would be useful to
have those audits for third-party reports available
on NYCHA's website so that we have a holistic view of
what's going--of the progress of the Sandy recovery
work. Do you have any additional?

23

24

25

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you. Thank
you, Chair. With regards to--before I go into the--the

1
2 RFPs and the--and the vetting process, who is
3 responsible for design? Is there--

4 JOY SINDERBRAND: You mean the design
5 firms?

6 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Is it NYCHA or is
7 it a firm that you've hired to work on these designs?
8 Who actually is designing this--

9 JOY SINDERBRAND: [interposing] Sure.

10 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --that's taking
11 four--you know, all these years.

12 JOY SINDERBRAND: Yes so design firms
13 were hired, and the--the oversight of the design firms
14 is through the Office of Recovery and Resilience.

15 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So are--are they--
16 when were they hired, first? Do you know?

17 JOY SINDERBRAND: It's actually various
18 times depending on the project. Some were hired--some
19 were hired through--through a prequalification
20 process, and others were hired directly for the
21 project.

22 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Do they get paid
23 just one sum that's kind of agreed to at this--at the
24 contract signing or the longer this takes, they get
25 paid more money?

1
2 JOY SINDERBRAND: Typically these are one
3 sum projects. If there's a significant change in the
4 scope of work, there may be an additional task order,
5 too, associated with that change.

6 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Have there been any
7 changes to the--to the scope of work, and any changes
8 to their contracts that they're getting paid a larger
9 sum?

10 JOY SINDERBRAND: There are certain
11 developments where the scope of work changed based on
12 the negotiations with FEMA, and inasmuch as that
13 created a substantial difference it was also in the
14 task order.

15 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: How have the--the
16 consultants that NYCHA has contracted with because
17 there's a need for FEMA assistances, how have they
18 helped to improve the process of getting the funds
19 and to get the work started as soon as possible?

20 JOY SINDERBRAND: And so you said how is
21 it the design comes up?

22 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: How have--NYCHA has
23 hired consultants, is that correct--

24 JOY SINDERBRAND: [interposing] Yes.
25

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --to help over-
manage the--the FEMA work, is that correct?

JOY SINDERBRAND: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So how have they
helped the process?

JOY SINDERBRAND: So the--the team, the
professional team that was hired for their specific
grant sizing and programmatic expertise is broken up
into groups. We have a grant sizing group, design
oversight, construction, procurement and resident
engagement. The Design Oversight Group is critical
to helping us align design with the negotiated
project worksheets. So some of these project's
worksheets are--which they are on a conceptual level,
but then when you actually get on the ground and try
to dig into what this would look like on a site, it
actually becomes a conversation with FEMA again.

DEBORAH GODDARD: You might ask also to
the work the consultants did in negotiating with FEMA
to get the \$3 billion.

JOY SINDERBRAND: Right. I mean they're
really, you know, the--the testimony is what we did to
it (sic) but we really give credit to the consultants
for increasing that grant from \$1.8 billion to \$3

1 billion. I mean that was something that was outside
2 of our—that was outside of the scope of NYCHA's
3 imagination. There is certainly nobody on NYCHA's
4 staff with that expertise and arguably nobody in the
5 region who could have done that.
6

7 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Well, you—you keep
8 mentioning \$3 billion.

9 JOY SINDERBRAND: Uh-huh.

10 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: On your fact sheet
11 it now states nearly \$3 billion, which is different
12 than \$3 billion--

13 JOY SINDERBRAND: Sure.

14 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --and everything
15 counts now because when we're talking about the scope
16 of work and what's promised to people and the market,
17 what is the amount of money that is legally obligated
18 to—to NYCHA--

19 JOY SINDERBRAND: [interposing] Uh-huh.

20 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --and why is there
21 a discrepancy between \$3 billion and nearly \$3
22 billion on your fact sheet?

23 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER:

24 JOY SINDERBRAND:

25 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER:

1
2 JOY SINDERBRAND: So, there are several
3 pots of money that are inter-related. The-the \$3
4 billion is hour shorthand to write. We-we don't go
5 down to the dollar when we talk about it. So that's
6 our record grants that also takes into account
7 sources of funding from the local governments or the
8 local match and the insurance proceeds.

9 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So with the local
10 match and whatever other factors, what is the actual
11 amounts that NYCHA is receiving from FEMA?

12 JOY SINDERBRAND: So, the-the dollars
13 from FEMA will change slightly as we negotiate-as we
14 complete the litigation with the insurance companies,
15 but the total program will stay the same at the \$3.2
16 billion level. So the-the specific grant, the 428
17 grant that we say is a \$3 billion grant is in
18 combination with other sources of funds as well.

19 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And you are still
20 in litigation with insurance companies?

21 JOY SINDERBRAND: Uh-huh. Yes, we have--

22 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: [interposing] How
23 many?

24 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --ongoing
25 litigation.

1
2 JOY SINDERBRAND: I don't remember, but I
3 have—I'll have to get back to you.

4 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And how much money
5 has been recouped so far out of the total amount that
6 is being contested?

7 JOY SINDERBRAND: \$318 million has—has
8 already been recouped, and we're contesting another
9 \$115 million.

10 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And these insurance
11 companies are still hired by NYCHA?

12 JOY SINDERBRAND: I don't know off the
13 top of my head. I'll have to find out for you.

14 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Because I—I
15 remember at our first hearing we were told there—
16 there were about 20 insurance companies that NYCHA
17 has. If one of them has the audacity to throw our
18 residents under the bus during the most trying times—
19 -

20 JOY SINDERBRAND: Uh-huh.

21 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --the City of New
22 York should not be doing business with these greedy
23 individuals. [background comments] I want to get
24 into the bidding process--

25 JOY SINDERBRAND: Uh-huh.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --because now I-I-
my colleagues have touched upon it, but I-I'm going
to get really into the issue of the bidding process
and local hiring. These are RFPs, is that correct?

JOY SINDERBRAND: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: How have residents
from the impacted developments shaped the RFP that
went out before bidding?

JOY SINDERBRAND: So you're saying the
design of the development?

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: The RFP, meaning
that expectations of the contractor, what is expected
of them? For example, when we have the breakfast
meetings with my resident leaders and NYCHA--

JOY SINDERBRAND: Uh-huh.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --we ask that when
a contractor is selected that they will conduct a
resident engagement meeting--

JOY SINDERBRAND: Uh-huh.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --so the resident
leaders and the board know who they are, know what's
happening, know what's going on. There's no--there's
no guessing games, there's no ambiguity, and there's
a clear chain of accountability, and there's a local

1 hiring plan that's being discussed. How has-how-how
2 have-how have they, the residents who you have
3 significantly done other outreach to, and I've-I've
4 seen it, but I-I just want to now see how that
5 outreach has filtered into the RFP.
6

7 JOY SINDERBRAND: Well, you're right,
8 that-that communication is critical--

9 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: [interposing]
10 Right.

11 JOY SINDERBRAND: --and the Construction
12 Management Oversight group in my office is
13 responsible for ensure that prior to any construction
14 occurring, the GMs that's hired to the RFP process
15 meets the-the tenant leaders, and if that has not
16 happened, construction cannot start.

17 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So we heard it
18 before. One of the resident leaders, Miss Smalls
19 from O'Dwyer, mentioned that someone who-who
20 presented themselves as-as a whether it's a
21 contractor or some company went on the premises and
22 she was forced to on her own try to negotiate or in
23 essence request that residents from her development
24 have a shot at working at her developments. Are you
25 aware of this incident?

1
2 JOY SINDERBRAND: [off mic] I do not have
3 any active projects that are employed, right? [on
4 mic] I—I don't have an active major project at
5 O'Dwyer right now, but I would—I'll check back with
6 my team. That should never have happened. They
7 should just not be—that shouldn't be anecdote of this
8 year. (sic) We work directly with the GMs to make
9 sure that the hiring is occurring, and we also work
10 with the local lease office and—and thank you for
11 your support in connecting us together just to make
12 sure the word is getting out. One thing we haven't
13 talked much today is—is—is the—the RFP that we have
14 out on—on the street right now for \$1.4 million from
15 HUD to pay for a pre-apprentice program to give
16 residents another pathway to its union jobs, and
17 those bids are due March 7. So we are really looking
18 forward to getting that on the street. That should
19 be—that should be enough training for 100 residents.

20 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I'm—I'm just—I—I'm
21 going to get to hiring in a second. I'm just
22 finishing the RFP process.

23 JOY SINDERBRAND: Sure.

24 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: We are going to—I
25 know I could say for myself definitely I'm going to

1
2 actively be involved in making sure that that
3 commitment made is a commitment kept--

4 JOY SINDERBRAND: [interposing] Uh-huh.

5 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --for residents of
6 these developments that once a contractor is
7 selected--

8 JOY SINDERBRAND: [interposing] Uh-huh.

9 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --there--there
10 should be a meeting with the resident leaders, the
11 board. There should be--it's--it's in NYCHA's
12 interest.

13 JOY SINDERBRAND: Yes.

14 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: It's in the
15 residents' interest. It's in all of our interest
16 that there is 100% transparency about what's
17 happening to development, who is expected to be
18 there, who shouldn't be there. What are the protocols
19 with regards to people moving in and out of the
20 building because I'm sure doors will be open and that
21 could leave the door open for strangers and whatnot.
22 So there has to be a-a real good thorough meeting
23 between the residents and the contractor, and is that
24 commitment still on the--still on the table?

25 JOY SINDERBRAND: Yes, definitely.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Alright, local
3 hiring. We also heard from our resident leaders that
4 they're being told by NYCHA individuals that it will
5 be very difficult or impossible to hire local
6 residents from NYCHA developments, the impacted
7 developments to work on these job sites. Can you
8 clarify if those remarks are accurate as far as
9 people being told they can't work here if they're not
10 officially a part of the union?

11 JOY SINDERBRAND: Well, our goal is to
12 meet and exceed the--the Section 3 requirements and,
13 you know, inasmuch as we are working with the unions,
14 we certainly appreciate any support from the elected
15 to come up with new and different pathways for--for
16 folks who are actually seeking opportunities. The
17 Pre-Apprenticeship Program that I talked about is
18 just one of them. There's other agreements that we
19 need to--to make--to make slots available for--for NYCHA
20 residents.

21 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So just to respond
22 to that, and--and I have seen the flyers, I've seen
23 the events--

24 JOY SINDERBRAND:

25 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER:

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JOY SINDERBRAND: [interposing] Uh-huh

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CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --with regards to
providing OSHA classes and other types of training
opportunities. What-what I see happening and what I
hear happening is that now you have a whole bunch of
residents with these OSHA cards, and other, you know,
pieces of paper saying that you are now eligible to
do this, A-B-C--

10

JOY SINDERBRAND: [interposing] Uh-huh.

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JOY SINDERBRAND: Uh-huh.

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CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And so-and I
understand there's a whole bunch of stuff. There's

1
2 PLAs, there's REES, there's this and that. We have
3 to make it happen. It's as simple as that. We have
4 to make it happen. Tell us in practical terms.
5 Let's throw out the--that's throw out the acronyms.
6 I'm tired of all the acronyms. In practical terms
7 how do we get interested, qualified residents from
8 the impacted developments working in their
9 communities? How does it happen?

10 JOY SINDERBRAND: Well, the--the framework
11 that's been set up is still the path forward. Once
12 people are registered with the REES Office and
13 they're on the list of interested--interested
14 residents, our--our office follows up with them to
15 make sure that they're aware of any opportunities for
16 additional training and for the Pre-Apprenticeship
17 Program. Once the--the folks--once those folks are
18 qualified, then they are on the list whenever we hear
19 of a--a contractor who's trying to hire for job.

20 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Look, I--I-I just--
21 and--and I--and I appreciate that, you know, I think
22 there's a sincere effort to try to, you know, to get
23 us this information, but let me just kind of give you
24 the paint--the picture that I think might work best.

25 JOY SINDERBRAND: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: As you mentioned,
we have 33 or 34 separate applications, right, for
each development--

JOY SINDERBRAND: [interposing] Uh-huh.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --for Sandy
recovery, and at some point you're going to have 33
or it could be one contractor doing multiple
projects, is that correct? So that would be 33
separate--

JOY SINDERBRAND: [interposing] Right.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --people doing this
work, but at some point you're going to have
contractors selected for all of these 33
developments. I imagine there's going to be a plan
of action for each of these developments--

JOY SINDERBRAND: [interposing] Yes.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --and there should
be some sort of an estimate of how many jobs will be
created per development. Is that correct? Is that a
part of that--those discussions with these
contractors--

JOY SINDERBRAND: [interposing] Yes.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --that are part of
this RFP process? You know, let's say whether it's

1 Coney Island Houses, we—we expect there'll be 150
2 jobs, and it's giving a number out there, and of that
3 150, how many are going to local residents? Is—
4 that's how I'm envisioning this in working this out
5 and, of course, working through your channels whether
6 it's REES and—and the residents, but the bottom line
7 is many of the residents, as you could hear from
8 their—from their feedback and—and I hear from
9 meetings, there's a lack of confidence in the REES
10 Office and the REES program.

12 JOY SINDERBRAND: Okay.

13 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: There is a
14 significant lack of confidence, and we have to work
15 on that now, not ten years from now, but now--

16 JOY SINDERBRAND: Uh-huh.

17 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --because it will
18 be a travesty, a travesty if \$3 billion is spent in
19 our city and we don't lift up the hopes and dreams
20 and aspirations of our local residents, and that
21 they're not the ones doing this work. That will be a
22 travesty. We have to get work to those that need the
23 most. Now, I understand the other point is that
24 residents have to be equipped with certain skills and
25 knowledge to do that work. You can't have any random

1
2 person just saying I want to do the job, but this is
3 a two-way street that we have to meet as well.

4 JOY SINDERBRAND: Uh-huh.

5 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So, I-I-is there a-
6 is there a local hiring plan that's a part of the-the
7 conditions of-of-of-of these RFPs in selecting these
8 contractors that they have to present to you and
9 present to the resident leaders this is our plan for
10 local hiring?

11 JOY SINDERBRAND: So we-to start, I just
12 want to emphasize to date we have 146 NYCHA residents
13 who have worked on the Sandy Program since its
14 inception. So we are not starting from 0 but we are
15 striving for more, and then when it comes to the
16 individualized plans, you're right. As part of each
17 RFP, the contractor is required to outline an
18 estimate of new hires, and then their goal for such a
19 date of hiring within that-that new hire pool. And
20 we work with them to come up with their goals and
21 then to come up with a plan.

22 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And who is
23 responsible because it shouldn't be a resident leader
24 happening to just run into someone at her development
25

1
2 to discuss and to negotiate hiring at their
3 development. That should not be happening.

4 JOY SINDERBRAND: Certainly not. We—we
5 actually have a—a staff that's been dedicated to this
6 particular piece.

7 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: You have a person
8 dedicated for this piece?

9 JOY SINDERBRAND: Yes --

10 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Who is that person?

11 JOY SINDERBRAND: --as well. [background
12 comments] Yeah, yeah, so we—we have-- [background
13 comments] So, Laura is from my office and I can send
14 you her contact information. She comes out with me
15 to talk to people about this particular element. I
16 mean the notion is that every month we both work with
17 the contractor and check their invoices to make sure
18 that they are meeting their goals, and their invoices
19 include literally the names of each NYCHA resident
20 that they hire.

21 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So, just to kind of
22 in practical terms you finished one development in
23 the Lower East Side, is that correct?

24 JOY SINDERBRAND: Uh-huh.
25

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right, that's Rosie
Mendez's--

JOY SINDERBRAND: [interposing] Yes.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --district. What
was the total cost of that project?

JOY SINDERBRAND: \$5.2 million.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: \$5.2 million and in
that project were any local residents from that
community hired to do work?

JOY SINDERBRAND: I don't know if I have
it here. [pause] Yes, three--there were three NYCHA
residents hired and that was--that's a hiring plan
projection.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So is that the
projection or that's actually what happened?

JOY SINDERBRAND: It was the--it is the
projection was that--was that three would be hired,
and three were hired.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: From that
particular development or--

JOY SINDERBRAND: [interposing] From that
particular part of--it says NYCHA hires so from that--
I don't know if it was from that the development, but

1
2 the priority listed first trying from the development
3 and then from NYCHA as a whole.

4 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: See, what we—we
5 have to really get this right, and it is critical
6 that the residents from the impacted developments
7 have the first shot.

8 JOY SINDERBRAND: They are—they do.
9 That's just the criteria.

10 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: But—but you're
11 saying you're not sure if those three people were
12 from that development.

13 JOY SINDERBRAND: Well, I just didn't
14 have—I don't have that detail listed here. So I
15 don't want a mistake. I'd have to get back to you to
16 be sure.

17 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Well, as you can
18 see, certainly resident leaders in my district
19 they're very visible and vocal, and they will let us
20 know if their residents are—are the ones. I know
21 that Ms. Carter already has it.

22 DEBORAH CARTER: [off mic] But I didn't
23 say that. (sic)

24 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Yes, and—and so I—
25 I—I understand that NYCHA voluntarily agreed to

1
2 comply with Section 3 Guidelines with the FEMA
3 dollars when you didn't have to, and-and that-and we
4 appreciate that by the way. That's-with-with the
5 FEMA dollars they-they don't have to. HUD-HUD they
6 have to.

7 DEBORAH CARTER: [off mic] It has been
8 so.

9 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: No, this is not a
10 debate.

11 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: [gavel] Yes, I-I-
12 we-believe me, my colleague and I and the staff here
13 has spent enormous amounts of time sifting through
14 these documents and requirements, and there-there are
15 -there are certain laws and rules with regards to HUD
16 funding. The FEMA dollars there was a decision made
17 to follow Section 3 Guidelines where even quite
18 honestly my staff did a great job of researching the
19 Section 3 language.

20 JOY SINDERBRAND: Uh-huh.

21 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I would wish
22 Section 3 gets even stronger because there's certain
23 language in there that-that troubles me.

24 JOY SINDERBRAND: Okay.
25

1
2 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And when it says to
3 the greatest extent possible. I—I like when it says
4 you have to do it, but that's something that we have
5 to work with our federal partners on to really
6 strengthen that—that language--

7 JOY SINDERBRAND: [interposing] Uh-huh.

8 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --but we—we're
9 going to be following up on these job—local job
10 hiring plans for each of these developments and make
11 sure that local residents are having a shot, and in
12 the case of my district, just to let you know, when
13 it got back to me from Workforce 1 that there were
14 some residents that just needed a couple of extra
15 things on their resumes to give them a better chance,
16 we worked with local non-profits to provide those
17 opportunities to break down any of those barriers.
18 We're—we're committed to making sure that residents
19 are getting the skills, not just for a job, but a
20 good paying sustaining career for the rest of their
21 lives. Does my colleague have any other—any other
22 questions?

23 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: No, questions, but
24 just—I just want to say I'm excited about the
25 opportunity that we have here, but I find the

1 progress that we're making to be underwhelming. I
2 think the 2021 timeline is horrifying to me to think
3 that there are residents who have been waiting eight
4 or nine years or would have--would have to wait eight
5 or nine years to see the construction complete, and--
6 and I'm troubled that we don't have the clear
7 timeline for design, even a time range.

8
9 JOY SINDERBRAND: Oh, no we have timeline
10 for the end of design. What I don't have is the
11 start dates for each of the projects. I wasn't--I
12 wasn't here for the start dates so I just can't say
13 what the--the total was.

14 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Yeah, I mean I asked
15 you what was the standard--what was the standard
16 timeline for design--

17 JOY SINDERBRAND: [interposing] Yes.

18 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: --and I don't recall
19 getting an answer.

20 JOY SINDERBRAND: Sure, and the projects
21 range from one building site to 30 building sites,
22 and so giving a typical timeline for design--

23 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: [interposing] Even a
24 range.
25

1
2 JOY SINDERBRAND: Sure. I would say one
3 year to 18 months design-design process would be
4 typical for-for projects that range from \$10 million
5 to \$100 million that involve multiple trades.

6 CHAIRPERSON TORRES: Okay. So you can
7 rest assured that we're going to be digging deeper on
8 this topic in the near future. I'm not cleared that
9 we're pleased with the answers we've heard so-

10 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you and just
11 a-just a closing question with regards to you have a
12 PLA, right with the building trades, is that correct.

13 JOY SINDERBRAND: Uh-huh, correct.

14 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And-and so how are
15 they going to be looped in and engaged in the local
16 hiring plan as well because there are-there a number
17 of players. You have NYCHA, you have the contractor,
18 you have union workers and you have residents. Tell
19 us what is their role in this.

20 JOY SINDERBRAND: [off mic] You got it,
21 Deborah.

22 DEBORAH GODDARD: The unions themselves?

23 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right.

24 DEBORAH GODDARD: I think the most direct
25 connection they have is through the PLA where they

1
2 are required to set aside some of the apprentice
3 slots--apprenticeship slots that are reserved for city
4 residents that are then set aside and reserved for
5 NYCHA residents.

6 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thanks.

7 DEBORAH GODDARD: That's the most direct.

8 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Can you--can you
9 explain what these apprentice slots--apprenticeship
10 slots mean?

11 DEBORAH GODDARD: No, I can't. I'd have
12 to get back to you.

13 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Okay because this
14 is something that--[background comments]--that you
15 could answer?

16 MALE SPEAKER: [off mic] I probably
17 could.

18 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Okay, if you could
19 just introduce yourself, sir.

20 MALE SPEAKER: But I actually--I submitted
21 testimony.

22 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So maybe a separate
23 panel. Okay, but we'll get to that and that's what--
24 what we'll hear. So, but the questions again in the
25 PLA--

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DEBORAH GODDARD: Yes.

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CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --are unions understanding that local residents those with the skills and qualifications and that they will be should be a part of this process in being-being hired, and not just-not just referred to another training.

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DEBORAH GODDARD: Right.

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CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I think they are-I think they are tired of being told another workshop, another training, another-- That's what I think many of them are. Yes, I think many residents have OSHA cards. They have tons of cards with their pictures on it, and nice certificates of recognition and appreciation, and-and that's great. They want to be called to a job, and so we just want to make sure that the unions are understanding of that, and again, I have the utmost respect for labor but it's labor's interests that the workforce is reflective of our communities.

22

DEBORAH GODDARD: Yes.

23

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CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: That's in everyone's interest here. So, can you just speak to have you had any discussions with labor with regards

1
2 to their local hiring efforts and local outreach
3 efforts as well?

4 DEBORAH GODDARD: I—I have not.

5 JOY SINDERBRAND: [off mic] Our office
6 with those.

7 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Who negotiated the
8 PLA? [background comments]

9 DEBORAH GODDARD: I am—I know for sure
10 that the Law Department was involved in it, but I am
11 not otherwise.

12 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So the folks who
13 are heading up the Sandy effort were not at the table
14 when discussing the PLA?

15 DEBORAH GODDARD: No.

16 JOY SINDERBRAND: It preceded my tenure
17 at NYCHA, but I don't know if you know. So it—it
18 just while—while—our office does—the Sandy Office
19 does actually speak directly with the unions and
20 works with them to create opportunities and to make
21 sure that that pipeline is available, but we are also
22 part of—part of NYCHA as to the work (sic) and are
23 under those same auspices.

24 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: So I think we need
25 to have some follow up with—with folks here, with

1
2 NYCHA with the unions, with the contractors once
3 they're—once they're selected that we actually see
4 visible functioning, actionable hiring plan. Again,
5 you have—you have the City Council, you have the
6 residents, you have elected officials, you have
7 advocates that are closely watching this advocating
8 for local hiring, and we have to do everything
9 possible to make sure that that happens. First of
10 all, I think let's just begin by getting design
11 completed and just getting the contracts, and—and
12 speaking of which, the concern that I have about the
13 contracts and the bidding as well, the Mayor has a
14 very ambitious housing plan, as we have discussed,
15 and now there's construction booming across the city
16 of New York. It is reasonable to assume that
17 contractors will be jacking up their prices, and that
18 is why I know that NYCHA you have your design
19 estimates of what these projects should cost, but
20 once they hit reality that is where I am deeply
21 concerned about these—these numbers getting higher.
22 And also, I've learned very quickly in the City
23 Council that once a contractor breaks ground on
24 something, they might find ten other things that are
25 wrong, and that project has to be a new project and a

1 new project and a new project. And I also want to
2 make sure that all of the assurances that we're
3 hearing applies not jut to the contractors, but to
4 the subcontractors and their subcontractors and their
5 sub-sub-subcontractors. Because I have no more
6 patience and tolerate for people being duped time and
7 time again, and these games that are being played
8 through subcontracts. I've-I've learned very quickly
9 here in the City Council. So with that, if-okay,
10 with that, if there's no-no other questions, we thank
11 the panel for-for being here and we'll call up the
12 next panel. The next panel is we have Lavon
13 Chambers, Inez Robinson-Turpan, and Karen Blondell.
14 [background comments] And the Council does have a--
15 [background comments] I can't hear you. [pause]
16 You're-you are the next panel. So just bear with us
17 momentarily, there is a-a two-minute clock on--
18 [background comments, pause] Well, I'm here. I'll be
19 hearing. I'll be hearing. So, but just-but just
20 let's-let's let the panel begin. [background
21 comments] Alright, so Lavon Chambers, Inez Robinson
22 interpreting and Karen Blondell. [laughter] And I
23 guess we'll star with Lavon that is? [pause,
24 background comments]
25

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2 LAVON CHAMBERS: So I—before I start I
3 just want to just apologize. I did write testimony,
4 but while I was sitting here after I listened to the
5 first panel of residents, I thought it would be
6 disrespectful if I didn't create some time to address
7 some of their issues. So I'm going to be extracting
8 some of my original testimony in dealing with—with
9 some of their issues, okay? Alright, my name is
10 Lavon Chambers. I'm the Executive Director of
11 Greater New York LECET. What that means is that I
12 represent Local 78 and Local 79 but I also represent
13 1,400 contractors. We like to brag and say that—the
14 labor is probably specializing Section 3. We have as
15 of June 2016, we have 385 members who are New York
16 City Housing Authority residents. Way before Sandy
17 started, one of the things I want to say I met with
18 the Sandy Recovery Team. In fact, I met with the
19 Sandy Recovery Team before I ever knew that there
20 would be a Sandy Recovery Team. And I want to say
21 that when they stopped by my office, I was really
22 impressed because one of the things that they decided
23 to do is they knew that we had a history with Section
24 3 and they tasked us to come up with methodologies to
25 expand Section 3, and—and that's what we actually.

1
2 So some of the methodologies that we came up with was
3 for instance a lot of people are confining Section 3
4 to apprenticeship programs. What we decided to do
5 was to request a variance from the State Department
6 of Labor so that our Section 3 people could be
7 brought in as journey people. So in fact, I'm going
8 to have to say probably 80 to 90% of the people that
9 we bring in do not go through the apprenticeship.
10 They're coming straight into journey people through
11 the help NYCHA and through—from a lot of TA
12 presidents that we work with and the community
13 leaders, we are able to identify people in the
14 community who have some kind of construction
15 experience, and they just come in and they get their—
16 the book. Out of the 385 Section 3 residents that we
17 have--[bell] Right. We have about today 14 who are
18 out of work. I really wanted to address some of the
19 issues that the Team President said. Could I have
20 just have just a little bit more time?

21 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: What I'll do is
22 I'll let everyone just have their—have their

23 LAVON CHAMBERS: [interposing] Sure.

24 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --remarks and then
25 I'm going to have some follow-up questions and--

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LAVON CHAMBERS: Sure.

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CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --and questions you
could apply to. So the next panelist.

5

6

KAREN BLONDELL: [off mic] I'm up? Okay,
so name is Karen Blondell.

7

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CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: [interposing] Is the
mic on?

9

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KAREN BLONDELL: [on mic] Okay, can you
hear me?

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CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Yes, yes.

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KAREN BLONDELL: Okay, I'm--so I'm Karen
Blondell. I work with the Fifth Avenue Committee. I
live in Red Hook Houses, and I also work with the New
York Rising, which is the Integrated Flood Protection
System for Red Hook, and thank you for having me here
today. I'd like to talk about the recovery efforts.
I think that there has been a lot of outreach in Red
Hook. I am still a little disappointed with how long
it takes to actually get people to work. That's
disappointing because we started in May of 2015
talking to the residents telling them get ready, you
know, prepare yourself for this free apprenticeship,
and a lot of them did, but there was such a lapse
between that time and the beginning of construction

1 that that's an issue. And when we sent our first
2 troops out, everybody is watching. So when they
3 don't get work everybody else goes yeah, we knew it
4 was BS the whole time, and that's an issue that I'd
5 like to, you know, address in Red Hook and Gowanus
6 going forward. So, and the other thing is kind of
7 like understanding how this works with local hiring
8 because in the city they don't have local hiring.
9 ORR does not have the local hiring. They say it's
10 illegal, right, through the Committee (sic) Clause
11 and Privilege and Immunity. So you can speak to
12 Michael Shake or someone about that issue, and I
13 think there's a mix-up because the monies keep
14 getting re-appropriated, mixed up and all kind of
15 stuff like that. So it's kind of hard for us to
16 follow the track of money whether it's the \$3.2
17 billion that NYCHA got or the \$13 billion the city
18 got, but all of that money was HUD money at some
19 point. Now, you said that FEMA money does not have
20 to follow HUD, but HUD says that it does. It says
21 anybody who touches their money, which NYCHA did,
22 they took 10%. So they used the insurance money and
23 used 10% down payment from HUD money. That now
24 supersedes everything else.
25

1
2 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: [interposing] Do
3 you have that in writing from HUD?

4 KAREN BLONDELL: Yeah, that's--that's--
5 that's--

6 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: We'd like to get
7 that language because we were told and just-just to
8 clarify, we've been told by attorneys and by experts
9 in the Section 3 realm that Section 3 only applies to
10 HUD, and not to FEMA. So if you have any language
11 that contradicts that, I'd love to see it.

12 KAREN BLONDELL: Okay.

13 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you, but you
14 may continue your testimony. Okay, and so I only a
15 minute or two left, but what I'm really trying to
16 convey to you is that HUD states if the residents
17 were not trained [bell] they should be trained.
18 We're not just talking about one event. Sandy is the
19 beginning of climate change. We're going to have a
20 lot of other events. We need to have people right in
21 the neighborhood who are able to work who understand
22 bioswales and berms, and the new energy efficiency.
23 There's so many things that the residents know and
24 can see just from looking out their window that can
25 decrease the energy usage in--in NYCHA, but NYCHA is

1 not addressing the residents, and when you do it's
2 always free volunteer. We need money. This is one
3 of the most expensive cities in all the world, and
4 it's very hard for even people with public housing
5 who have to pay 30% of their income, pre-tax dollars
6 to survive in--in New York City. So it's important
7 that you pay them for their efforts, and if you do
8 that, that's the type of partnership that will create
9 the most results.
10

11 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you. Yes,
12 ma'am.

13 INEZ ROBINSON: Thank you. Good
14 afternoon. My name is Inez Robinson-Turpan. I'm
15 here representing my TA President Patricia Trocher-
16 Trochet who is our TA President at Campus Plaza
17 Housing 2 located on the Lower East side. We reside
18 at 612 East 14th Street. That's our building, and we
19 also represent 641 and 643. For those of you who do
20 not know, our development has been divided. Half of
21 my development is private now, and the other half is
22 through New York City Housing. My building is still
23 under New York City Housing. So as far as the Sandy
24 element goes after listening to all the disparities
25 here with everybody from Red Hook and Coney Island

1 we've been blessed and I thank God that we have. We
2 haven't had any work done, but I thank God that we
3 weren't hit as hard as some of the communities that
4 I've been listening to here. We do need work as
5 normal housing city works need hot-heat hot water,
6 new doors, new elevators, things like that. But as
7 far as mold and mildew, they have addressed that
8 issue. Michaela O'Connell is our field
9 representative as far as Sandy recovery. A very
10 integral part of our community. Attends our TA
11 meetings monthly, diligently. Contacts us
12 diligently. Keeps us apprised diligently. So for
13 that I'm very grateful. I also know what happened
14 during Sandy because we live right in front of Con
15 Edison, and I saw floats go down 14th Street
16 including my daughter's car. So I can understand
17 what's going on. We also know that because we are
18 now private and we are NYCHA we are faced with a lot
19 of private developers that are coming into our area.
20 Number one, NYU. So I think that's why we are
21 getting a lot of attention because we got a lot of
22 private development going on in my area. But I say
23 this to say this, we are blessed. We are getting the
24 answers that we need. Development hasn't started as
25

1
2 of yet. But we've been told what to expect once
3 development does come in. [bell] Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And I thank you for
5 being here as well. Thank you very much for your
6 patience. So, Mr. Chambers, you wanted to respond
7 to some of the concerns raised by resident leaders.

8 LAVON CHAMBERS: Yes. So, you know,
9 people keep talking about partnerships right, NYCHA
10 residents. So just let me say that we have quite a
11 few kind of associations. I know these folks. A lot
12 of them are friends. Sometimes we argue and fight,
13 but we always—all the time, but they are friends.
14 But I also work closely with the township. There is
15 no construction job in New York that has Section 3
16 that contractors willingly just do it. So part of
17 this blame—and some of it has be upon the
18 contractors. Just chasing them down to do the right
19 thing. Hey, look, we're not going to be biased may
20 they be union or non-union, right. They never want
21 to do it. A couple weeks ago I was in Coney Island
22 because there was a problem with Section 3 with our
23 sister Ron De Feliciano's project.

24 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right.
25

1
2 LAVON CHAMBERS: And there was a
3 challenge and I came out there, and we're going to
4 get it done. I guess what I want to say is this:
5 With the work that I represent, there should not be
6 one job that Section 3 goals are not met. I cannot
7 speak for every union but my union, which is two-
8 thirds people of color. We are stronger because we
9 help people who live everywhere, right, and how did
10 we get this way? We got this way through programs
11 like this that continue to fuse members into our
12 union that reflect the makeup of the city, and I say
13 all that to say is that if you have a job in your
14 area and one of my contractors were out there, and
15 we're not fulfilling Section 3, call me. They will
16 fulfill Section 3. That's just not my work. That's
17 the district--because that's the Business Manager of
18 the District Council Bobby Bonanza's work. We--if our
19 partnership with NYCHA makes us stronger but our
20 partnership with the folks over here makes us
21 stronger. So we care and I've got to be honest. I--I
22 sat here and I heard those horrible stories, and to
23 be quite honest, these were the same stories that I
24 heard when we were dealing with Columbia. It's not a
25 situation that's just focused with NYCHA.

1
2 Contractors just do your way to go. (sic) But what I
3 will tell you is this: When the community and labor
4 team up, these problems seem to go away. So, we need
5 to figure out how to get this done, alright?

6 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I-I-I'm going to do
7 this for-to further your comments, because that-that-
8 that's really the answer. I mean--

9 LAVON CHAMBERS: [interposing] Yes.

10 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --community labor,
11 [coughing] all the advocates come together on the
12 same page. We-we want to-look, it's actually in our
13 interest to see residents develop the skills and-and
14 obtain all the, you know, all the credentials to join
15 the union, and-and to-and to get better wages and-and
16 benefits and the pensions. That's-that should be
17 pathway, and-and I thank you so much for your
18 heartfelt commitments, and-and your work and your
19 service.

20 LAVON CHAMBERS: May I make a--

21 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: [interposing] Yes.

22 LAVON CHAMBERS: You know, the-I can't
23 speak for every union.

24 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Of course, right.
25

1
2 LAVON CHAMBERS: There are different
3 unions that are different phase of design. Look, to
4 be clear, when I got hired, the--the members that I
5 represented they were mostly white through attrition
6 through--just through the work, you, it becomes
7 everybody black, white Latino working together, but
8 in my 27 years in this business, and mind you, the
9 first five years I ran a coalition, and it was my job
10 to shut down the union jobs because they didn't have
11 good color. The most important job I've ever done
12 has been working with NYCHA in the Sandy building
13 trades bringing in each and everyone of those 385
14 people, and I don't mean to sound hokey on this,
15 right. But the advantages I have that you don't have
16 that even the people from NYCHA don't have is that I
17 meet them at the beginning. I get to spend all those
18 years with them. After laws have changed I get to
19 see people who become home--homeowners and I get to
20 see people go from homeless to homeowners, you know.
21 So I have the best job. This is pretty much--this is
22 our job. So, the work that NYCHA residents, you
23 know, sometimes I hear NYCHA residents don't want to
24 work. I'll be fair. Some of the best members that I
25 have are NYCHA residents that only needed one thing,

1
2 just one shot. They didn't ask for two shots. The
3 didn't ask for three. They just needed one shot.
4 They have become the best members. Now how do you
5 beat that?

6 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: No, I-I agree and
7 I'll-I'll close by just saying that you probably will
8 not find a more motivated person to work on a NYCHA
9 site than someone who has lived and been raised in-
10 in-in the building who-who knows everyone by their
11 first name. They take that work extra personal.
12 It's not just a paycheck, it's where they live.

13 INEZ ROBINSON: That's why I'm here. I'm
14 a Section 3.

15 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right. That is-that
16 is where they live. It's in their-it's their
17 personal interests that their developments is
18 beautiful and safe, and providing a great quality of
19 life for all of it's-all of it's residents. So it's
20 in our-it's all of our interest that we get residents
21 that shop that opportunity that they so much deserve,
22 and I thank the panel for being here today.

23 LAVON CHAMBERS: Sure.

24 INEZ ROBINSON: Thank you.
25

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Okay. Next panel
Charlene Nimmons. Yes, that's you. [laughs] Ayeza
Torres if I'm pronouncing it right. Claudia Cojer or
Coher and Edward Tyre.

EDWARD TYRIE: Tyrie.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Tyrie. I'm sorry.
[background comments, pause] Alright, so we'll begin
with Ms. Nimmons.

CHARLENE NIMMONS: [off mic] No, it's
Tyrie.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Oh, it's--oh, Ty-
Tyrie. Yeah, sure. [pause, background comments]
We'll begin with Ms. Nimmons and work our way down.

CHARLENE NIMMONS: So I apologize but I
get so emotional with this stuff. Charlene Nimmons.
I live in Wyckoff Gardens. I'm a resident of nearly
30 years. I have served as a resident association
leader for 12 years. I started a non-profit
organization called Public Housing Communities
founder and Executive Director of that organization,
and I am just fed up. I sat here and I listened to
NYCHA talk and it just frustrates me because they lie
under test--under oath--I'm sorry--and clearly I do not
have anything against unions. Let me just say that.

1 I used to work for the New York City Board of
2 Education and I was UFT Rep for teachers and a
3 parent. Um, that should tell you I really take
4 myself serious. I'm apologizing right now because
5 it's not showing up on my phone. Section 3 is so key
6 and so important. It says 'should' and 'shall' and
7 'must'. Those words are in there, and if we look at
8 those HUD regulations for what it can do, rather than
9 look at what it doesn't do. When a union contractor
10 accepts an award, they are to reach out to their
11 collective bargaining agreement unit, and inform them
12 that they must follow Section 3. When NYCHA created
13 a PLA they were out of order. Even HUD stipulates
14 stipulates in their new proposed rule that is online
15 that they are not in agreement with that PLA for New
16 York or Chicago and because it does not meet the
17 obligations of Section 3. What's saddens me is that
18 HUD is allowing it to still continue, and they're
19 waiting for it to end. When a HUD—Oh, Jesus. When a
20 HUD—when the NYCHA leaders says to me, "Oh, don't
21 worry about it. It's going to end in 2018." Well,
22 guess what, this HUD regulation existed since 1968.
23 If we are serious about impacting poverty, then we
24 would be in—using that implementing that program
25

1 since 1968 because it's about not only jobs, it says
2 jobs and training. But they want to do training and
3 don't want to do jobs. It also talks about
4 homeownership, business ownership within your home.
5 You can own your business and contract with the
6 Housing Authority up to a million dollars.
7 Unfortunately, me as a Section 3, non-profit or
8 registered as a Section 3 business concern, they do
9 not bring us in to do training. We do training,
10 scrimping, scrapping and trying to get funding to do
11 training for our residents. We get it done, and then
12 we are not acknowledged for the work that we do.
13 They go and the hire, and now Speaker—I almost said
14 Quinn—Speaker Mark-Viverito just announced that there
15 is going to be funding for training leaders. Let me
16 tell you all something. We are trained. We do have
17 information, valuable information, and to impose it
18 to say that the Murphy Institute and NYCHA is going
19 to determine how our leaders are taught, when we have
20 leaders that you can contract with to teach our
21 leaders because we do it already. You're not
22 acknowledging us, and if we continue to go on with
23 the non-profit organizations that are out there that
24 are not even associated with the resident leadership,
25

1
2 and they are paying their mortgages, and we're still
3 living in poverty. We need to make some changes.
4 You need to hear our voices clearly, and understand
5 that we can represent ourselves, we do represent
6 ourselves, and we're tired of volunteering.
7 Halleleujah.

8 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Halleleujah. Hey,
9 listen, I-I-I just want to say-I mentioned it before
10 and I'll say it again, is the-the residents-I'm not
11 sure if anyone is still in the room from the Coney
12 that--

13 CHARLENE NIMMONS: No they left.

14 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: They left but--

15 CHARLENE NIMMONS: [interposing] But they

16 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --they have a long
17 way back home. They're the ones that deserve the
18 credit for bringing this to the attention of all the
19 powers that be. Their leadership, they're
20 mobilizing, they're organizing. They are the
21 champions.

22 CHARLENE NIMMONS: And this is what we've
23 been doing for years.

24 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right, right, so--
25

CHARLENE NIMMONS: [interposing] But
nobody is listening to us.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Well, we have folks
here that--that are overseeing NYCHA.

CHARLENE NIMMONS: Well, no, I'm sorry,
not you. I--I commend--I didn't say that--

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: [interposing] I
know, I know, I--I--

CHARLENE NIMMONS: --I commend you,
Ritchie Torres. There are some that I commend on our
City Council.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And--and--

CHARLENE NIMMONS: [interposing] Thank
you.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Sure, we--we
appreciate that. That, yes, the next one. Yes, it is
cold out. [laughs]

CLAUDIA COGER: Good afternoon. My name
is Claudia Coger, and I'm a resident in Astoria
Houses that sits on the Peninsula there in
Northwestern Queens and our City Councilman is Cost
Constantinides, and I appreciate just being here
today to let those at the residents. (sic) Our
peninsula is considered one of the lowest peninsulas

1 in the City of New York, but Sandy has brought us
2 into the limelight, and a lot of development that's
3 going on around us now. But just to address the
4 issue of--of today, the lack of dialogue to--it's been
5 addressed here. Most of the things that I'm going to
6 say has already been addressed as far as the
7 residents are in the Sandy areas, but I want to just
8 express that the lack of dialogue from the top from
9 NYCHA from the top, the Sandy operations is lacking
10 with the resident associations, and on the grounds.
11 We do not get any progress reports when it comes to
12 contracts and et cetera. And as for your--I do say
13 that we've had our--we had eight developed--eight
14 apartments that was affected, occupied apartments
15 that was affected. They have been restored, and the
16 residents has been restored back into their
17 apartments. I give them credit for that. That has
18 happened. Seven--seven of them have been restored.
19 So that progress, but when it comes to the Section 3
20 operations, we had two employees that was hired
21 during that process, and at that time those two
22 employees was not full time. They were not full-time
23 employees. They were just when needed, and the most
24 of the time when there was photo ops or something
25

1
2 that needed to be—to cover the little fact that there
3 weren't [bell] they weren't hiring. But I just
4 wanted to—to say also I'm going to give NYCHA the
5 credit for having on their grounds, on our grounds
6 two residents, two employees that do give us cause on
7 a weekly basis to find out if there's heat or hot
8 water or anything that's affecting the residents.
9 And those two or people are constantly really there.
10 But I want to just make sure that you understand that
11 I'm lost bone in high weeds when it comes to knowing
12 the progress and what they plan to do. I'm tired of
13 walking into Hazmat suits on the ground, and when I
14 approach them, I find out that they are part of the—
15 the Sandy portion. They're working there, but I have
16 no clue and the residents have no clue as to why
17 Hazmat suits are walking on the grounds. We don't
18 appreciate that at all, and--

19 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: [interposing] So,
20 Ms. Coger, I just—I—I have to—I really thank you for
21 coming out here from Astoria, Queens. That's—that's
22 a schlep--

23 CLAUDIA COGER: [interposing] Yes.

24 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --I—I have to say.
25 According to NYCHA in your development you're in

1
2 construction phase, and you're telling me that you--
3 you--you don't know what's happening at your
4 development. Is that what you're saying?

5 CLAUDIA COGER: I'm saying that the phase
6 that they are in now--

7 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: [interposing]
8 Right.

9 CLAUDIA COGER: --no I have not had--they
10 had no meeting with me as to that phase of putting--
11 they're working now to put generators I--I believe.
12 I'm not sure. That part--part of the--that's--that's a
13 part of their scope, and but--

14 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: [interposing] But--

15 CLAUDIA COGER: --I have not had any--

16 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: [interposing] But
17 just to--so that means so they've begun Sandy work in
18 your building, and did you--

19 CLAUDIA COGER: [interposing] I knew--I
20 knew about the building.

21 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right, but--

22 CLAUDIA COGER: [interposing] Yes.

23 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --did you--was there
24 a meeting with your resident board and the contractor
25 before the work began--

1
2 CLAUDIA COGER: [interposing] Wit that,
3 yes.

4 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --to discuss work?

5 CLAUDIA COGER: Yes.

6 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And have—and you're
7 saying there has not been a meeting since.

8 CLAUDIA COGER: No, that's all the rest
9 of the thing. (sic) That's what--

10 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And so you have no
11 idea. For example, we're told that the work in your
12 development is—is supposed to end—supposed to end--

13 CLAUDIA COGER: [interposing] In 2018.

14 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --somewhere in the
15 quarter 2 of 2018--

16 CLAUDIA COGER: Uh-huh.

17 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --and you—but you
18 have no idea where you're at right now?

19 CLAUDIA COGER: None whatsoever.

20 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Okay.

21 CLAUDIA COGER: We also have on the
22 grounds—they've taken care of the occupied space that
23 was affected--

24 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: [interposing]
25 Right.

1
2 CLAUDIA COGER: --that was affected, but
3 we have community space that's not even in the scope.
4 I don't understand that. Why--how they did not put
5 all of the space that was affected on the ground by
6 Sandy and those eight buildings. They are--they are
7 only addressing one building.

8 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Now, do you have
9 any sense of how many of your residents are working
10 at your development on this site, on this project
11 site?

12 CLAUDIA COGER: There's none at this
13 time.

14 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Because it's an
15 estimated \$88 million project.

16 CLAUDIA COGER: I understand, and really
17 clearly.

18 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: That's--I believe
19 that your residents deserve a piece of that pie.

20 CLAUDIA COGER: Most certainly.

21 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Yes.

22 CLAUDIA COGER: Most certainly.

23 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I thank you for
24 your honesty and for your courage to be here today.

25 CLAUDIA COGER: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you. Next,
sir.

EDWARD TYRIE: [coughs] Excuse me. Good
afternoon. My name is Edward Tyrie. I'm the
Resident Association President from Gowanus.
[coughing] First I want to thank people from Sandy
Recovery Kela and Robert Wang because they have been
excellent. I mean they helped to---they did
everything that they needed to--all the information
that we need to have, we get it from them. And I
also want to thank our Resident Engagement because I
want to thank all the sections of Resident Engagement
because there are so many sections that I couldn't go
and name of them, and since I've been the president
for about four years now, I've had no problems with
them. Everything I've asked for they pretty much
worked with me to get. My biggest problem is when it
comes to this--one of--one of my biggest problems when
it come to construction thing like my first time
because I was new, the--the contractor came into the
development and pretty do what they wanted to. I
didn't know who was who, who--who--who to go to for
whatever, whatever, and they just did pretty much
what they wanted, and they were very disrespectful to

1 the residents. And a couple of times I had to go and
2 quit them and check myself because they were talking
3 about this a--a construction site. I said it's not a
4 construction site. It's a residency that has
5 construction doing work there. That's the big
6 difference, and like I said, you know, people feel
7 that because they're from quote, unquote "the pride".
8 So they call us that we're not people. We're people
9 like everybody else is, and--and another thing another
10 time we had--we don't have a community center. We
11 have a building that used to be called the community
12 center, and it's been like that for about 14 years.
13 Red Hook got a new center, Whitney got a new center.
14 We're not asking for a new center. All we're asking
15 for is help us with what we do have. So we're not
16 trying to be greedy and tell us--to build the World
17 Trade Center or nothing like that. There we're
18 saying, you know, help us with what we do have. You
19 know, and--and I don't think that's asking for much,
20 you know. I would like to meet the--the contractors
21 well before the project's start rather than wait
22 until we get into the project, and then I find out
23 that this is Joe Smith here and this Mary Lou or
24 whatever, and what their jobs are. Then [bell] oh,

1 well, oh, and anyway, I'm-I'm saying for the cause,
2 and this is why we're here. You know, any time you
3 have an open relationship with somebody, you-you
4 tend-tend to work well with them. I have an open
5 relationship with management from the-from the
6 Director all the way down to the management and local
7 management, and we do have a good relationship
8 because we're open with each other. And I think it
9 should be like throughout the Housing Authority, and
10 we should have people working for the Housing
11 Authority like I just said, resident engagement and
12 the Sandy people because these people are very well
13 and treat you very well, and they have a lot of
14 respect for the residents. And that's why I'll say
15 that in closing, you know.

17 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And I-I certainly
18 appreciate that and I said-I said in my opening
19 remarks that the-the level of outreach I could speak
20 for-for my district in Coney Island for example has
21 significantly increased-significantly compared to the
22 last administration. I-I-I can't say that the
23 residents-there is a person to email, to call, to
24 contact and someone will get-will-will get back to
25 you, and I do appreciate that. But it-it now comes

1 time to execute because I have in my district every
2 couple of months a breakfast with one of residents
3 leaders and NYCHA to discuss progress reports, Sandy
4 issues, and there's come a point where just have to
5 start seeing major work begin, and-and so that's-
6 that's kind of where we're at, and Mr. Tyrie, I
7 really have to credit you. You-you are-we need you,
8 and-and you're absolutely correct. Human life is in
9 your development, and they should be treated equally
10 as anyone else, and it is a residential site that
11 happens to have construction going on, and they
12 should be respectful of that. And that's why we're
13 trying to avoid those types of issues by having those
14 meetings take place prior to construction starting in
15 all of the other developments. There should be no
16 ambiguity, no guessing game of who's who, what's
17 what, and they should definitely know who you are,
18 definitely have access to you and a number, and you
19 should have their numbers as well because residents
20 come to you. I hear from my resident leaders that
21 residents call them, and they'll say who is the
22 stranger in my development. So they have no idea who
23 that person is, and that creates a whole circle of-of
24 problems, and I contact NYCHA, and that should not
25

1
2 happen. It's in everyone's interest that we know
3 who's who, what's what. It's in your interest, the
4 residents' interest, mine, NYCHA's everybody. We
5 are--so transparency should be the name of the game,
6 and I--again I applaud you and your courage for being
7 here today. Thank you. Thank you very much--

8 EDWARD TYRIE: [interposing] Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --for the time.

10 CHARLENE NIMMONS: [off mic] Could I say
11 something? (sic)

12 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Very quickly
13 because we have the next one. Please. Sure.

14 CHARLENE NIMMONS: [off mic] I'll be
15 fast.

16 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Sure.

17 CHARLENE NIMMONS: [off mic] When NYCHA
18 spoke about mold removal and things like this, they
19 are talking about the Sandy Recovery, but NYCHA has
20 been told we have issues with that, and one of the
21 things that I learned when I got trained because the
22 International Chemical Workers Union I was picked.

23 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: [interposing] Oh,
24 the microphone, please.
25

1
2 CHARLENE NIMMONS: Sorry, that if the
3 International Chemical Workers Union of Cincinnati
4 brought me out and trained me on hazard issues, and
5 they came and they trained me in the Bronx, and they
6 actually paid for us to get trained. Mildew-mold or
7 any-any contamination that's being con-material
8 that's contacted within 24 hours or 48 hours you
9 really have to remove that. They come into the
10 Housing Authority and they wipe it down or they do
11 something, which is-it-it-it makes it airborne, and
12 we talk about the health issues. They need to go
13 behind the walls and cut out the sheetrock or the-
14 even some framing has to be removed. But that
15 doesn't happen. We also have to be concerned about
16 the work that is happening within those homes because
17 we're talking about infill and all the-all of these
18 different things that's happening now, and what is
19 the environment to impact? What is going to be
20 happening to the residents?

21 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: [interposing] Well-

22 -

23 CHARLENE NIMMONS: We are in those homes.

24 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Right.
25

1
2 CHARLENE NIMMONS: They do asbestos
3 removal, and the dust settles in the apartment. Who
4 cleans that? The residents clean that. NYCHA does
5 not clean off our furniture. We clean it. We're
6 exposed to asbestos.

7 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Well, these are
8 very serious concerns, and we certainly—I—I encourage
9 residents in my district, for example, to take
10 pictures, document that, you know, bring it to our
11 attention because we need to document those types of
12 cases, and these are very serious things, and---and
13 again I appreciate your bringing—brought this to our
14 attention. Thank you very much.

15 CHARLENE NIMMONS: Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you panel.

17 EDWARD TYRIE: Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: [background
19 comments] Okay, we have Alena Kong. We have Robert
20 White, Jasmine Copen, and Paul Mankowitz (sp?).
21 [pause, background comments] You may begin.

22 ROBERT WHITE: Good afternoon City
23 Council and everyone in stands. My name is Robert
24 White, and I prepared a statement to read in regards
25 to a little bit about me, and my outreach team. I'm

1 a resident of Red Hook East Houses and a member of
2 their Tenant Association. I am also a member of the
3 Outreach Team for the Recovery to Resiliency Program.
4 Since joining the Recovery to Resiliency in the fall
5 of 2014, I've earned my degree in Forensic Psychology
6 from John Jay College of Criminal Justice, and I
7 realized one dream by achieving that accolade, but
8 I've always wanted to serve my community and empower
9 our underserviced majority. This position has given
10 the opportunity to do that. Since Hurricane Sandy,
11 the Recovery to Resiliency Program has worked closely
12 with residents and community leaders of the 33 Sandy
13 impacted NYCHA sites. Our goal is to keep the
14 communities abreast and involved throughout the
15 entire resiliency process while providing regular
16 updates, asking for input and addressing questions
17 and concerns. We regularly engage residents by
18 attending tenant association meetings, conducting
19 weekly calls to tenant association presidents and
20 organization design and construction progress
21 meetings. As both a resident and a member of the
22 Outreach Team for the Recovery to Resiliency, I have
23 experienced both sides of the coin when it comes to
24 NYCHA. This job is not always easy, but it is
25

1
2 rewarding. The love and appreciation we get when we
3 go to the communities is the best part of my job.
4 Some of the residents I've worked with have given up
5 on NYCHA until they witnessed the great work that our
6 program is doing. The Recovery to Resiliency has
7 done a great job involving residents throughout this
8 entire project, and will continue connecting them
9 where—connecting them to opportunities until the end.
10 The Outreach Team alone is comprised of 11 NYCHA
11 residents. I am proud to represent the Recovery to
12 Resiliency Program. I am not an island. I don't do
13 this alone, and the same is—it's the same way you all
14 work together to get the best results for you people.
15 We do the same. Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you. Next.

17 [pause] [bell]

18 ALENA KONG: Good afternoon. My name is
19 Alena Kong. I am working for New York City Housing
20 Sandy—Sandy Recovery Community Outreach. I'm
21 representing Vice Chair La Guardia addition to your
22 president (sic) to read a testimonial that he wrote
23 about Sandy Recovery Program. Sandy Recovery Program
24 is a very good program. In the past years your
25 employees from Community Outreach have visited La

1
2 Guardia Addition and had our Sandy we needed
3 questions answered. The communication of Sandy
4 Community Outreach is excellent. One of the
5 employees from Community Outreach, Ms. Kong, called
6 about heat and hot water and asked me about non-Sandy
7 related issues on La Guardia Addition persistently on
8 a weekly basis from then to today. It is so
9 touching. It is so nice to have such a program
10 that's there hope really. (sic) This program can
11 last longer, and all the damages in the affected
12 settlement can be repaired in a timely manner. Deep
13 appreciation to Ms. Kong and Sandy Community Outreach
14 Department. Thanks. [pause]

15 PAUL MANKIEWICZ: [coughs] Good day. My
16 name is Paul Mankowitz. I'm the Chair of the Soil
17 and Water Conservation District. We have the best
18 soil survey on the planet here in New York. I have a
19 doctorate in biology and ecology. I also helped star
20 the Urban soil testing at Brooklyn College and run
21 the Guy (sic) Institute. I built the first 30 swale
22 type systems storm water capture system 12 for the
23 Bloomberg Administration and about 30 before that
24 with the Parks Department starting around the year
25 2000 in East New York. Every one of those projects

1 was built with prevailing wage, with the old who
2 would look to you and me and were exactly from the
3 neighborhood, from these areas, and they were—did
4 excellent work. We have one of the best storm water
5 capture systems, constructed (sic) systems anywhere
6 in the world. We have in NYCHA properties it's
7 basically about one-tenth of the city the largest
8 green jobs opportunity, the storm water capture
9 opportunity, enhancement of urban health
10 opportunities on the planet, and I see [bell] multi-
11 million and billion dollar projects with nothing
12 incorporating these kinds of things. You should
13 capture all the storm water. It should go to—there's
14 something like 2,000 native plants we have here.
15 There's thousands of young people in all of the NYCHA
16 housing that would—are curious like all young people
17 like all kids, and they would learn this. That would
18 become literally their way of seeing the world. The
19 same for us older folk people who also get the
20 enjoyment out of some of this stuff. So, we have in
21 the city something that's really quite magnificent.
22 We have basically a clean soil bank, soil that's
23 pulled out of the earth below new developments.
24 Literally it hasn't seen the light of day for 18,000
25

1 years. It was to bury when the mass stones were
2 still here in the city. It's as clean you can get.
3 You could put your newborn out on the soil around
4 NYCHA programs if we simply cover this stuff with
5 these soil banks that are just as clean as you get.
6 So the idea is to literally create these
7 opportunities by making space for life and for the
8 capacity to literally drop the body temperature. If
9 we had native plants growing on NYCHA grounds, it
10 would drop the temperature below ambient. A 95-degree
11 day it will never get to 95. It will be a 89, 88 or
12 something like this. So we have this kind of
13 opportunity. We have programs in the city for taking
14 literally soil out of the old earth and making these
15 new habitats, and we have a potential labor force
16 that could actually carry this out, and I would look
17 to see this incorporated into what we do going
18 forward.
19

20 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you very-
21 thank you very much. Next.

22 JASMINE: Hi. Good day. My name is
23 Jasmine and I am a NYCHA resident. Been a NYCHA
24 resident for about 17 or 18 years now. I own a
25 business, a cleaning business with two employees, and

1 I'm going to say that after sitting here today I'm
2 kind of like, no, I'm kind of staying. I don't think
3 I should be here. I have hockey story. I own—I just
4 contracted with a company that works with NYCHA,
5 construction and I'm a Section 3 business person. So
6 for me that is like a good step up because I can also
7 employ NYCHA residents, and I could take the business
8 over for—as such, but I have to say something as not
9 only a business owner but also as—I worked in NYCHA
10 as a caretaker in Thompsons. And I have to say that
11 everything that all the residents sat here and said
12 in regards from Coney Island it doesn't make what the
13 development is, is all problems especially in
14 Thompsons. I remember when I was a caretaker, we had
15 to go to the basement many times because the basement
16 kept getting flooded with feces, and we had to move,
17 and no matter how many times there was a contractor
18 doing it, it was still a occurring problem no matter
19 what was done. So at this point, I basically think
20 sometimes it's the building itself and not
21 necessarily the work that is being done, or trying to
22 be done—be done because the buildings have been there
23 for so long and have not been actually taken care of.
24 Whether or not it's the tenant or management, but so
25

1
2 many across the board is failure that occurred, and
3 the tenants are feeling it, construction companies
4 are feeling it. Sorry enough to say, but from what I
5 see I think there will be a resolve hopefully.
6 Basically communication. I think that's the most
7 important things across the board for everyone.
8 Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: I-I thank you and
10 just to close on that, and I appreciate everyone's
11 service and your--your various capacities is that
12 there were certainly issues in our NYCHA buildings
13 prior to Sandy. There's no question about that, and
14 Sandy greatly exacerbated them. [bell] But we now
15 have a \$3 billion worth of opportunities and
16 obligations to make sure that we get right. It's not
17 everyday that FEMA gives \$3 billion. Actually, it's
18 the first time this largest grant ever came, and I
19 don't foresee them giving NYCHA especially with this
20 current federal climate-administration. So we have
21 to get this right, and-and residents have waited now
22 for four year. So, it's--again, I appreciate your
23 service, and I-I wish you continued success. Thank
24 you. The last panel. I think it's Ms. Michaela
25 O'Connell. If I'm pronouncing this correctly

1
2 Calowinta-Cala-Catalina (sp?) Singleton, and that's
3 it. [background comments, pause] Okay, you may
4 begin. [pause]

5 MICHAELA O'CONNELL: Hello. Hi, my name
6 is Michaela O'Connell, and I work with the New York
7 City Housing Authority Community Outreach Team, and
8 just to quickly say [coughs] what I do is for the
9 community and its resident. Every time there's a
10 power shutdown or a water shutdown, we phone, we
11 flyer, we knock on people's doors. We especially
12 spend a lot of time speaking with people, all of the
13 residents to make sure they're aware of what's going
14 to happen. If they have enough advance notice then
15 they can make their plan. I handle the Lower East
16 Side, and what I want to do is just four of my tenant
17 association presidents could not be here today, and I
18 wanted to just read parts of their testimonies due to
19 time constraints just so that you have some feedback
20 about how they feel about the Sandy Program. Glenda
21 Rhodes, the just-she's the Tenant Association
22 President of LES-5, one of the most dedicated tenant
23 association president I've ever worked with. She
24 says this about the Sandy Program: The Hurricane
25 Sandy Program Management Team was very helpful

1 through the entire process of installing boilers and
2 generators into LES-5. When service interrupt-
3 interruptions did occur, the NYCHA Sandy Program and
4 which team responded quickly restoring service as
5 soon as possible. Community Outreach representative
6 Ms. O'Connell always kept me informed on construction
7 progress outlined in the weekly construction
8 meetings. Luce Chile did an excellent job commuting-
9 communicating with Spanish speaking only residents.
10 All residents are pleased that the permanent boiler
11 has been installed in 89 Avenue C. We appreciate all
12 the fine home baking efforts that the Sandy Team made
13 during the construction phase. I recommend all the
14 NYCHA developments involved in the Sandy construction
15 take pitch media(sic) and each group under their
16 wings so they can get their generators installed as
17 soon as possible. [bell]

19 I see. Jessica Thomas the La Guardia
20 Tenant Association President of La Guardia Houses
21 said this: The NYCHA Sandy Program design and
22 outreach teams responded quickly to all our questions
23 during the Sandy program design phase. They
24 communicated the scope of work very clearly to the
25 residents at our tenant association meetings. Every

1
2 month Outreach Representative Ms. O'Connell explained
3 the Section 3 career opportunities e-application
4 process, and who to contact. The NYCHA Outreach Team
5 always made the residents feel included in the
6 program, and updated us on any changes at our
7 meetings. Okay.

8 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: You can submit the
9 rest as part of the record--

10 MICHAELA O'CONNELL: [interposing] Okay.

11 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --then.

12 MICHAELA O'CONNELL: Alright.

13 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: But we--

14 MICHAELA O'CONNELL: [interposing] Right,
15 this is just a-a brief overview of how they feel
16 about us.

17 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And we appreciate
18 that. Thank you very much. Yes.

19 Thank you. Good afternoon, everyone.

20 CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: [off mic] The mic,
21 please.

22 Okay, good afternoon everyone. My name
23 is Catalina Singleton, and I appear here today to say
24 how proud I am to be a member of this amazing
25 project, one that will improve the lives of residents

1 across 33 NYCHA developments affected by Hurricane
2 Sandy. As a resident of Astoria Houses, I know far
3 too well the damage that Hurricane has caused. I
4 have lived through the experience and I appreciate
5 the opportunity I have been given help the people in
6 my community. I was hired through Section 3 and I
7 have been placed in a unique position to work and
8 help improve the very community I live in. My job is
9 to building relationships with the communities we
10 serve, and to keep them informed of our progress. As
11 a New York City Housing Authority resident, I
12 understand how frustrating it can be to—to not know
13 our issues and to be addressed to—are being addressed
14 in the progress that's being made. But working with
15 the team and seeing the great work that's been
16 happening, has put me at ease. I know that this
17 program is creating something great, and it has been
18 a great opportunity for me to be a part of. In
19 conclusion, I find it rewarding and challenging to
20 attend association meetings—tenant association
21 meetings, community boards, TSA meetings to speak
22 about the progress of our program that our progress
23 is making and to be able to provide residents with
24 this sense of hope.
25

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: Thank you very
much, Ms. Singleton--

CATALINA SINGLETON: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: --for your service
and I would just recommend that someone could
probably just reach out to Ms. Corey (sp?) the
President of Astoria Houses because she seems to need
some updating about what's happening there because
she mentioned before that there's an issue meeting
with contractors about the work that she would like
to have some more updates and things.

CATALINA SINGLETON: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And we thank you
for--for your--for your work and service to--to NYCHA
and to the City of New York

CATALINA SINGLETON: Absolutely. Thank
you.

CHAIRPERSON TREYGER: And I do it, yes,
thank you, and I--I do acknowledge that folks from
NYCHA stayed throughout the duration of the hearing,
and we do--we do appreciate that, and again it's--it's
easy for some folks to kind of take shots at an
agency that has in my opinion, you know, many has--has
taken a--a beating by the federal government for--for

1
2 decades, and certainly under the current federal
3 administration they have serious concerns about the
4 level of commitment or lack of thereof to—to support
5 housing, but at the same time this grant was secured
6 under the Obama Administration and we—we appreciate
7 that, and we have to execute. We have to get this
8 done. It's not everyday that we have an opportunity
9 like this. May we never see a Sandy storm ever
10 again, but we have to get this right, and we have to
11 just get work started. That's what this is about.
12 The residents just want to see work started in their
13 Neighborhoods and thank you all for—for this hearing,
14 and it s officially adjourned. [gavel]

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. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date March 5, 2017