



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, N. Y. 10007

Testimony of the Mayor's Office of City Legislative Affairs

Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Sitings and Dispositions

September 18, 2025

Dear Chair Hanks, Council Member Marmorato, and Members of the Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Sitings, and Dispositions,

My name is Diane Savino and I am Senior Advisor for the New York City Office of the Mayor. I am writing in regard to LU 0363-2025, Application No. G230033 HHX, a land use application submitted by the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation, requesting authorization to lease a parcel of land located on the Jacobi Hospital Campus to The Fortune Society, Inc.

Currently, the Adams Administration is actively reviewing the Just Home project. The City is developing a new proposal that would identify a different location for Just Home and also deliver supportive and affordable housing at the Jacobi Hospital site. This approach would ultimately allow more people in need to receive the care and services they deserve.

We hope to come back to the Council in the near future with a plan that would continue to deliver the Just Home project affordable and supportive housing on the Jacobi campus. We look forward to working with the Council on this process.

Thank you for your time,
Diane Savino

Testimony of the New York City Health and Hospitals

Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Sitings and Dispositions

September 18, 2025

Dear Chair Hanks, Council Member Marmorato, and Members of the Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Sitings, and Dispositions,

My name is Dr. Mitch Katz and I am the President and CEO of New York City Health and Hospitals. I am writing in regards to LU 0363-2025, Application No. G230033 HHX, a land use application submitted by the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation, requesting authorization to lease a parcel of land located on the Jacobi Hospital Campus to The Fortune Society, Inc.

At this time, the Adams Administration is actively reviewing the Just Home project. The City is developing a new proposal that would identify a different location for Just Home and also deliver supportive and affordable housing at the Jacobi Hospital site. This approach would ultimately allow more people in need to receive the care and services they deserve.

We hope to come back to the Council in the near future with a plan that would continue to deliver the Just Home project and affordable and supportive housing on the Jacobi campus. We look forward to working with the Council on this process.

Thank you for your time,
Dr. Mitch Katz
NYC H+H President and CEO

From: [REDACTED]
To: [Land Use Testimony](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Just Homes
Date: Thursday, September 18, 2025 1:08:47 PM

[REDACTED]

To the city council land use committee:

On the subject of Just homes on the Jacoby hospital campus I AM OPPOSED to bring criminals into our community. We are a residential community with schools and churches and children living within walking distance of the Jacoby campus. We should not have a prison ward in any residential community. This empty building should be used for the veterans or seniors from our neighborhood, Not for criminals. It's time that the city stops dumping on the Bronx. It's time that the city listens to the community members. We live here, we own our homes and we pay our taxes. When we don't want something we should have the support of the city council to say NO. We should not have to fight to keep our children safe. The city should agree that safety must come first. Putting criminals in our neighborhood will put our children and seniors in a prison restricting residents to our own homes due to fear for safety. I am asking you to do the right thing, listen to the community, Vote NO.

Andrew Chirico
Bronx

Letter to the City Planning Commission regarding the LIC Neighborhood Plan public hearing

To the interested parties:

New York City – City Planning Commission

Greetings all, my name is Senjuen Hsia, and I help my family manage property lots in the IBZ North designated area of Long Island City. We are located on the corner of 21st Street and 40th Avenue, and represent the areas of Block 392 – Lots 1, 5, and 43. I have lived in Sunnyside and Long Island City for forty years and have worked in and around both areas for almost thirty. We also have been in regular contact with other property owners, workers, and residents for the area and property lots in and around Block 392.

While we support the rezoning plan's objectives to enhance Long Island City's mixed-use character, we believe that the areas designated in the IBZ North should ALSO be recommended for re-zoning as mixed-use so that it allows for at least some, or any kind of, residential or housing development. There are several compelling reasons why we believe that this should be done in as timely a fashion as possible.

New economic trends after the Pandemic

- The 2019 Pandemic has upended the market for New York City office buildings.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/08/01/nyregion/manhattan-office-building-auction.html>
In 2006, 135 West 50th Street in Midtown Manhattan sold for \$332 million. Last week, it sold for just \$8.5 million. The building was 23 stories and was once the former headquarters of Sports Illustrated.
- The sale follows the same recent trend of several Manhattan office buildings being sold at steep discounts over the past decade.
<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/06/12/business/distressed-office-buildings-buyers.html>
CoStar predicts that 2024 and 2025 will be the two worst years on record for office buildings in terms of the amount of floor space that tenants are giving back or vacating across the country.
- The pandemic has exposed economic trends ushering in a lasting shift to remote work in many sectors. Companies are embracing hybrid and remote work, employees do not visit the office as much, and most buildings are no longer considered safe investments. As such, building owners no longer collect enough rent to pay off their current mortgages. Additionally, rising interest rates have made those same owners reluctant to renegotiate financing deals or unable to afford new mortgages.

As bad as it is for commercial real estate, similar trends continue for NYC's industrial and manufacturing sectors. According to recent CBRE market reports, industrial leasing in the city hit new lows in the final quarter of 2023, with an average lease of just 7000 square feet.
<https://commercialobserver.com/2024/02/new-york-city-new-industrial-space-soundstages-demand/>

- In Manhattan, many developers are trying to convert office buildings into apartments as a way to deal with these trends. However, conversions are costly, and not all buildings are easy to retrofit.

LUCKILY, there are several building lots in the IBZ of LIC North, including the lots at 40th Avenue, 21st Street, that DO NOT have that problem, as those places can be quickly made ready to be demolished and rebuilt so that they be installed as new building projects.

Industrial Business Zones (IBZs) were created in 2006. They have not worked in LIC North.

- ONE-TIME relocation tax credits of only \$1000 per employee, capping out at just \$100,000 (<https://edc.nyc/industry/industrial-and-manufacturing>), are drops in the bucket for companies in today's business environment. Despite the growth of Long Island City in the south, more companies and businesses have left the Queensbridge / IBZ North area since 2006 than have arrived. In this modern economic climate, these tax credits barely scratch the surface of what is needed to attract manufacturing or industrial businesses to move here, especially in comparison to what other states and regions in the country are offering.

ZERO companies in the area currently apply for these IBZ tax credits because they DO NOT stack with other city and state tax credits or incentives. Tax benefits such as the REAP Program are taken by companies instead, as they provide better tax benefits, for more years, AND do not have the same sorts of geographic requirements mandated by IBZ policies.

<https://www.nyc.gov/site/finance/business/business-reap.page>

- Developers and banks will not fund or finance any construction projects without significant interest from larger companies. We can personally attest to this because it is exactly what has been communicated to us. Using a tiny one-time tax credit aimed at attracting businesses that have up to 100 employees or less, has had ZERO effect on convincing anyone to invest in the manufacturing sector of the IBZ, especially when there are much better incentives and subsidies that are offered by the city and state that CAN NOT be combined with the IBZ tax credit.
- A perfect example can be made by pointing to the property lot located across the street from us, addressed 38-50 21st Street – Block 471, Lot 703.
<https://propertyinformationportal.nyc.gov/parcels/parcel/4004710703>

Amazon, despite controversies before and during the pandemic, signed a TEN-YEAR lease for the property in 2020 to open a brand new delivery station of 20,000 square feet.

Renovations were made in 2020, and Amazon started operations in 2021.

<https://licpost.com/amazon-to-open-new-delivery-station-in-long-island-city>

<https://www.crainsnewyork.com/commercial-real-estate/amazon-heads-lic-latest-delivery-station-not-second-headquarters>

- Within a year, Amazon stopped operating out of the location, and the place sat empty for two years until Fisker Group – a now-defunct electric car company – leased the site to use as a storage space for its vehicles. In June 2024, Fisker Group filed for bankruptcy, and their lease expired for the year, and sat empty yet again for almost another year through 2025, until Rivian – another electric vehicle company (16% of which is owned by Amazon, Inc.), recently leased the property to serve merely as a private service center – providing maintenance and repairs of their vehicles (by appointment-only) for their customers.
<https://www.cnn.com/2022/09/14/map-of-amazon-warehouse-closures.html>
<https://property.compstak.com/3850-21st-Street-Long-Island-City/p/235623>
<https://www.google.com/viewer/place?mid=/g/11yfs9jfb>



Changes to how traffic is diverted along 21st Street / 40th Avenue no longer makes the lots in the area feasible for significant manufacturing transport.

Driving up and down 21st Street from Astoria down to Hunter's Point, we can see that LEFT TURNS were banned on nearly every intersection throughout the entire IBZ and beyond. In 2019, the 21st Street Corridor was officially designated as a Vision Zero corridor and has been completely redesigned to emphasize pedestrian safety and bus reliability.

<https://licpost.com/21-street-listed-as-priority-corridor-in-new-vision-zero-plan>

<https://www.nyc.gov/html/dot/downloads/pdf/21-st-bus-priority-safety-study-cb1-mar2022.pdf>

- Since the Vision Zero designation, the Department of Transportation installed three things that significantly inhibit the ability for facilities in the area to transport goods and materials:
 - A) An island divider for pedestrians
 - B) An entire bike lane
 - C) A full bus lane prohibiting parking or any other traffic

21st Street used to be a two-way, four-lane boulevard. There is now only ONE lane for each

direction. When the building was operational decades ago, the street was JUST wide enough for 40-foot containers to back into the loading docks. While those trucks were being loaded, they would block an entire lane of traffic.

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/EkUvrs6Dw6hWV5jf6>



- After the DOT installed those three items, it is no longer possible for large trucks and containers to effectively maneuver around any building in that area for any significant amount of goods or materials transport. There simply isn't enough room for any large trucks or containers to load and unload goods or materials without completely blocking out an entire side of traffic on 21st Street.

This will scare away ANY manufacturing or wholesale company that might have been interested in a move to the area. Neither does it work as a support district for the neighboring business community.

The areas immediately north AND south of the LIC North IBZ are zoned for Mixed-Use.

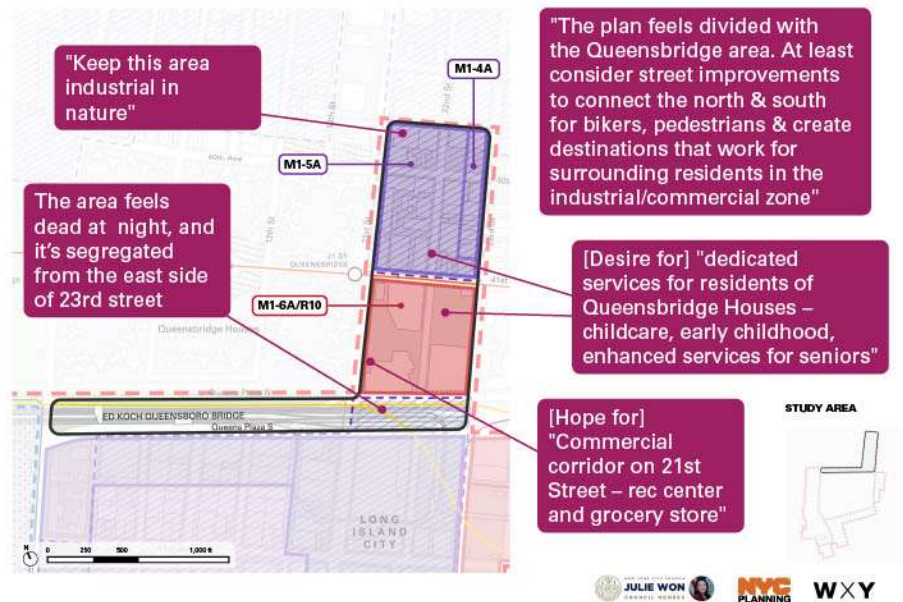
- The LIC North IBZ is surrounded on all sides by residential and mixed-use buildings.
 - a) The area is filled with hotels, retail stores, and restaurants/ markets specifically catered to the growing number of tourists and residents in the area.
 - b) The site is also serviced by the 21st Street – Queensbridge subway stop, and four bus lines. They are all geared towards residential commuting and servicing commercial and retail activity.
- The area lost key elements of its manufacturing /industrial character decades ago. Zoning should be changed to match the characteristics of the neighboring areas, based on the

Planning Committee's own land-use rationale guidelines.

- Multiple comments during the break-out sessions were concerned about the empty, desolate feel of the manufacturing district segregating Queensbridge Housing from the rest of the area.

2 NORTH: ZONING FEEDBACK

- Concerns about lack of height limit in M1-6A/R10
- The proposed density is inappropriate next to QBH, worried about isolating QBH
- Need deeply affordable housing here
- Need to improve pedestrian and cyclist connectivity and safety under QBH
- Support more affordable commercial uses on the ground floor such as a rec center and grocery stores
- Support for residential uses adjacent to QBH to better connect the campus to the surrounding neighborhood



12
LONG ISLAND CITY NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN

Large manufacturing facilities will not be able to operate due to environmental restrictions, as a result of their proximity to Queensbridge Housing and the surrounding residential neighborhoods immediately bordering the area.

Neighborhood comfort and safety issues along streets zoned for manufacturing and warehousing:

- Barnett Avenue next to Sunnyside Gardens is a prominent example. It is common knowledge never to park along the warehouses, parking lot facilities, etc. on this road. There is very little pedestrian traffic, a lack of security cameras or CCTV, leading to vagrancy, crime, smashed car windows, and car thefts for many years.
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/382555689074911/posts/1409766246353845/>
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/382555689074911/posts/1409406753056461/>
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/382555689074911/posts/1396287441035059/>
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<https://www.facebook.com/groups/654863675068167/posts/1552173475337178/>
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<https://www.facebook.com/groups/654863675068167/posts/1718669615354229/>
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/654863675068167/posts/1761605751060615/>
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/654863675068167/posts/1761657494388774/>
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/654863675068167/posts/1789736744914182/>

- It is a very similar situation on the lots around 21st to 23rd Street and 39th Avenue to 40th Avenue. In addition to vagrancy and crime, it is a popular area for illegal garbage dumping, and a common spot for people to sell drugs to the homeless and those with substance use disorders.

We have had multiple meetings and conversations with building developers and banks. Zoning without residential or mixed-use designations is an absolute non-starter for any construction project financing.

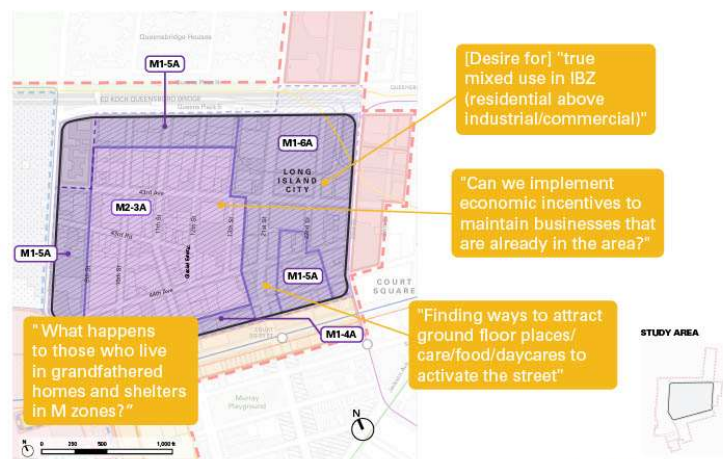
- No companies or businesses are interested in any form of development without a mixed-use or residential zoning designation.
- Upon request, we can present to the committee multiple letters and communications from developers and banks who directly informed us of this.

Based on the comments and feedback provided in the last two town-hall meetings, every zone in the LIC Plan advocated for more available housing.

- We have been to every town-hall meeting and focus-area meeting during the LIC planning committee process. The overwhelming response in these meetings has been to call for more housing.
- During the break-out sessions in May / June, even the Industrial / Commercial Area was full of comments and advocacy for carving out zoning for residential housing. This was a running theme in every meeting.

3 INDUSTRIAL & COMMERCIAL AREA: ZONING FEEDBACK

- Concerns that proposed changes would not sufficiently activate the area
- Safety concerns in the IBZ area
- More parks, green and open spaces are needed in the area
- Confusion about mid-block district separations
- Desire to keep area industrial to protect existing industry and artists spaces, in addition to growing tech, science, and film industries



It has become apparent that throughout the community planning process, there is an overwhelming desire from the local community to see industrial/residential mixed-use developments throughout the IBZ area. This includes areas that are currently zoned for only manufacturing/industrial-only use.

There are several compelling reasons why IBZ-only zoning no longer makes sense for the areas that we have highlighted. The most important of which is that the city itself has already isolated 21st Street and the surrounding blocks into a residential / commuter-friendly transportation hub. This completely locks out manufacturing and industrial businesses from using the area as a place that is conducive for transporting goods and materials.

Allowing for a blend of industrial, commercial, and residential uses will create a better environment for businesses of all kinds, and residents to thrive together. Many of us in this area have become frustrated and remain stuck because of this IBZ designation – as it isolates the area from the rest of Long Island City. We need to have more residential and mixed uses so that these IBZ-designated areas can be made cleaner, safer, and more walkable to attract better quality activity and economic investments into the area.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,
Senjuen Hsia

SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS PUBLIC SITINGS & DISPOSITIONS

CITY HALL CHAMBERS, NEW YORK, NY

IN-PERSON AND ONLINE TESTIMONIES

Thursday – September 18, 2025 – 10:00 A.M.

Project #364 — JUST HOMES

In-person testimony prepared by Bernadette Ferrara

Thursday, September 18, 2025

President of Van Nest Neighborhood Alliance (VNNA)

Life-long NorthEast Bronx Resident

Good morning Chair and Committee Members,

My name is Bernadette Ferrara. I am President of the Van Nest Neighborhood Alliance and a life-long NorthEast Bronx resident. Today I speak on behalf of my many years as a Bronx resident. These are the reasons why I strongly oppose the Just Homes Project which will permanently house Rikers' homeless and detainees at 1900 Seminole Avenue, the unused building#2 on Jacobi Campus. For the record, Just Homes is an experimental project, never before managed by Fortune Society or NYCHH.

The communities ask NYCHH, NYC Mayor and the City Council to work towards a win-win solution.

The communities respect NYCHH's need for revenue. We ask that you respect our love and the needs for our communities we call home. The Just Homes Project is not what our communities need. Our community's needs list, prioritized first to last, is Senior Housing, Veterans Housing, STEM School, Community Center, Wellness & Culture Center, and Birthing Center that will work in this location before the need for this Just Homes Project.

Our major concerns are its close location to five of our schools and the safety of our residents.

The Fortune Society will screen and choose who permanently lives there with the inmates referred by Correctional Health Services. CHS has disclosed that most of the medical conditions suffered by Rikers inmates are not "complex medical needs" but mental health and substance abuse problems. This permanent housing will have minimal security. The Fortune Society has publicly stated that when screening, there will be no discrimination on the inmates' reason for being incarcerated, **only their medical needs**. This means that the Rikers "tenant" might be a former convicted rapist, murderer, robber, child pornographer, sex offender of any level that will roam freely in our communities without accountability.

Who will be accountable when a senior gets assaulted, a child gets raped, a home gets robbed, a person gets killed? Presently, residents are being robbed while walking their dogs by guys on scooters in broad daylight!! Don't you think NYCHH'S employees who work staggered hours and double shifts are nervous? Why is NYCHH not thinking of the safety of their employees?

The Just Homes Project at 1900 Seminole is too risky at this location for our communities.

Thank you.



THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

JOHN ZACCARO, JR.
Assemblyman 80th District

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COMMITTEES

Aging
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Economic Development, Job Creation,
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Small Business
Tourism, Parks, Arts and
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MEMBER

Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic and
Asian Legislative Caucus

MWBEs

Puerto Rican/Hispanic Task Force

September 20, 2025

**New York City Council
Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Sitings and Dispositions
City Hall Park
New York, NY 10007**

Dear Chairwoman Kamillah Hanks and Members of the Subcommittee,

I write today to express my strong opposition to the Just Home project proposed for the Jacobi Hospital campus in my district, and to stand firmly with the members of my community who have voiced their concerns from the very beginning.

Let me be clear: my opposition is not to affordable housing, nor to supportive housing. In fact, I am deeply committed to expanding both. Each week, my office hears from seniors, veterans, families, and individuals with disabilities who are desperately trying to remain in the neighborhoods they love. I meet Bronxites facing eviction or already displaced by skyrocketing rents—residents who built their lives here, only to find themselves left behind in a city they helped sustain.

From the outset, I have taken an active leadership role in raising this issue with Mayor Adams and his administration, engaging local leaders, advocates, and fellow elected officials. The message I have heard again and again is consistent: this community does not support this project in its current form.

One of the deepest wounds has been the way this project was introduced. From the very beginning, there was a lack of transparency, collaboration, and genuine community input. Residents and stakeholders were not engaged early, openly, or honestly. Instead, the project arrived in our neighborhood as a decision already made, leaving people feeling blindsided and disrespected. By the time conversations began, trust had already been broken—before the Fortune Society ever had a chance to make its case. That lack of communication and intention set the tone, creating an environment of mistrust that lingers today.

Meanwhile, the Bronx faces a severe housing crisis. In my district, more than 2,300 veterans and 18,000 seniors—many living below the poverty line—struggle every day to secure safe, stable housing. When a five-alarm fire at 2910 Wallace Avenue displaced dozens of families earlier this year, we saw firsthand the lack of affordable housing options available right here in our community. Lifelong Bronx residents, some with roots going back generations, were forced to scatter across the city because there was nowhere for them to stay locally. That cannot continue. Our first responsibility as leaders must be to the people we represent—to protect our seniors, support our veterans, and keep families in the homes and neighborhoods they have built.

That said, my opposition is not a rejection of the Fortune Society or its mission. I believe firmly in rehabilitation and in ensuring that formerly incarcerated individuals have access to housing and stability. I remain committed to working with the Fortune Society and the administration to identify a more suitable site—one that respects the needs of this community while also creating space for supportive housing that uplifts those deserving of a second chance. That is the kind of thoughtful, balanced solution our city should pursue.

I urge you to respect the will of this community and vote no on Just Home. This is about more than a single project—it is about how development is done in the Bronx. When transparency is lacking, when community voices are ignored, and when decisions feel imposed rather than built together, trust is broken. If we want future projects to succeed, we must start with honesty, collaboration, and respect. The people of the Bronx deserve nothing less.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Zaccaro, Jr.", with a stylized "Z" and a long horizontal flourish.

John Zaccaro, Jr.
New York State Assembly
80th Assembly District



**Testimony of Meg Egan, CEO of the Women's Prison Association
Subcommittee on Landmarks Public Sitings and Dispositions
September 18, 2025**

Good afternoon, my name is Meg Egan, and it is my great honor and privilege to lead the Women's Prison Association. Chair Hanks and the rest of the members of the subcommittee, I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of the Justice Home project today.

Throughout its 180-year history WPA is a force for change, challenging the systemic inequities that criminalize and marginalize women, particularly Black and brown women, at disproportionate rates. For these women, incarceration is not merely a consequence of a single event but the result of compounding systemic failures: poverty, housing instability, trauma, lack of quality health care, and lack of opportunity.

The harms and failures of Rikers Island are real. The cost to families, communities, and the city is immeasurable. Mothers are separated from children. Communities lose contributors. The cycle of inequity perpetuates and deepens. But what if there was a different way? A way that prioritized prevention, provided support, and treated justice as an opportunity for restoration? WPA envisions that path forward. Projects like Just Home are critical to the safe, healthy, and prosperous future for all New Yorkers.

Just Home provides a key path and proof point for that way forward. Just Home is an innovative housing initiative that will provide permanent housing and supportive, wrap-around services for medically complex, homeless New Yorkers after they leave jail. Just Home will create approximately 83 apartments on the Jacobi Hospital campus:

- 58 permanent, supportive studio units;
- 24 affordable studio units;
- A larger apartment for a live-in superintendent.

NYC Health + Hospitals, NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) and The Fortune Society will model Just Home after Fortune's Castle Gardens, which opened in 2010 and has become an integral and valued part of the West Harlem community. Castle Gardens and Just Home are models that we can leverage for more New Yorkers with specific needs.

The Fortune Society is an essential partner for WPA. Together, with our other partners across the city, we have developed an ecosystem of care for those who encounter the



347 EAST 10TH STREET NEW YORK, NY 10009 | 646-292-7710 | info@wpaonline.org

criminal justice system. By meeting people where they are, and providing necessary services, while also providing accountability, we can achieve true public safety. Just Home does just that and is a far more cost-effective approach to community safety and care.

Please contact me by email, megan@wpaonline.org or by phone at 646.292.7710 with any questions.



Outlook

[EXTERNAL] No to just homes

From**Date** Mon 9/22/2025 9:02 PM**To** Land Use Testimony <landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. Report suspected phishing emails with the Phish Alert Button or forward them to phish@oti.nyc.gov as an attachment.

I'm opposed to the Just Homes project with its ever changing program . The Fortune Society does not distinguish the crimes when vetting, they have stated so publicaly at city council hearings , so their vetting means nothing . This is not an appropriate location near schools . This area needs senior housing for seniors with medical needs or veterans
Just No ! To Just Homes !

District 13 citizen
Sent from my iPhone



Outlook

[EXTERNAL] Just Homes

From [REDACTED]
Date Thu 9/18/2025 1:08 PM
To Land Use Testimony <landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov>

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To the city council land use committee:

On the subject of Just homes on the Jacoby hospital campus I AM OPPOSED to bring criminals into our community. We are a residential community with schools and churches and children living within walking distance of the Jacoby campus. We should not have a prison ward in any residential community. This empty building should be used for the veterans or seniors from our neighborhood, Not for criminals. It's time that the city stops dumping on the bronx. It's time that the city listens to the community members. We live here, we own our homes and we pay our taxes. When we don't want something we should have the support of the city council to say NO. We should not have to fight to keep our children safe. The city should agree that safety must come first. Putting criminals in our neighborhood will put our children and seniors in a prison restricting residents to our own homes due to fear for safety. I am asking you to do the right thing, listen to the community, Vote NO.

Andrew Chirico
Bronx



Outlook

[EXTERNAL] Against!! NYC Health + Hospitals Jacobi Just Home

From Annette [REDACTED]
Date Thu 9/18/2025 1:55 AM
To Land Use Testimony <landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov>

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Hello writing as someone living close by to this facility and I am AGAINST using this property for formerly incarnated individuals. I personally wouldn't feel safe getting home late (at least 1am). Since the housing near Westchester square area opened up there's been individuals found loitering around this area. This was brought to my attention because of News 12 the Bronx and this development has been under wraps since 2022. I think the neighborhood does not need another mental ill facility for individuals who committed crimes. We have medical students and elderly people living nearby that prefer the area as it is, quiet.

Thanks for your time.

Hello everyone. My name is Anuva and I am a Morris Park resident speaking IN SUPPORT of Just Home, which will be built just a block away from where I live. I am a medical student currently living in the Albert Einstein College of Medicine apartments and I am reminded of a patient at Weiler who my team and I recently cared for, who had struggled to access stable housing following incarceration, in part due to restrictions given his history of incarceration. This contributed to him being unhoused, unable to prioritize health above other needs, when even access to food was a daily struggle, impacting his mental health and putting him at risk of substance use and unhealthy exposures. Ultimately, these risk factors led to a hospital admission for infective endocarditis (an infection of the heart), but with a prolonged hospital stay since he was not eligible for continuing his long IV antibiotic course outside of the hospital due to his unstable housing situation. Clearly, his lack of housing put him at greater risk of worse, uncontrolled health outcomes and also strained the hospital system's resources for an otherwise preventable situation. JustHome would address many of these barriers by providing previously incarcerated individuals with stable PERMANENT housing, allowing them to address other urgent social and economic needs with the assistance of support staff, including case managers, social workers, and Fortune Services. With the close proximity to Jacobi Hospital, this will allow for a renewed focus and attention on management of complex health needs, allowing for continuous access to necessary medications, scans, and labs, while also affording quick and easy access to specialists and treatments in the setting of acute health exacerbations. Ultimately, this will improve the health of a vulnerable population while not causing unnecessary overutilization of in-demand, limited, expensive health services, ensuring all community members have appropriate health access.



[EXTERNAL] Just Homes Project Opposition

From Arlind S [REDACTED]
Date Fri 9/19/2025 11:46 PM
To Land Use Testimony <landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. Report suspected phishing emails with the Phish Alert Button or forward them to phish@oti.nyc.gov as an attachment.

Hello,

I am a resident of Morris Park and I am opposed to the construction of the Just Homes Project near Jacobi Hospital.

My family is opposed to it as well, we are 4 in total.

Best Regards



Outlook

[EXTERNAL] Support for Just Home

From Bennett Reinhardt [REDACTED]
Date Sun 9/21/2025 12:20 PM
To Land Use Testimony <landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov>

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Bennett Reinhardt
Bronx, NY 10454

To whom it may concern:

I write in strong support of Just Home, a project that provides critical supportive housing for formerly incarcerated New Yorkers with medical challenges in the Bronx. If we are to be a city that welcomes and supports, where everyone has the chance to thrive, and where everyone deserves a second chance, then we must invest in what truly matters--like high-quality housing and supportive services. In the face of attacks and hostility both at the federal level and even from some New Yorkers who have yet to appreciate the immense value to be found in inclusion, we must show up and build. I urge the Council to move this project--and many others like it--forward as quickly as possible. Thank you!

SUBCOMMITTEE ON LANDMARKS PUBLIC SITINGS & DISPOSITIONS

CITY HALL CHAMBERS, NEW YORK, NY

IN-PERSON AND ONLINE TESTIMONIES

Thursday – September 18, 2025 – 10:00 A.M.

Project #364 — JUST HOMES

In-person testimony prepared by Bernadette Ferrara

Thursday, September 18, 2025

President of Van Nest Neighborhood Alliance (VNNA)

Life-long NorthEast Bronx Resident

Good morning Chair and Committee Members,

My name is Bernadette Ferrara. I am President of the Van Nest Neighborhood Alliance and a life-long NorthEast Bronx resident. Today I speak on behalf of my many years as a Bronx resident. These are the reasons why I strongly oppose the Just Homes Project which will permanently house Rikers' homeless and detainees at 1900 Seminole Avenue, the unused building#2 on Jacobi Campus. For the record, Just Homes is an experimental project, never before managed by Fortune Society or NYCHH.

The communities ask NYCHH, NYC Mayor and the City Council to work towards a win-win solution.

The communities respect NYCHH's need for revenue. We ask that you respect our love and the needs for our communities we call home. The Just Homes Project is not what our communities need. Our community's needs list, prioritized first to last, is Senior Housing, Veterans Housing, STEM School, Community Center, Wellness & Culture Center, and Birthing Center that will work in this location before the need for this Just Homes Project.

Our major concerns are its close location to five of our schools and the safety of our residents.

The Fortune Society will screen and choose who permanently lives there with the inmates referred by Correctional Health Services. CHS has disclosed that most of the medical conditions suffered by Rikers inmates are not "complex medical needs" but mental health and substance abuse problems. This permanent housing will have minimal security. The Fortune Society has publicly stated that when screening, there will be no discrimination on the inmates' reason for being incarcerated, **only their medical needs**. This means that the Rikers "tenant" might be a former convicted rapist, murderer, robber, child pornographer, sex offender of any level that will roam freely in our communities without accountability.

Who will be accountable when a senior gets assaulted, a child gets raped, a home gets robbed, a person gets killed? Presently, residents are being robbed while walking their dogs by guys on scooters in broad daylight!! Don't you think NYCHH'S employees who work staggered hours and double shifts are nervous? Why is NYCHH not thinking of the safety of their employees?

The Just Homes Project at 1900 Seminole is too risky at this location for our communities.

Thank you.



Outlook

[EXTERNAL] Just Home

From brandi mandina [REDACTED] >
Date Wed 9/17/2025 3:14 PM
To Land Use Testimony <landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov>

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I was born and raised in Morris Park/Indian Village. I am 24 years old. All of my friends still live here. We have been talking about having to leave the community we were raised in with family and friends. I am applying to graduate school for the last 2 years. I have not really started my life yet I love where I live and planned to stay for a long time but if there are released pre-trial detainees living around the corner from me I know I will not be safe. If even one person goes the wrong way it could mean my life or one my friends that I grew up with and am still very close with could get very hurt or even killed (God forbid). Please consider another option for this building. I was lucky to live in one of New York City's great neighborhoods and would be heartbroken if I had to leave and change my whole way if life and leave my friends . Thank you for listening



[EXTERNAL] PLEASE VOTE NO ON JUST HOMES

From Briana Marricco [REDACTED]
Date Wed 9/17/2025 8:22 PM
To Land Use Testimony <landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov>

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Councilmembers & Committee Members,

I am writing to state my unequivocal opposition to the proposed Just Home project at the Jacobi Campus. As a resident within walking distance of Jacobi Hospital, I can say with certainty that this project would be DETRIMENTAL to the safety, stability, and character of our community.

This proposal intends to house pre-trial detainees from Rikers Island. Why our community? What tangible benefit does this provide to the families who live here? The only individuals who stand to gain are those who made the choice to commit crimes. Meanwhile, our VETERANS, our SENIORS, and LAW-ABIDING families are overlooked yet again. These criminals need to be placed in an area that isn't near ANYONES homes.

Why can pre-trial detainees receive care and housing on the Jacobi Campus, but my disabled father is forced to travel great lengths just to attend his medical appointments? Why is it that criminals are prioritized, while law-abiding, tax-paying citizens are ignored? This is an insult to every hardworking family in our community.

Our neighborhood is one of the few remaining strong, stable communities in the Bronx. Families, like my own, came here with NOTHING, worked tirelessly, and invested their lives in building a safe and proud community. This project threatens to unravel that.

Why are we continuously burdened with developments that put our safety and quality of life at risk? What is the plan when, not if, someone escapes? With already insufficient police resources, how can you justify placing this burden on us? This is NOT fairness, and it is NOT justice. It is reckless and shortsighted.

Please reject this proposal. Our community deserves to be PROTECTED, NOT SACRIFICED.

Thank you

[Sent from the all new AOL app for iOS](#)



[EXTERNAL] No to Just Homes

From Cchsesq [REDACTED]
Date Fri 9/19/2025 4:35 PM
To Land Use Testimony <landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov>

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This is not an appropriate location near schools

C Swett Esq.
10464



Outlook

[EXTERNAL] Just Homes at Jacobi Hospital

From Cathy Cebek **Date** Fri 9/19/2025 3:23 PM**To** Land Use Testimony <landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov>

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Good Afternoon ,

I'm opposed to the Just Homes project with its ever changing program . The Fortune Society does not distinguish the crimes when vetting, they have stated so publicaly at city council hearings , so their vetting means nothing . This is not an appropriate location near schools . This area needs senior housing for seniors with medical needs or veterans housing for veterans with medical needs . Why is it every time a community asks for such , it's never put forth .Are you not including seniors and veterans in your housing plans ? You should ! They vote too .
Just No ! To Just Homes !

District 13 citizen
Cathy Cebek
Sent from my iPhone



520 Eighth Avenue
New York, NY 10018
p. 646.386.3100
f. 212.397.0985

Courtney Bryan, Chief Executive Officer

innovatingjustice.org

**Center for Justice Innovation
New York City Council
Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Sitings and Dispositions
September 18, 2025**

Good afternoon Chair Hanks and esteemed members of the Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Sitings and Dispositions. My name is Hailey Nolasco, and I serve as the Senior Director of Government Relations for the Center for Justice Innovation (the Center). Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of the Just Home project.

The Center for Justice Innovation is a community justice organization that, for more than 30 years, has partnered with communities, courts, and the people most impacted to advance safety and racial justice. We design and operate evidence-based alternatives that reduce reliance on incarceration, connect people to meaningful services, and improve outcomes for both individuals and communities.

Through this work, we have seen firsthand that safe, stable housing is the cornerstone of public safety. Without it, individuals leaving jail face almost insurmountable barriers. Even a short stay in jail can mean the loss of a home, a job, or a shelter placement. These barriers don't just harm individuals; they put entire communities at risk.

Upon release, people encounter discrimination in rental markets, restrictions tied to criminal records, and limited income. These challenges fuel cycles of homelessness, rearrest, and reincarceration.¹ By contrast, research consistently shows that supportive housing dramatically reduces the likelihood of returning to jail.²

Just Home offers an urgently needed solution. It will create more than 80 units of affordable, supportive housing—doubling the number of affordable units built in Council District 13 over the past decade.³ Importantly, it will serve people returning from city jails with serious medical conditions, a group that is especially vulnerable and often left with nowhere to turn. Too often, these individuals cycle between shelters, emergency rooms, and jails because no system is equipped to meet their complex needs. Just Home will provide a humane and cost-effective

¹ Hernandez, P., De La Torre, B., Page, J., & Stuart, C. (2022, May 2). *Opinion: Supportive Housing Can Help Break the Cycle Between Homelessness and Incarceration*. City Limits. <https://citylimits.org/opinion-supportive-housing-can-help-break-the-cycle-between-homelessness-and-incarceration/>

² Peiffer, E. (2020, September 16). Five Charts That Explain the Homelessness-Jail Cycle—and How to Break It. <https://www.urban.org/features/five-charts-explain-homelessness-jail-cycle-and-how-break-it>

³ Brand, D. (2022, May 18). *17 Units Here. 8,555 There. See Where NYC Builds Its Affordable Housing*. City Limits. <https://citylimits.org/17-units-here-8555-there-see-where-nyc-builds-its-affordable-housing/>

alternative: stable housing paired with comprehensive services, including social workers, peer specialists, residential aides, and 24-hour security, promoting safety for the residents, as well as the community as a whole.

This project embodies a community-based approach to public safety—addressing root causes of instability rather than perpetuating the revolving door of jail and homelessness. It represents the kind of smart, compassionate investment our city must make if we are serious about ending homelessness, advancing health equity, and breaking cycles of justice involvement.

The Center has long partnered with the Fortune Society and deeply values their leadership in this work. Our practitioners know that when they refer individuals to Fortune, clients will receive robust, high-quality supportive services that help them stabilize and thrive. Approving this project will not only transform the lives of its residents but will also strengthen the safety, health, and stability of our city as a whole.

I urge the Council to support Just Home. Thank you for your time and consideration.



[EXTERNAL] "Just Homes" Project

From c1a1h (null) **Date** Fri 9/19/2025 12:43 PM**To** Land Use Testimony <landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov>**Cc** District13 <District13@council.nyc.gov>

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I am a proud resident of the Indian Village Community. "Just Homes" is projecting to house Rikers Island in a building located on the Jacobi Hospital Campus. This area is a beautiful community where our residents enjoy their homes and their daily activities.

I am STRONGLY 100% against this particular program. This is a residential area with many public schools, parks and young children that need to be protected along with our elderly residents who walk along the area and need to be safe. I am not speaking badly about individuals with mental health and substance abuse issues and formerly incarcerated individuals but we cannot allow these individuals to have free range of their whereabouts. They will be coming and going whenever and wherever they please with no supervision which will cause a lot of safety issues to our community and its residents. This is not the area to house this type of complex.

Respectfully,

Connie Ann & Dennis Hynes & Frances Boffa



CSH Testimony in Support of Just Home

My name is Lauren Velez, and I am the Director of the Metro Team at Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH). I am testifying in strong support of the Just Home project.

CSH is a nonprofit intermediary and Community Development Financial Institution focused on advancing affordable housing with services to help people and communities thrive. We are committed to sustaining and increasing access to permanent and affordable housing solutions, especially for people who face complex barriers – like those involved in the homeless, criminal legal and emergency health systems. We have a 30-plus year track record of innovation and investment in New York City by partnering with affordable housing developers, hospitals, city agencies, and other nonprofits to make having a home a reality for those facing the barriers I mentioned.

Investment in supportive housing is an important public safety strategy, backed by research, and CSH is coordinated a sign-on letter in support of this project back in December of 2023, which I will attach with my testimony. Nearly 100 people and organizations signed on.

We know there are well over 2,500 people in city jails that could greatly benefit from supportive housing. This is based on an analysis and policy report that my team published on Rikers and supportive housing in 2022 (which you can find here: [Advancing Supportive Housing Solutions to Reduce Homelessness for People Impacted by the Criminal Legal System](#)). Currently there are only 120 units of supportive housing dedicated to people leaving Rikers, NYC DOHMH's Justice Involved Supportive Housing Program (JISH). This is clearly not enough to meet the need of over 2,500.

The tragic irony of the justice system is that once someone has paid their debt to society and we expect them to rebuild their lives, we then tell them, "You can't live here."

We also know, as New Yorkers, that there is an acute shortage of affordable housing that every neighborhood faces. Just Home is an important project that adds the affordable and supportive housing units we so desperately need and addresses inequities.

This project represents a chance to add 24 units of affordable housing. An additional 58 supportive housing units will be designed for tenants who have serious chronic illnesses such as congestive heart failure, stage 4 cancer, end-stage renal disease, oxygen dependence, or needing help with activities of daily living.



These 58 units represent permanent, affordable housing for people with complex health needs, an important alternative to this city's shelter system.

I'll end my remarks by uplifting the incredible work of Fortune Society, and that this neighborhood would benefit in having them as a partner in your community. The Fortune Society is well respected for its over 20-year commitment to building reentry housing and being a great neighbor, perhaps most well-known for Castle Gardens in West Harlem. Not only does this project give members of our society dignity as they live with complicated health needs, it also gives this community a strong resource in Fortune Society's staff. What is great about projects like Just Home is that there are strong services and staff to help tenants – whether it be in the supportive or affordable units, there are dedicated professionals to respond and work to resolve – a resource many private market and general affordable housing projects cannot and do not offer.

Affordable housing investment is critical for public safety, and the research shows this. In the Fall of 2023, Columbia University released research findings that looked at using supportive housing as a reentry investment over a 10-year window. The findings, focused on people who left Rikers, show it works – people stay housed, they are significantly less likely to have future encounters with jails, shelters and emergency rooms.

We urge the New York City Health and Hospitals Board of Directors to approve the ground lease of the project so that the Just Home affordable and supportive housing project can move forward. It is important to support our most vulnerable neighbors and invest in affordable housing for public safety and strong communities.



We, the undersigned, are writing today to express our strong and unwavering support for the Just Home project, a partnership between NYC Health + Hospitals (H+H), NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) and The Fortune Society (Fortune). Just Home will provide much-needed housing for New Yorkers who were formerly incarcerated and have complex medical needs. We ask the City Council to approve the ground lease of the project so that it can move forward in developing quality, affordable and supportive housing, which is so desperately needed in New York City.

Located in a vacant building on the campus of Jacobi Hospital in Morris Park, the Bronx, Just Home will provide quality supportive housing with onsite services for people who would otherwise be homeless and who were released from city jails with serious medical needs. The housing units will be designed for tenants who have serious chronic illnesses such as congestive heart failure, stage 4 cancer, end-stage renal disease, oxygen dependence, or needing help with activities of daily living.

We estimate that each year over 2,500 people in city jails need supportive housing due to their ongoing homelessness and service needs. Supportive housing is a combination of permanent, affordable housing with voluntary, individualized services. Supportive housing is a solution to not only end homelessness, but that also improves community safety, disrupts cycling through costly crisis systems, reduces jail recidivism, and improves health outcomes for many populations, especially those with health needs and criminal legal histories.

Currently there are only 120 units of supportive housing through NYC DOHMH's Justice Involved Supportive Housing Program (JISH), which clearly does not meet the need or demand.

The 2022 report, ["Advancing Supportive Housing Solutions to Reduce Homelessness for People Impacted by the Criminal Legal System"](#) outlines the full scope of need for the thousands of people on Rikers Island are experiencing homelessness and struggle with ongoing behavioral health needs. Approving the ground lease for Just Home will be one step towards addressing this need.

Just Home will also play a role in addressing the affordable housing gap in City Council District 13 compared to other City Districts. From 2014 to 2022, District 13, where Jacobi Hospital is located, produced a dismal 95 affordable housing units, ranking 47 out of 51 Council Districts, according to the New York Housing Conference. Notably, in addition to 58 permanent supportive apartments for medically complex people released from city jails, Just Home also will include 24 apartments of affordable housing for other members of the community, as well as one apartment for a live-in superintendent, for a total of 83 units.

As the developer of the project, The Fortune Society has a mission to support successful re-entry from incarceration and has a strong track record of supporting residents who benefit from supportive housing remain housed, improve their overall wellness, and help them thrive in their communities. They are well-positioned to lead the Just Home project, which will be modeled after their successful West Harlem project, Castle Gardens, where 88% of supportive housing residents remain housed for at least two years. Fortune's work has repeatedly demonstrated that supportive housing meets people where they are, acknowledges their humanity and the common



human desire for a safe home, and drives equity while revitalizing neighborhoods afflicted by vacant buildings.

We strongly support the development of the Just Home project as a needed support for formerly incarcerated New Yorkers with complex medical needs. We urge City Council to approve the ground lease of the project so that New Yorkers returning from incarceration can find a safe, affordable place to call home. It is a vital part of the solution to New York City's affordable housing crisis and an opportunity to provide homes to some of our most vulnerable neighbors.

Judith Ackerman
Ryan Acquasotta
Carol Anshien
Jasmine Awad
Katherine Bajuk
Tracy Barber
Shannon Barbuto
John Betts
Aimee Beyda
Diana Bittern
Alex Brass
Caroline Burek
Rev. Dr. Michael Carrion,
Promised Land Covenant Church
Juli Cooper
Stephanie Cuellar
Michelle Des Roches
Sharon Dolin
Ellie Epstein
Diana Finch
Caren Fried
Paula Galowitz
Josh Goodman
Lorie Goshin, PhD PMHNP-BC
Victor Herrera
Diane Holzinger
Catherine Hood
Tracy Jones
Sheree Jones
Bridgette Jones
Earl Jones Jr.
Michael Kaess
Iva Kaufman
Olivia Killingsworth
Alex Kowtun
Lauren Kurtz
Darby Larkin
Jeffrey LeFrancois
Rachel Makleff Makleff
Edmond Malin
Christian Marquardt
Varsha Mathrani
Jon McFarlane
Peggy McGarry
Elizabeth Mellen
Lizbett Mendoza
Daniel Miller
Marianne Montero
Ruth O'Sullivan
Michele Ovesey
Christopher Owens
Phyllis Palm
Francine Perlman
Judith Plaskow
Rocco A. Pozzi,
Commissioner of Probation,
Westchester County
Ethelyn Pugh
Alexis Quintero

Marion Rodriguez
Stacey Rose
Bruce Rosen
Cory Rowe
Ashley Santiago-Conrad
Sandra Santisteban
Burnette Sheffield
Tal Siegel
B Siesel
Avay Smalls
Tess Sommer
Anna Spack
Judy Stewart
Hernandez Stroud
Hannah Tager
Rev. Adriene Thorne,
The Riverside Church in the
City of New York
Kate Vandeveld
Roberta Wall
Kevin Walsh
Carola Walton
Howard Weiner
Benjamin Wetzler
laurie Wolko
Javonah Woods
Kathryn Wylde, President & CEO
of the Partnership for NYC
Mavis Yon

A Little Piece of Light
Brooklyn Defender Services
Brooklyn Perinatal Network Inc
CAMBA, Inc.
CASES
Center for Community Alternatives
Center for Justice Innovation
Children's Defense Fund-New York
Citizens' Committee for Children of NY
Community Service Society of New York
Community Voices Heard
Congregation Romemu
Diana Breen Consulting, LLC
CSH
Eitzah
Enterprise Community Partners
Exodus Transitional Community
Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies
Freedom Agenda
Henry Street Settlement
Homeward NYC
Hour Children
Housing and Servicez, Inc.
Housing Works, Inc.
Independent Rikers Commission
JASA
Legal Action Center
Music on the Inside, Inc
Nazareth Housing
Neighborhood Coalition for Shelter, Inc.
New York County Defender Services
New Yorkers For Children
NY Jewish Coalition for Criminal Justice Reform
NYU Law Criminal Defense and Reentry Clinic
Open Hearts Initiative
Open New York
Project FIND
Queens Defenders
Robin Hood
Safe Horizon
SCO Family of Services
Supportive Housing Network of NY (the Network)
The Fortune Society
The Health & Housing Consortium
The Jewish Board of Family & Children's Services
The Legal Aid Society
The New York Women's Foundation
The Women's Community Justice Association
United Way of New York City
Urban Justice Center Mental Health Project
Vera Institute of Justice
Women & Justice Project
Women's Prison Association
Youth Represent

**Testimony to the Council Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Sitings, and Dispositions
September 18, 2025
Submitted by Ryan Acquattro**

Thank you, Chair Hanks and Members of the Council Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Sitings, and Dispositions.

My name is Ryan Acquattro. I'm a Bronx resident, and I spent several years working in the Bronx Criminal Court, collaborating with the District Attorney's office in launching and operating a diversion program for people charged with first time gun possession, among other Alternative To Incarceration programs.

Over those years in the court, I interviewed hundreds of people, some detained and some in the community. I spoke to people of all ages, who were accused of all kinds of charges, and I worked with anyone the District Attorney and Court would allow me to. If someone was homeless, it was my and my team's job to find them housing. If someone was struggling with addiction or in a mental health crisis, it was our job to get them treatment. We helped people find jobs, get their GEDs, reunite with their families, and so much more.

It was this time that I spent working in the courts that showed me why a facility like Just Home is so urgently necessary, and I remember being thrilled when I first heard it announced years ago. I thought of people I interviewed on Rikers who were in wheelchairs, with numerous co-occurring medical conditions, whose families had no capacity to house or care for them when they came home. The concept of Just Home seemed tailor designed to meet a need that, as a court advocate on the outside, I so often had such difficulty identifying resources to meet. Many of the already existing housing programs for people coming home from jail could not provide the level of medical care these particular people required, and many of the medical facilities or programs that could provide that appropriate level of care would not take referrals from the jail.

I am sure everyone here has heard horror stories of people dying on Rikers, and I'm sure if people actually read those stories they see that many of these deaths are the result of neglect. People are frequently not getting the medical care that they need on Rikers. Sometimes they're intentionally denied access, sometimes access to care is just extremely difficult to obtain even if it isn't being intentionally denied. A colleague of mine spoke to someone on Rikers recently who had basically given up on his life because traveling between Bellevue and Rikers for chemo treatments was destroying his body. Chemo treatments alone are incredibly hard to endure, let alone while shackled, malnourished, sleep deprived, and more.

Rikers is just not an environment in which people can get well. What the city has proposed and is discussing here today in Just Home will save lives and will make all of us safer, because we are all safer when our neighbors are housed and healthy. I urge the Subcommittee and the Council to approve this proposal, and I hope to see Just Home open in the very near future so everyone who will be a neighbor to the people living there can learn to appreciate their humanity. Thank you.

My name is Robert Cohen.

I am a physician. I was the Director of the Montefiore Rikers Island Health Services from 1981-1986.. I served as the Vice President for Medical Operations at the New York City Health and Hospital Corporation from 1986 through 1988.

I served as the City Council's representative on the Board of Correction for 16 years, ending in July of this year. I also was a member of the Fortune Society Board of directors for 17 years.

Today's hearing concerns matters close to my heart, and I appreciate the opportunity to speak in strong support of the Just Home housing initiative.

The New York City Criminal Justice Administration has analyzed data over the past 8 years on the relationship between homelessness and release from New York City's jails. CJA found that pretrial detention is associated with a **420% increased likelihood of becoming homeless**. This relationship is significant at the 0.5% level. It would be significant at any level.

Tossing men and women with serious medical problems out of jail and onto the streets without a place to live is cruel and heartless. The City's shelter system is enormous, but it is not equipped to care for seriously ill homeless persons leaving jail. The city's opportunity to provide supportive housing for these patients with complex medical needs is not optional. It is essential. These men and women have serious medical needs requiring supportive care which they will not receive if they do not have a place to live.

This program should be celebrated, and not subject to cost benefit analysis and scorn. It recognizes the needs of the surrounding Bronx communities by providing new low cost housing for local low income residents

The Just Home initiative which will provide housing and comprehensive services to homeless medically ill persons shouldn't be debated. Housing these homeless patients being released from the City's jails with serious medical needs is an opportunity which should be greeted with enthusiasm not scorn. New York is a great city because it cares. I am proud to live here for many reasons, and the Just Home initiative is one of them.

Thank you.

Robert L. Cohen, MD

September 18, 2025



**TESTIMONY OF
THE FORTUNE SOCIETY**

**THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
Committee on Land Use
Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Sitings and Dispositions**

City Hall,
New York, NY

September 18, 2025

SUBJECT: Land Use Application,
NYC Health & Hospitals/Jacobi Just Home, Bronx (G 230033 HHX)

PURPOSE: To seek approval for the Just Home permanent supportive
and affordable housing development.

Presented by

Stanley Richards
President and Chief Executive Officer

The Fortune Society
29-76 Northern Blvd.
LIC, NY 11101
212-691-7554

<http://www.fortunesociety.com>

Chair Hanks and members of the Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Sitings and Dispositions: thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony today. My name is Stanley Richards and I am the President and CEO of The Fortune Society, which has been my professional home for over 30 years. For 58 years, The Fortune Society has been committed to supporting people returning from incarceration and providing meaningful alternatives to incarceration. We make a lifetime commitment to the people that we serve and our work is deeply rooted in the belief that people can undergo transformation when given the right support. We have seen firsthand how comprehensive, community-based interventions, including supportive housing, can change lives, break cycles of incarceration, and create safer communities.

In Fiscal Year 2025, Fortune served over 18,000 individuals through our sixteen program areas, including Alternative to Incarceration and reentry programming, employment and education services, mental health and substance use treatment, and across our continuum of housing programs. We housed over 1200 people across our six different housing sites in Brooklyn, the Bronx, and Manhattan, offering a continuum of emergency, transitional, and permanent supportive housing.

At Fortune, we always say that we counterfear with facts. The fact is that providing formerly incarcerated people with supportive housing does not make our neighborhoods less safe; to the contrary, it makes us all safer. As former HUD Secretary Marcia Fudge said, denying housing to people with convictions “makes our communities less safe because providing returning citizens with housing helps them integrate and makes them less likely to reoffend.”¹ We know this from research² and we know this from our own decades of experience operating housing across New York City.

Over twenty-five years ago, when we purchased the property on West 140th Street that would become the Fortune Academy, we got into the business of developing housing because far too many of the people we served simply could not access it. Today, we are seeking your

¹ U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, Office of the Secretary. (2022, April 12). *Eliminating Barriers That May Unnecessarily Prevent Individuals with Criminal Histories from Participating in HUD Programs*. https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/Main/documents/Memo_on_Criminal_Records.pdf; see, e.g., Kimberly Burrowes, Can Housing Interventions Reduce Incarceration and Recidivism?, HOUSING MATTERS, AN URBAN INSTITUTE INITIATIVE (Feb. 27, 2019) available at [Can Housing Interventions Reduce Incarceration and Recidivism? | Housing Matters](#).

² See, e.g., Burrowes, K. (2019 Feb. 27). *Can Housing Initiatives Reduce Incarceration and Recidivism?*. Retrieved from [Can Housing Interventions Reduce Incarceration and Recidivism? | Housing Matters](#)

approval for Just Home to fill another gap, the lack of permanent supportive housing for people leaving incarceration with complex medical needs who would otherwise be homeless. Shelters are not equipped to manage the care of people who are managing late-stage cancer or who rely on assistive devices such as wheelchairs and oxygen tanks. Shelters also do not offer the full range of wraparound supports that we do, let alone the kinds of supports often needed by people who have experienced the trauma of incarceration. Just Home would prevent physically vulnerable individuals from entering our overburdened shelters, winding up on the streets, or languishing on Rikers Island simply because the court will not release them without a stable housing plan.

Just Home will be located on the campus of Jacobi Hospital. Just Home's permanent supportive housing residents will have on-site case management and care management. We will also offer on-site wraparound services as needed by the residents, which may include behavioral health treatment, recreational activities, and arts programming. In addition, Fortune case managers will coordinate their medical care in collaboration with Jacobi staff and other health care providers. As individually appropriate, and depending on their mobility, we will arrange transportation for them to access all of the programs and events in our main service center in Long Island City, as well as at other organizations. To ensure a safe environment for all residents, staff, and the community, we will follow the protocols we have successfully implemented for years in our other supportive housing locations. Those protocols include installing cameras throughout the common areas of the building and having residential aides on site, 24 hours/seven days a week. These staff members will conduct regular rounds as well as monitor the cameras, welcome guests, and support tenants.

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THE FORTUNE SOCIETY**

**THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
Committee on Land Use
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City Hall,
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SUBJECT: Land Use Application,
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PURPOSE: To seek approval for the Just Home permanent supportive
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Presented by

Stanley Richards
President and Chief Executive Officer

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⁷ Schneider, A. (2022, July 28). "Jacobi Hospital's 'Just Home' seeks to house formerly jailed with medical needs, but residents say 'criminals' not welcome." Bronx Times. Retrieved from [Jacobi Hospital's 'Just Home' seeks to house formerly jailed with medical needs, but residents say 'criminals' not welcome – Bronx Times](#); Schneider, A. (2022, Oct. 6). "Chaos ensues as CB11 Just Home public hearing leaves little room for disagreement." Bronx Times. Retrieved from [Chaos ensues as CB11 Just Home public hearing leaves little room for disagreement – Bronx Times](#).

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Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony today regarding Just Home. As a city, we have a duty to ensure that people who have been incarcerated and have complex medical needs do not languish in our jails or shelters, or on our streets, simply because they have nowhere else to go. As we say at Fortune, everyone deserves a home. This City Council upheld that belief in three ways in the recent past: by passing the Fair Chance for Housing Act with an overwhelming majority; by negotiating a budget that includes additional funding for the Justice Involved Supportive Housing program, after years of calling for it in the Preliminary Budget Response; and just this August, unanimously voting to pass Intro. 1100, which will expand access to supportive housing for homeless people leaving incarceration. We hope that you will continue on this path of ensuring access to safe and stable housing for some of our most vulnerable fellow New Yorkers by approving Just Home.

⁸ Letter from Manhattan CB 9 District Manager, August 8, 2022 (on file with The Fortune Society).

Just Home

G 250082 HHX

**Permanent, supportive housing for medically complex, homeless NYC
Health + Hospitals patients**

Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Sitings & Dispositions

Hon. Kamillah Hanks, Chair

September 18, 2025

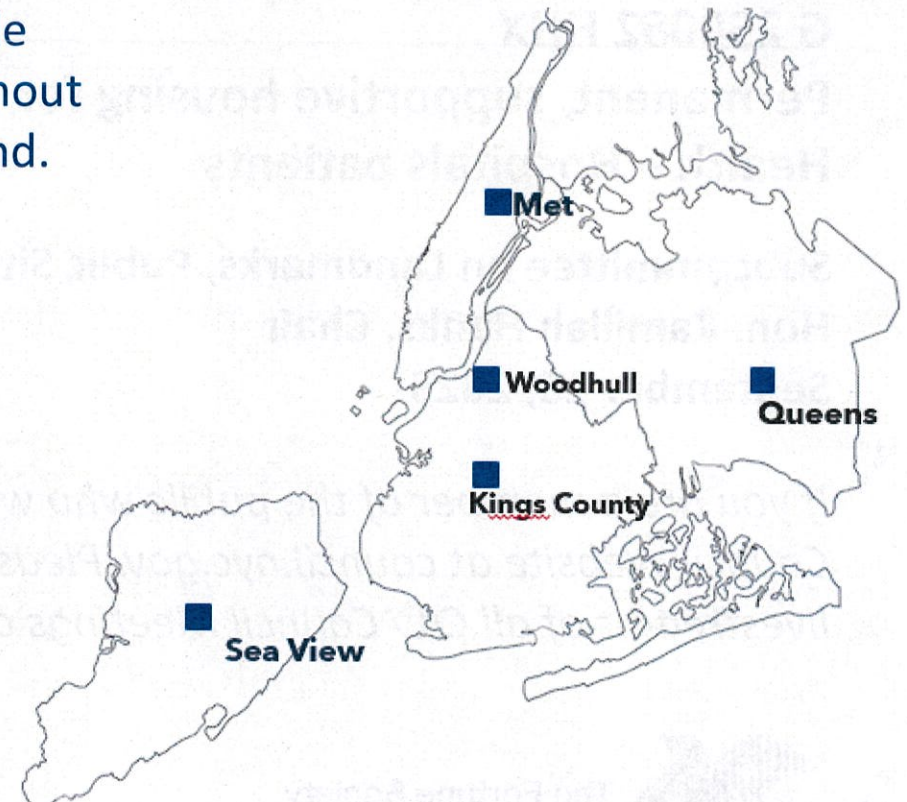
If you are a member of the public who wishes to testify, please register on the City Council Website at council.nyc.gov. Please visit the City Council Website to watch livestreams of all City Council Meetings and find recordings of previously held meetings.



The Fortune Society
BUILDING PEOPLE, NOT PRISONS

How NYC Health + Hospitals has supported the development of land on its properties

- There are more than 1,600 units of affordable and supportive housing on H+H land throughout Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens, & Staten Island.
- Housing for Health connects patients with housing supports and opportunities. The initiative has stably housed 1500 patient households.



NYC Health + Hospital land disposition authority

- NYC Health + Hospitals is a New York public benefit corporation formed in 1969 by New York State statute. The HHC Act that created NYC Health + Hospitals specifies how it is to make real estate dispositions.
 - The statute states, “no health facility or other real property acquired or constructed by the corporation shall be sold, leased or otherwise transferred by the corporation without public hearing by the corporation after twenty days public notice and without the consent of the board of estimate of the city.”
- HHC Act is a public and transparent process involving a public meeting and a vote of the City Council as well as the approval of the Mayor.

Project introduction

- **Development team:** The Fortune Society
- **Program:** Supportive Housing Loan Program (SHLP)
- **Location:** New York City Health + Hospitals/Jacobi
- **Proposed action:** Ground lease approval
- **Background:**
 - The Fortune Society applied to and was ultimately selected as part of HPD's 2013 Supportive Housing RFQ, which established a pre-qualified list of supportive housing developers.
 - HPD designated Fortune Society as sponsor for development of the project in July 2022.

The Fortune Society

- The Fortune Society was established in 1967 by David Rothenberg.
- Our mission is to support successful reentry from incarceration and promote alternatives to incarceration, thus strengthening the fabric of communities.
 - Comprised of 16 program areas, including housing, employment services, policy, and research
- Fortune served over 18,000 individuals in FY 2025.
- On any given night, more than 1,000 people are provided housing through Fortune's congregate and scattered-site housing programs.
- Our housing portfolio includes Castle Gardens.

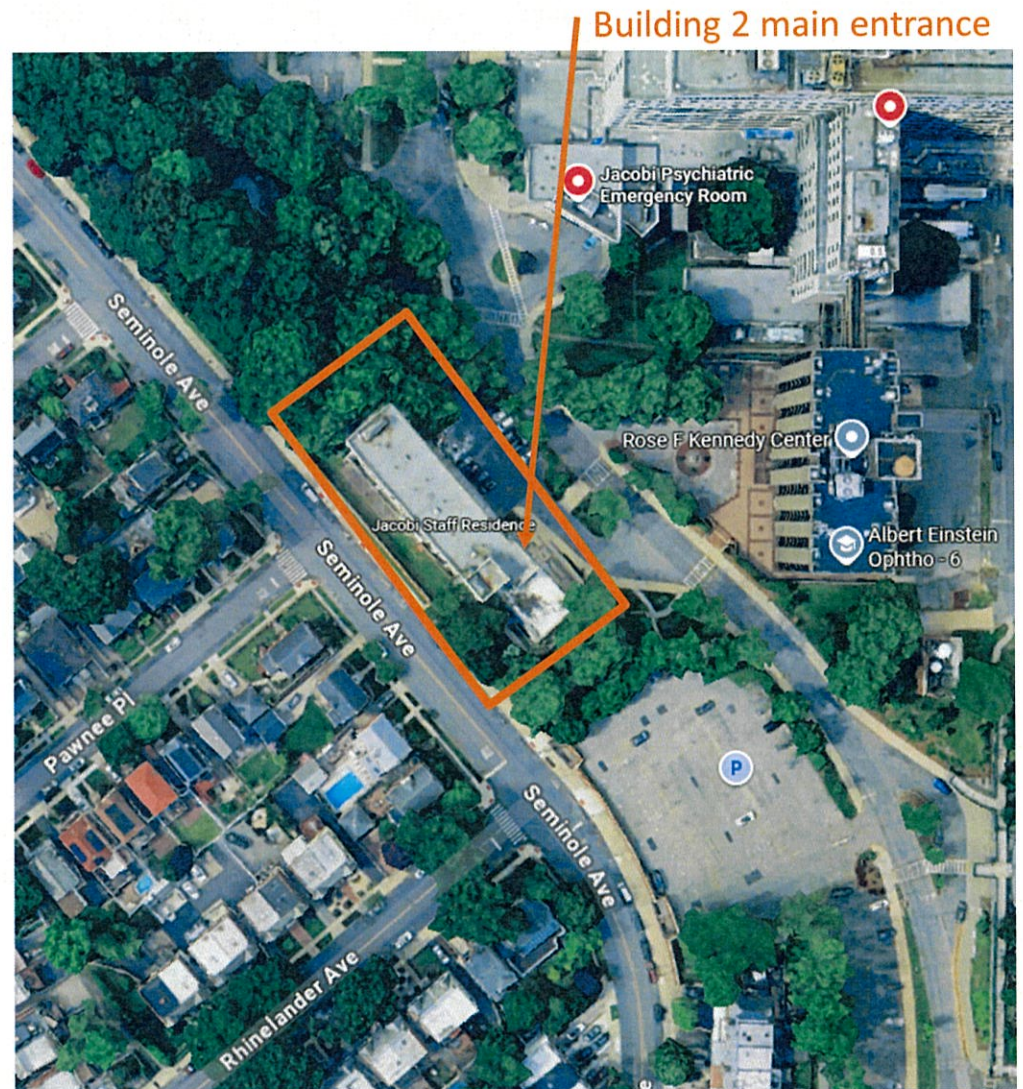
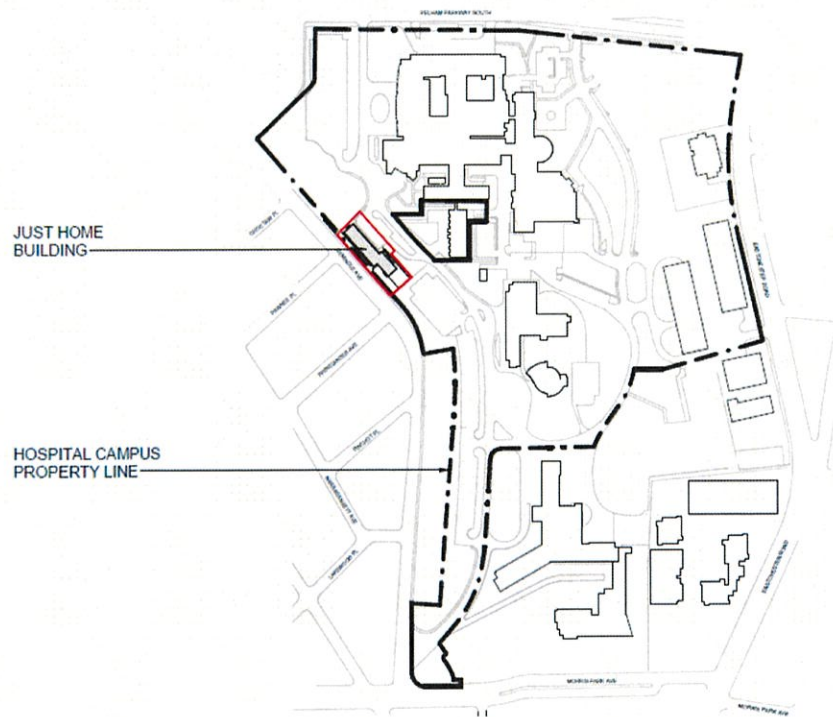
Fortune's Castle Gardens

- In 2010, Fortune opened Castle Gardens with:
 - 63 units of permanent supportive housing for homeless, justice-involved people; and
 - 50 units of permanent affordable housing for low-income community members.
- Of the 63 permanent supportive apartment units in Castle Gardens:
 - 82% of residents have remained housed for two years or more;
 - 69% of residents have remained housed for five years or more;
 - The average length of stay is 8 years.



Site location and context

- Morris Park neighborhood
- Community District 11, City Council District 13
- Building 2 on the Jacobi campus

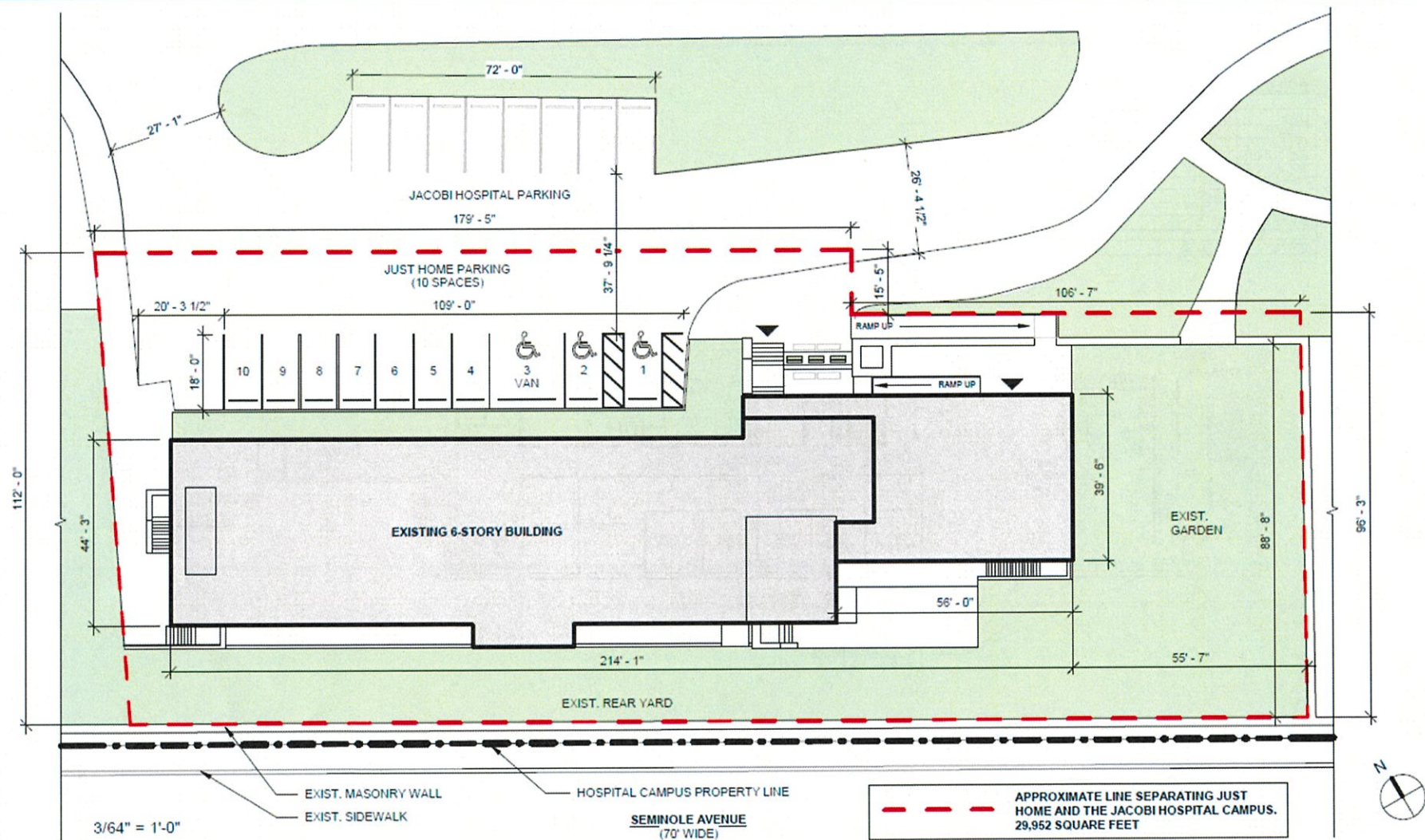


Project overview

- Just Home is an innovative housing initiative that will provide permanent housing and supportive, wrap-around services for carefully selected, medically complex New Yorkers.
- Just Home is a **100% affordable** housing development that will create 83 apartments on the H+H Jacobi campus financed under HPD's Supportive Housing Loan Program (SHLP):
 - 58 supportive studio units;
 - 24 affordable studio units, accessible through NYC Housing Connect, for New Yorkers who qualify by income, with preference given to local Community District residents;
 - Will serve households making up to 60% of Area Median Income (AMI)
 - 1 larger apartment for a live-in superintendent.
 - All tenants will have a rent-stabilized lease.



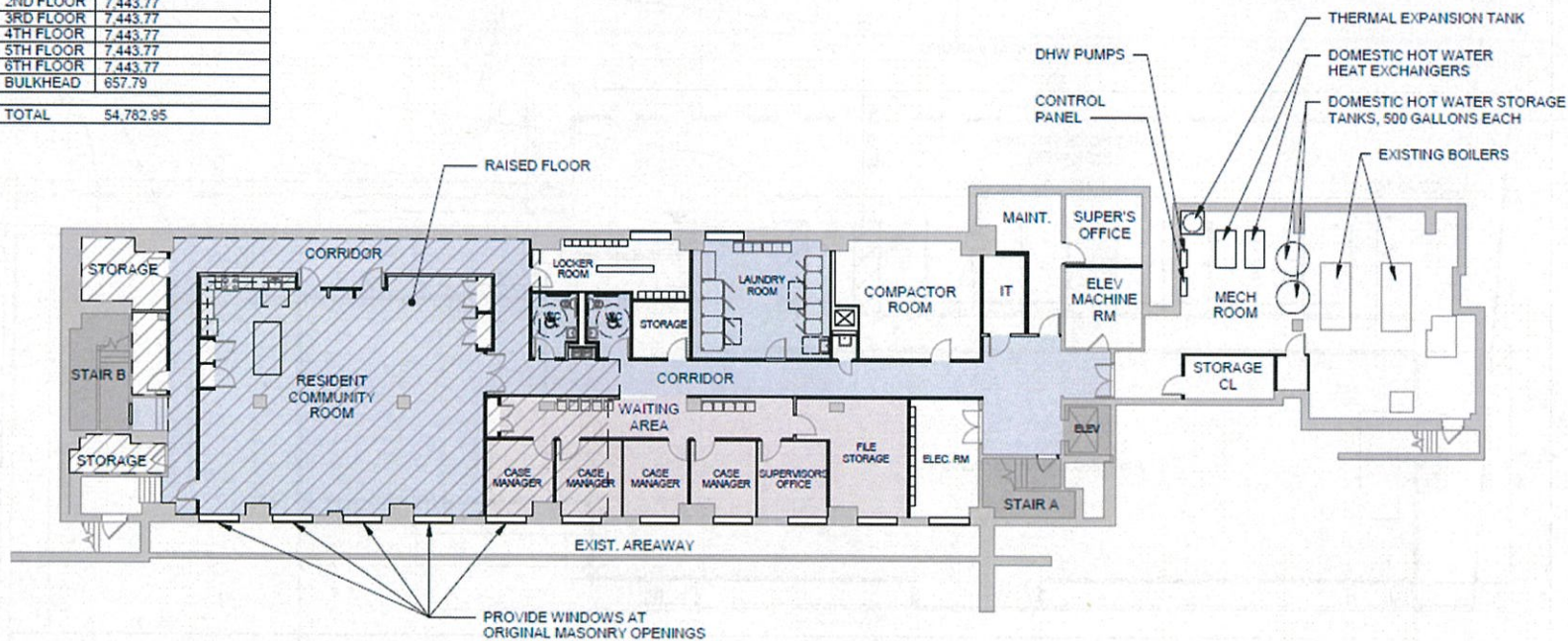
Site plan



Cellar plan

BUILDING GROSS AREA TABLE

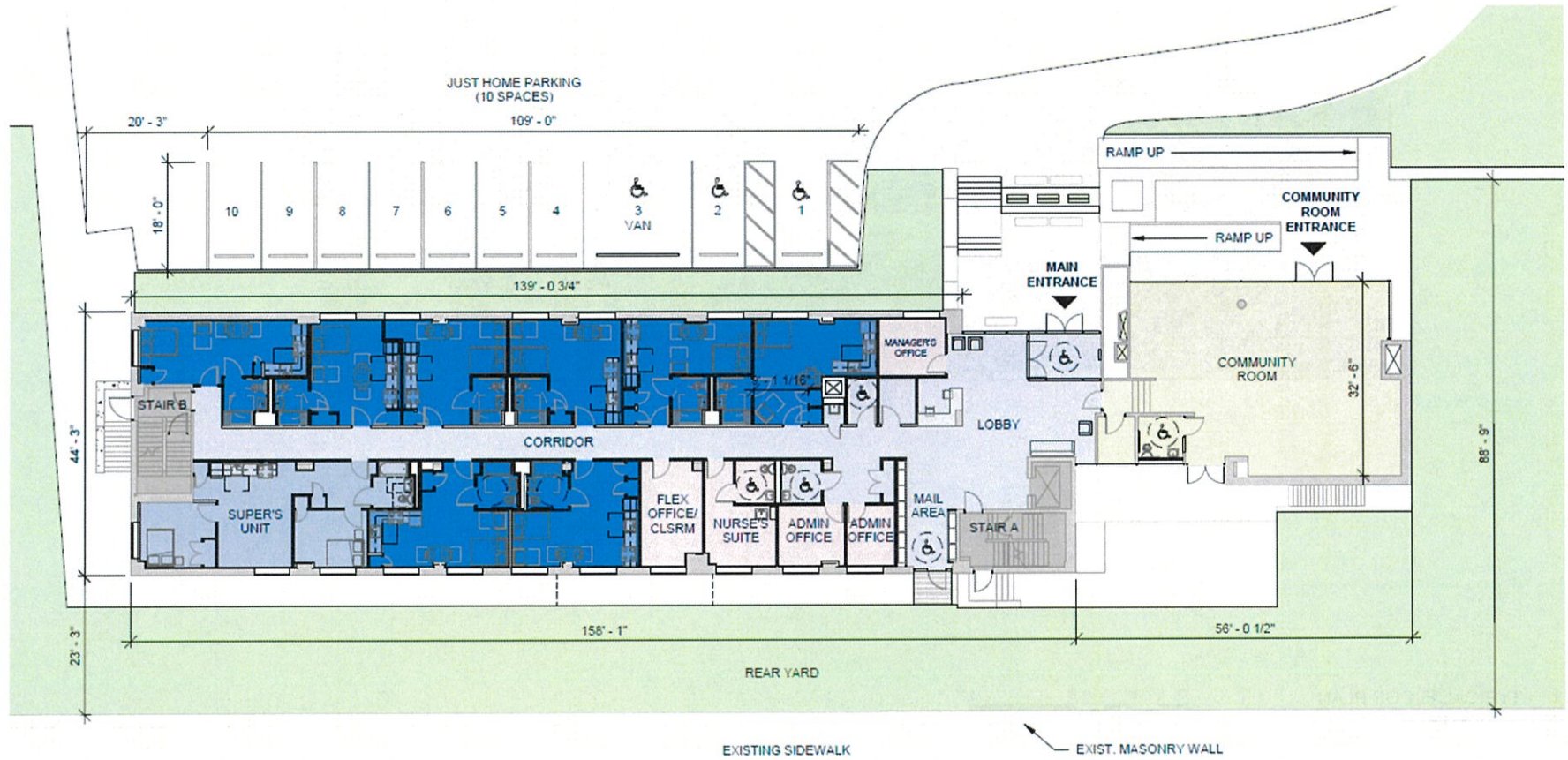
LEVEL	GROSS AREA (SQ. FT.)
CELLAR	8,845.37
1ST FLOOR	8,718.73
2ND FLOOR	7,443.77
3RD FLOOR	7,443.77
4TH FLOOR	7,443.77
5TH FLOOR	7,443.77
6TH FLOOR	7,443.77
BULKHEAD	657.79
TOTAL	54,782.95



1 CELLAR PLAN
03 1/16" = 1'-0"

0 8' 16' 32'

First floor plan



1 PROPOSED 1ST FLOOR PLAN
04 1/16" = 1'-0"

0 8' 16' 32'

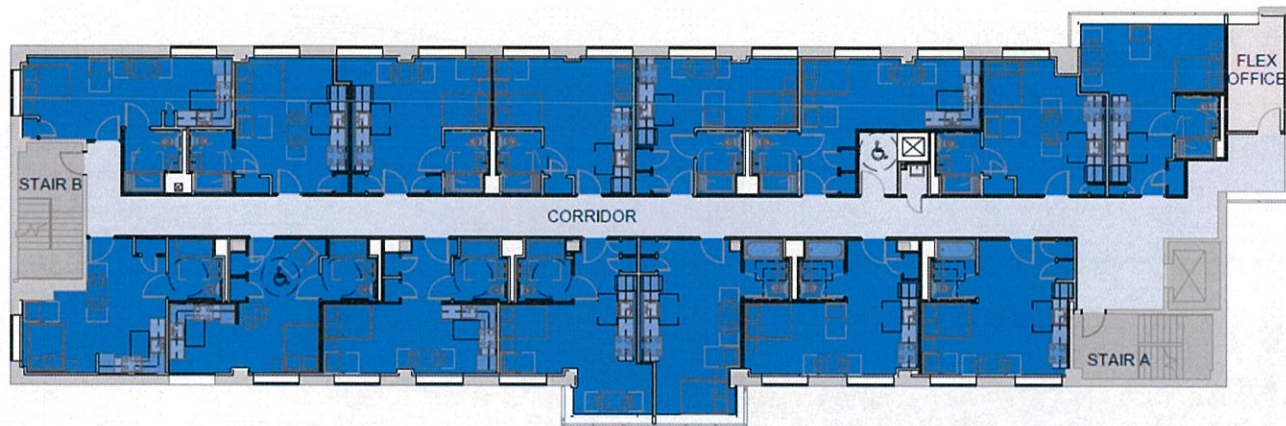
SEMINOLE AVENUE

04 | FIRST FLOOR PLAN

THE FORTUNE SOCIETY 2022.11 JUST HOME
© 2023 12/19/23



Floor plan



1
06 TYPICAL FLOOR PLAN
1/16" = 1'-0"

0 8' 16' 32'



06 | TYPICAL FLOOR PLAN (3-6)
THE FORTUNE SOCIETY 2022.11 JUST HOME
© 2023 12/19/23



Curtis +
Ginsberg
Architects

Just Home services program

- Tenants will have access to licensed clinical social workers, dedicated peer workers and specialists to provide intensive social services.
- Fortune will provide case management and counseling services.
- In addition, residents will have access to all of Fortune's services.
- Other programming includes:
 - Ongoing health assessment;
 - Benefits access support;
 - Care management to support residents in meeting their health needs; and
 - Assistance with activities of daily living, peer support, behavioral health support and transportation.

How Just Home supportive housing tenants will be selected and screened

We want the Just Home tenants to succeed in their new homes and will select individuals who are well-suited for this kind of housing. Selection and screening will entail three steps:

1. **CHS** will identify current patients with medical needs who would otherwise have nowhere to live after leaving jail and may be good candidates.
 - CHS clinicians will consider the patient's entire health profile, including the severity of their illness and their level of functional need.
 - Primary health conditions may include cancer, congestive heart failure, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, cirrhosis, and end-stage renal disease.
 - The majority of the medically complex CHS patients who will be considered for Just Home will be 55+.
 - Based on our last review of our medically complex patients who were homeless:
 - 88% had at least two chronic health conditions, and 36% had at least three chronic health conditions, including: recent/active cancer; heart-related disease; diabetes; Stage 3+ kidney disease;
 - 56% were 55+; and
 - 24% used a walker, cane or wheelchair.

How Just Home supportive housing tenants will be selected and screened

2. *Fortune will conduct its own tenant screening process.*

- Individuals assessed as posing a current risk of violence and individuals assessed as inappropriate for the independent, permanent housing model and level of services provided will not be accepted.
- Fortune will draw upon its decades of experience providing high-quality social services and housing in making these determinations.

3. *Prospective tenants will need to have been released by the **courts** back to the community in order to move into Just Home.*

- Neither CHS nor the Fortune Society will make the decision to release an individual from custody.
- Although potential Just Home tenants will complete the initial screening and application process while detained, they cannot be in custody at time of move-in.
- All referrals for placement will have had their open criminal cases adjudicated by the court and released to the community.



The gap Just Home fills in NYC's housing continuum

- There are New Yorkers experiencing homelessness whose medical conditions are so complex that they are unable to reside in shelters.
 - Shelters are not designed to support people who are managing late-stage cancer or need help dressing or showering.
 - Shelter placements are also more challenging for people who use wheelchairs, oxygen tanks, and other assistive devices.
 - As a result, many of these New Yorkers end up living on the street and/or cycling in and out of emergency departments, hospitals, or jails.
- People who are eligible for release from jail but are too medically complex for shelter may spend more time on Rikers solely because they do not have a stable housing plan for their release.

Questions

Appendix

Second floor plan



1 SECOND FLOOR PLAN
05 1/16" = 1'-0"

0 8' 16' 32'



The Fortune Society

05 | SECOND FLOOR PLAN

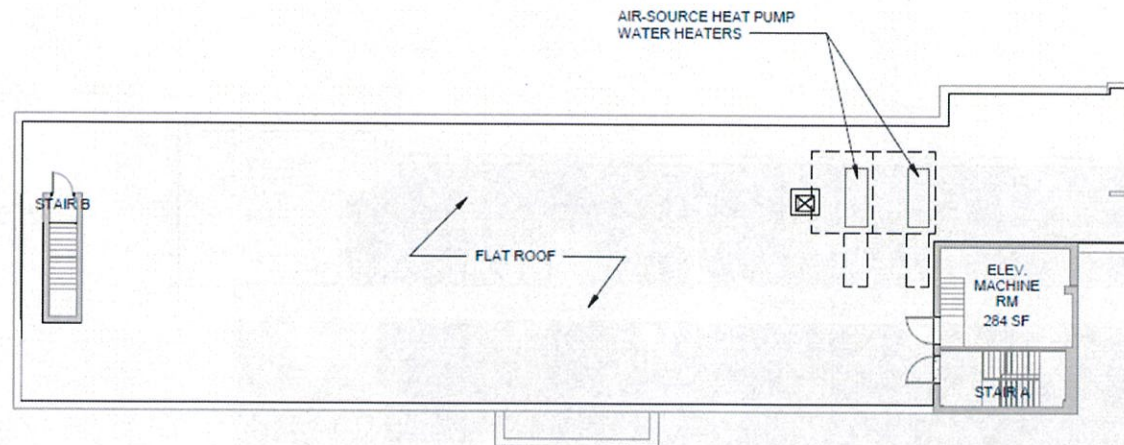
THE FORTUNE SOCIETY 2022.11 JUST HOME

© 2023 12/19/23



Curtis +
Ginsberg
Architects

Roof plan



1 ROOF PLAN
07 1/16" = 1'-0"

0 8' 16' 32'



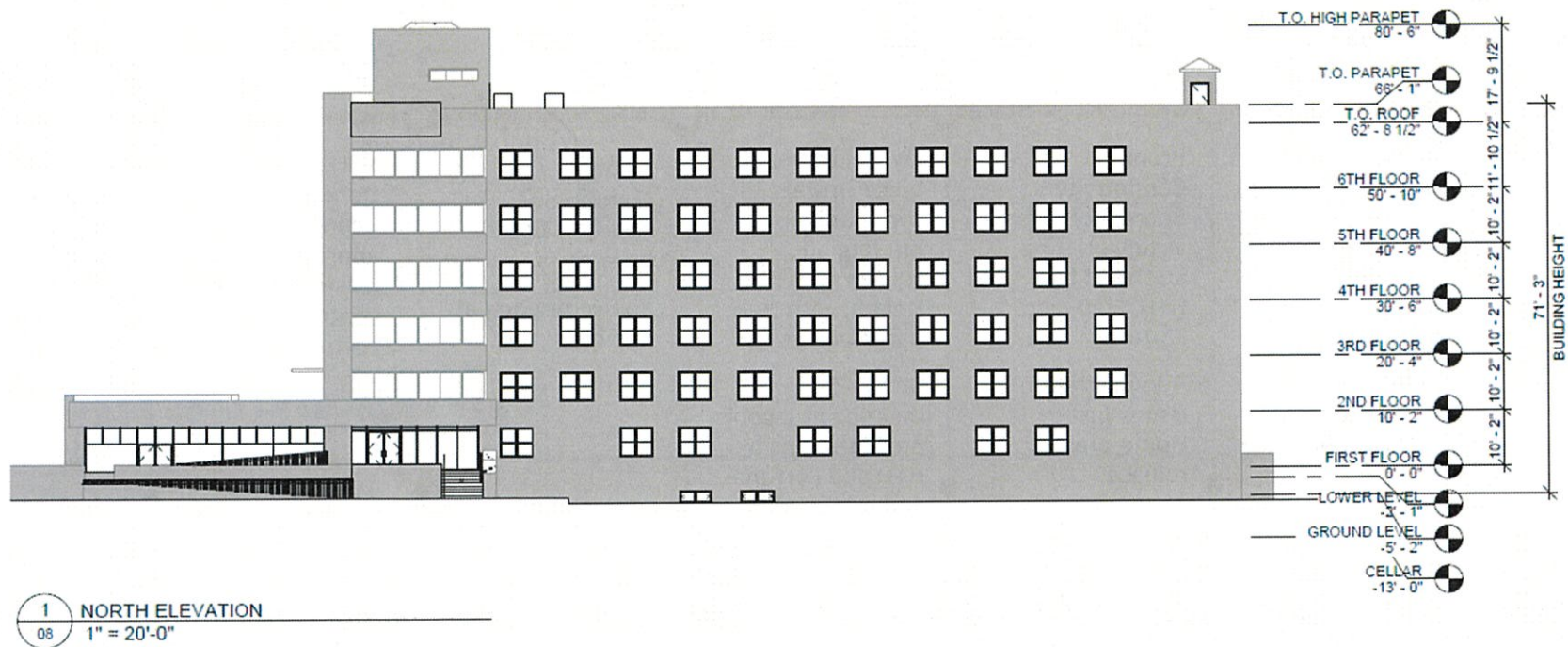
The Fortune Society

07 | ROOF PLAN
THE FORTUNE SOCIETY 2022.11 JUST HOME
© 2023 12/19/23



Curtis +
Ginsberg
Architects

Front elevation



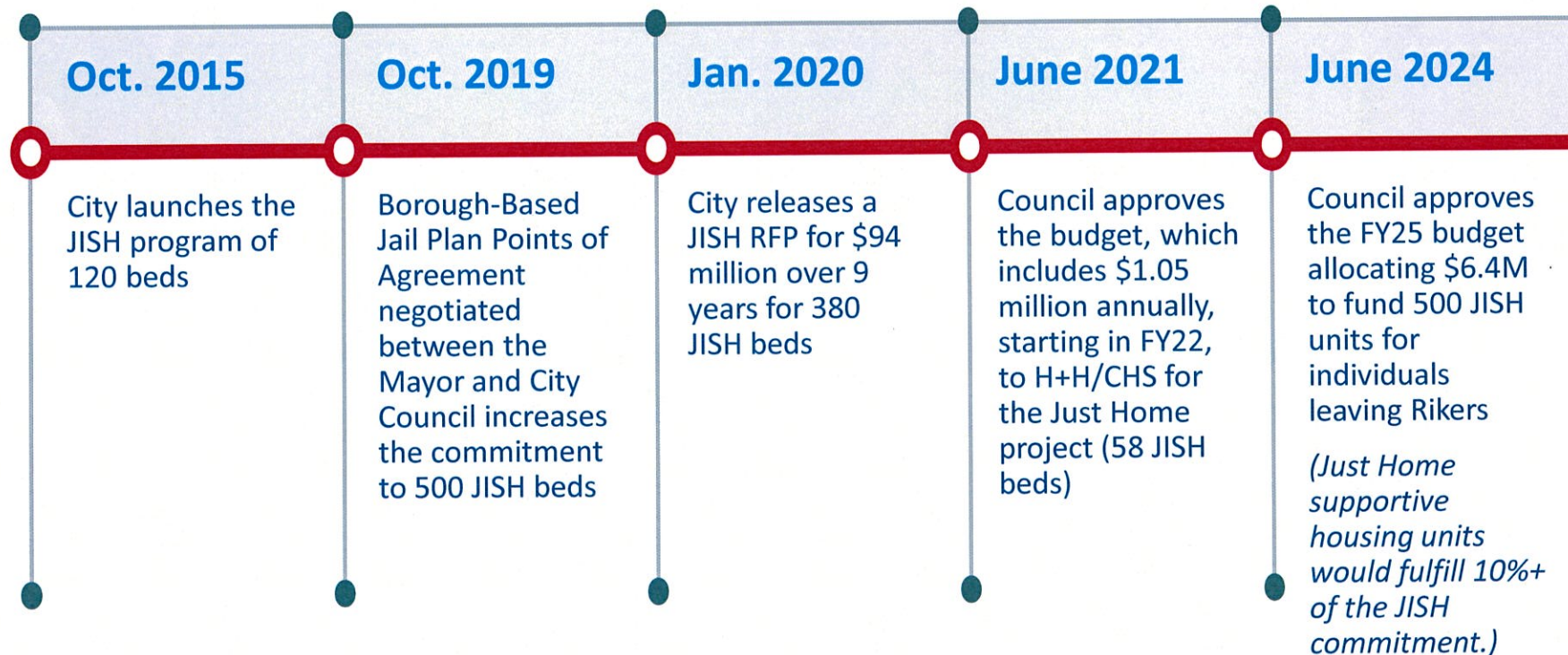
Timeline of Just Home public engagement events



* HPD selected Fortune from a pre-qualified list of non-profit developers who own and operate high-quality supportive housing.



Justice Involved Supportive Housing milestones



JUST HOME

NYC
HEALTH+
HOSPITALS
NYC
Department of
Housing Preservation
& Development



ABOUT JUST HOME

Just Home is an innovative housing initiative that will provide permanent housing and supportive, wrap-around services for medically complex, homeless New Yorkers after they leave jail. Just Home will create approximately 83 apartments on the Jacobi Hospital campus:

- 58 permanent, supportive studio units;
- 24 affordable studio units;
- A larger apartment for a live-in superintendent.

NYC Health + Hospitals, NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) and The Fortune Society will model Just Home after Fortune's Castle Gardens, which opened in 2010 and has become an integral and valued part of the West Harlem community. Castle Gardens is a state-of-the-art green building. 82% of Castle Gardens residents have remained housed for at least two years at Castle Gardens.

Just Home is not a homeless shelter or transitional housing. It is permanent, 100% affordable housing. Every tenant will receive a lease.

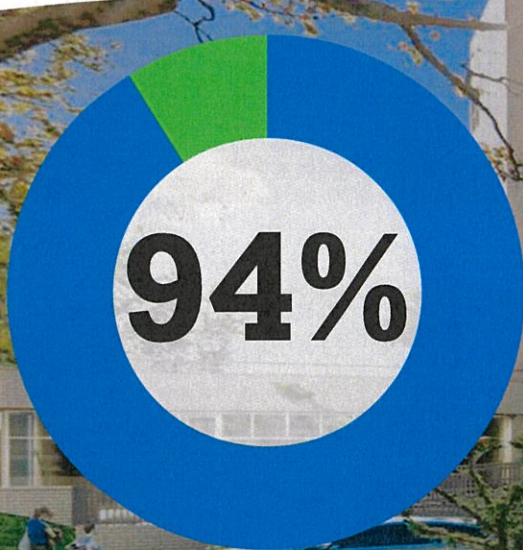
WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Qualifying residents of the 58 permanent, supportive units:

- Individuals released from city jails;
- And have complex medical needs, conditions such as congestive heart failure, stage-4 cancer, end-stage renal disease, oxygen dependence, need assistance with daily life activities and may be geriatric or non-ambulatory;
- And otherwise would experience homelessness and homeless shelters cannot meet their medical needs.

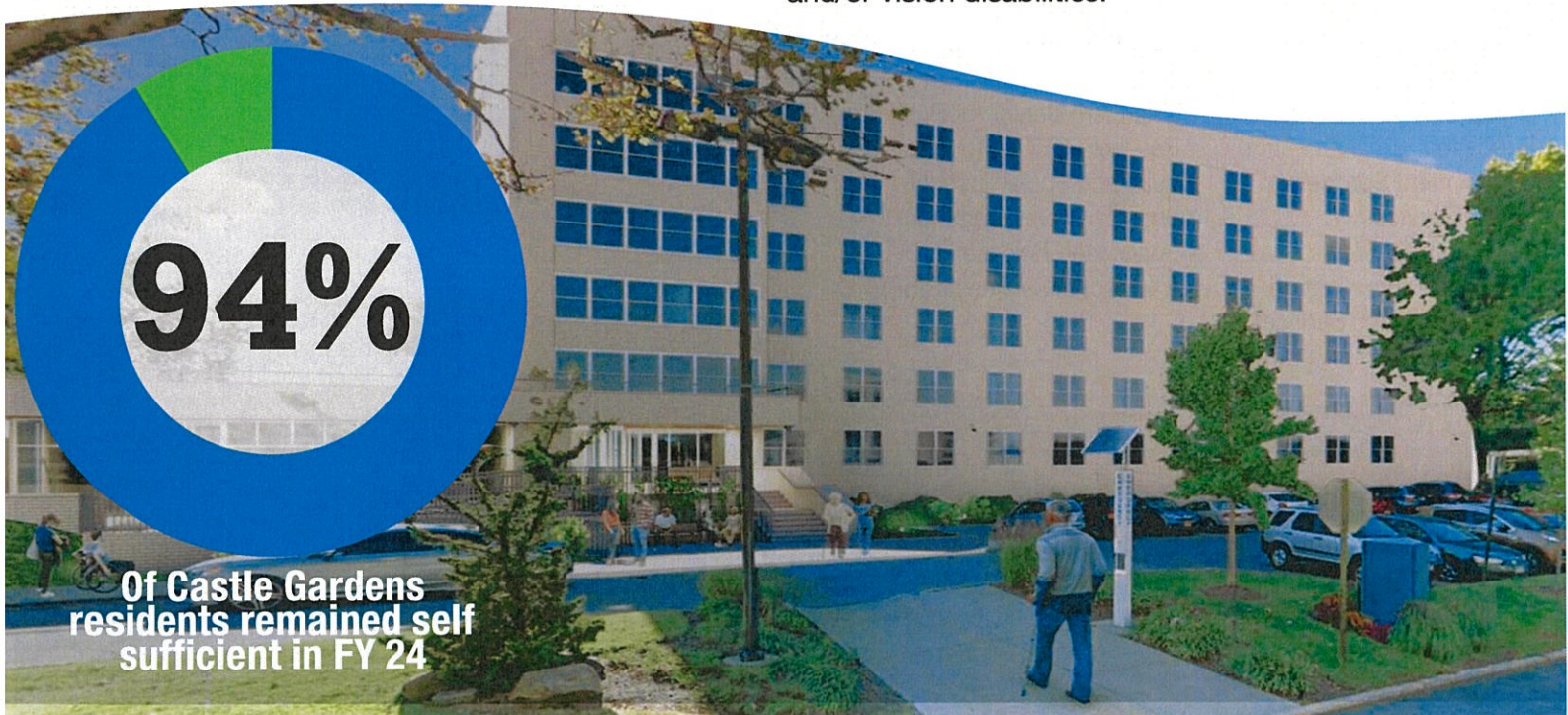
SELECTION PROCESS

- Correctional Health Services (CHS), a division of NYC Health + Hospitals and the direct provider of health care in the City's jails, will identify CHS patients eligible for Just Home based on their clinical needs.
- Only the courts can release someone from custody.
- Tenants in the supportive units will also undergo Fortune's rigorous tenant screening process before admittance to the building.
- The project will also create units for low-income New Yorkers. These will be rented through NYC Housing Connect. Current residents of Bronx Community Board 11 and NYC municipal employees will receive preference for these units, as will persons with mobility, hearing and/or vision disabilities.



94%

Of Castle Gardens
residents remained self
sufficient in FY 24





ON-SITE STAFF

- Case Managers
- Social Workers
- Peer Specialists
- Program Director
- Residential Aides

SECURITY

Just Home will have 24-hour desk coverage and security, including cameras in public spaces inside and outside of the building.

WHY THE JACOBI HOSPITAL CAMPUS LOCATION?

The location of Just Home on the Jacobi campus provides residents with close access to the health services at Jacobi Hospital and allows for close collaboration between Jacobi medical providers and Just Home case managers.

FORTUNE SERVICES

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| • Alternatives to Incarceration | • Housing Services |
| • Benefits Access | • Mental Health Services |
| • Creative Arts | • Peer Recovery Center (the NEST) |
| • Court Advocacy | • Policy & Advocacy (David Rothenberg Center for Public Policy) |
| • Digital Equity | • Research (Center for Research, Inquiry and Social Justice) |
| • Education | • Substance Use Treatment |
| • Employment Services | • Supervised Release |
| • Family Services | • Transitional Services (RISE) |
| • Food and Nutrition | |
| • Healthcare Coordination | |
| • HIV/AIDS Health Services | |

WHY IS JUST HOME NEEDED?

- The residents of Just Home need to be near critical medical care.
- People in supportive housing have fewer interactions with the criminal justice system.
- Supportive housing reduces the use of expensive crisis services, like emergency room visits.



THE FORTUNE SOCIETY'S MISSION is to support successful reentry from incarceration and promote alternatives to incarceration, thus strengthening the fabric of our communities.

CONTACT

STOP BY OUR MAIN SERVICE CENTER: 29-76 Northern Boulevard, Long Island City, NY 11101

CALL: 212.691.7554

EMAIL: info@fortunesociety.org



The Fortune Society
BUILDING PEOPLE, NOT PRISONS



CASTLE GARDENS

The Fortune Society's mission is to support successful reentry from incarceration and promote alternatives to incarceration, thus strengthening the fabric of our communities.

Castle Gardens is Fortune's first permanent supportive and affordable housing building, opened in 2010. It has won numerous awards including the Downstate Project of the Year Award and has been replicated in Syracuse as Freedom Commons through Fortune technical assistance. Most recently, Castle Gardens has been the model used for our newly-opened senior housing community, as well as three buildings that are forthcoming in Fortune's housing development pipeline.

AT A GLANCE: FISCAL YEAR 2024

Castle Gardens is a mixed-use, supportive and affordable residential development and service center in an environmentally sustainable building. It provides 63 permanent supportive apartments for homeless justice-involved individuals and their families, 1 superintendent's apartment, and 50 permanent affordable apartments for low-income individuals and their families from the community.

Of the 63 permanent supportive apartment units...



82%

of residents remained housed
2 years or more



69%

of residents remained housed
5 years or more

94%

of residents who remained self
sufficient

8 years

average length of stay at
Castle Gardens



[EXTERNAL] Just Home testimony

From Daniel Chandross [REDACTED]
Date Thu 9/18/2025 1:38 PM
To Land Use Testimony <landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov>

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I wasn't able to make it in person to testify, but please see what I would have said below. Thanks so much for listening to the community.

My name is Daniel, and a close family member of mine lives in the bronx in a situation that, would have benefited tremendously from supportive housing similar to the Just Home project. These projects have the capability to radically change people's lives, and it's ensure no one in our new york city community is left behind. In a moment when an estimated 350,000 New Yorkers are experiencing homelessness, we cannot afford to say no to the opportunity to provide permanent affordable housing in our community. Between 2014 and 2023, this Council district was in the bottom quarter for affordable housing production compared to other districts. Every single new yorker has an obligation to ensure no one is left behind.

Just like any other neighbors, the future residents of Just Home can make the neighborhood a friendlier and safer place, building community through daily interactions and patronizing local businesses. When we welcome everyone with warmth and empathy, we help build the strong community bonds that keep us all safe.

I strongly urge you to approve this project, to make sure everyone has a [Just] Home.
Thanks so much.
-Daniel Chandross

New York City Council
250 Broadway
New York, NY 10007

September 4, 2025

Re: September 18, 2025- Subcommittee on Landmarks Public Sitings and Dispositions-Hearing
on NYC Health and Hospitals Jacobi Just Home

To Whom it may concern:

I, Danielle Aprea, resident of the Morris Park area and residing at [REDACTED] Bronx, New York 10462, would like to give written testimony against the Just Home potential site at Jacobi Hospital. The Morris Park community has been misled and lied to about the Just Homes program at Jacobi Hospital. It was first stated that this site would be for "critically ill former incarcerated" individuals but now it has been changed to "medically complex pretrial detainees". This is unacceptable in an area with five schools and three parks within a one-mile radius. The community would like to see housing for senior citizens, staff and veterans established in the area instead. We need to help build up our community not bring it down with problematic issues and people that do not contribute to our community's well-being. The Bronx is not a dumping ground for the city's unresolved issues and problems. Please listen to your constituents and voters because we will continue to voice our concerns and vote out individuals that do not have [REDACTED] needs of our community in mind.

Thank you.

Danielle Aprea

Danielle [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Bronx, NY [REDACTED]

My name is Diana Finch. I speak in support of Just Home.

I am a 33-year resident of the same Community Board district and police precinct as Just Home - Bronx CB11, and the 49.

I testify as an individual resident of these areas, not on behalf of any group or organization

I first heard of Just Home in a early summer meeting of local community leaders (I am president of the Bronx Park East Community Association), where we were given a draft from Jacobi's Community Advisory Board. Contrary to rumor, these early plans were not leaked, either to the CAB or to our community task force, they were directly distributed. The Just Home plan seemed a good idea: affordable, supportive, permanent housing in studio apartments for a vulnerable population, that served Correctional Health's mandate: to arrange safe re-entry for people with serious health needs and no homes to return to.

The next thing I knew there was strident opposition, concentrated from one pocket of the district- well-to-do homeowners in the leafy Indian Village neighborhood by Jacobi. The Morris Park Community Association, led by president Al D'Angelo, called a public meeting. Out of curiosity, I went. I was shocked. A restive crowd packed the banquet hall. As soon as hospital officials and elected representatives started speaking, they were interrupted by yells and boos, every statement they made challenged.

Then Community Board 11 stepped in with a public hearing as part of their review, to be held in an auditorium at Jacobi, in hopes of a far more orderly atmosphere. But just 5 minutes in, the first shout interrupted the speaker, and things went downhill from there, with the presiding Community Board 11 Vice Chair - Morris Park Community Association president Al D'Angelo - assuming command of the meeting but unable or unwilling to keep control, allowing one particularly accusatory speaker to go on for nearly 20 minutes, making wild claims about a landlord-tenant dispute in which he'd rented to a Fortune Society client, while speakers in favor - including myself - were cursed at, threatened, and shouted down. Some of the opponents walked out, others - including several who testified Thursday at the Council hearing - stayed to continue shouting and booing, until the meeting was abruptly shut down. Hospital police insisted on escorting speakers in favor off the campus for their safety. Video of the chaos went viral.

I should not have been shocked. Morris Park has a regrettable history of opposing people "not like us": In 1984, a local broker and the Morris Park Community Association, which then ran a housing referral service, reached agreement with the State Attorney. They'd stop keeping Blacks and Hispanics from moving in, settle lawsuits over racial steering and racial discrimination that had violated city, state, federal housing law.

Ethics complaints, including mine, were filed with the Community Board over the conduct of their public hearing. Months later and after tense discussions, the Board voted unanimously to apologize for the lack of enforcement of their code of conduct at the hearing.

The vitriol spread to local Facebook groups, in posts and comments rife with exaggeration, fear-mongering and lies. Just Home residents were called "Rikers inmates", their permanent housing "a shelter", the "medically complex" designation endlessly attacked with constant claims that it allowed residents to include mentally ill pedophiles, violent thieves sure to terrorize hospital staff and roam nearby streets, stalking young girls and grandmothers.

The cruel ironies abound. Three close friends and neighbors of Councilmember Marmorato - Patti Marinello, Gina Velella Caliendo, and Lisa Velella DiTomasso - who railed against Just Home and its supporters online and testified repeatedly about their fears, are the daughters of the well-liked Republican State Senator Guy Velella, who endured a similar situation to the one Just Home will address: Sick with cancer in his early 60s, he received a controversial early release from Rikers - but unlike the Just Home clients his daughters disparage, he had a family and comfortable home, right across the street from Jacobi, to return to. Why deny carefully selected seniors with serious health conditions, just like former State Senator and Bronx Republican Party Chair Velella, a far more modest option and the same compassion?

Both Health & Hospitals and Fortune Society executives and spokespeople seemed to grow circumspect in their communications with the community - understandably, in my opinion, after current CEO Stanley Richards was publicly called an "animal", and elected officials, including Councilmember Marmorato and Borough President Gibson, failed to take charge of the conversation or correct the vociferous claims of anti-Just Home critics - a small clique of privileged people long used to having an outsized say in local governance.

As a community leader, I requested of Correctional Health at Jacobi that they consider establishing the Just Home Community Advisory Board well ahead of Just Home's opening, during the review period. They indicated a

willingness to do this - but not with the involvement of any of the ill-behaved ringleaders of the opposition. As these included longtime members of the local precinct council and community board, entrenched leaders of local neighborhood organizations, individuals accustomed to having a dominant voice in community affairs, the preliminary CAB idea was abandoned.

The small but highly vocal group opposed to Just Home have continued to point to the lack of an equally vocal group of proponents from the area as proof that the community agrees with them. This is far from true, however. The majority of residents I know realize that formerly incarcerated people live throughout the community, largely without any problems with their neighbors. There is a similar kind of residence just a couple of blocks from me, on Bronx Park East just south of Waring Ave, around the corner from the elementary school and across from a park playground, and has led to no problems at the school or playground. Most people just don't see the Just Home project as a big deal - on the Jacobi campus, in an existing building, walled off from the surrounding neighborhood, a supportive sanctuary for the seriously ill, mostly older, low-income. Most people also understand the great need - every so often, community members reach out to our Bronx Park East Community Association membership so ask for help locating housing for family members recently released from incarceration.

Local Republican and conservative Democratic candidates - three of whom testified against Just Home at the City Council hearing - ran and are again running for office on anti-Just Home platforms. Councilmember Marmorato is the only one to win so far, focusing fear on 58 future Just Home constituents out of the 168,000 she represents.

Health and housing are human rights. Health & Hospitals approved the ground lease for Just Home. I urge the City Council – and the Mayor, who spoke so forcefully in favor at his summer 2024 Morris Park area Town Hall - to urgently and fully support our public health system and Correctional Health's mandate to care for the most vulnerable among us, and approve as well.

Thank you.



[EXTERNAL] Just Home Project

From efrain gonzalez [REDACTED]
Date Sun 9/21/2025 9:12 PM
To Land Use Testimony <landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov>

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My name is Efrain Gonzalez III and I live in Westchester Square, and work in Morris Park at Einstien Hospital. I am against the Just Home Project going to Building 2 on the Jacobi Medical Center.

The project is not something that is need in the Indian Village, and Morris Park vicinity, that would house pre-trial detainees, and released inmates from Rikers Island. There are reasons why it will not be a good location.

There was talk about having those with medically complex conditions, but in reality those who are being considered are able to just access the hospital for treatment via the emergency department, and clinical care that is available to the public.

Having unsupervised tenants is also a problem that would require armed guards, or police officers to enforce safety on the campus, as HHC Police are not armed. This has to be addressed since the 49th Precinct does not have the personnel to provide a detail for that operation currently, with the needs of the entire precinct covering their various sectors.

What I do see that is needed is a need for senior housing, to include veterans who are seniors to have housing units to live in. Many are in large apartments living by themselves, and those properties are not suitable anymore for them. That building could also provide services for geriatric care, and services for others like veterans services, and possibly for female veterans for care too, to include gym services.

The impact on Morris Park would be significant if the project is allowed, and it's just not a good area for unsupervised pre-trial detainees, and released inmates to be around. There are schools close to the location, and the students safety would be at risk.

A location near Lincoln Hospital is probably better for them. Since it is in close proximity to the Bronx Probation Office, and even the Fortune Society has a center on East 163rd Street, a few bus stops away. Even if they need to access Manhattan for their probation appointments, the subway is a short distance away.

The senior and veterans who are from the vicinity of Jacobi are the ones who know the community, and Jacobi best. Since 1955 many have utilized that facility, including the hospital that I work in. This is why I ask the committee and entire NYC Council to not approve the Just Home Project at the Jacobi Medical Center grounds.

Efrain Gonzalez III

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)



[EXTERNAL] Just Home Proposal

From LUIGI CIOFFI [REDACTED]

Date Thu 9/18/2025 8:04 PM

To Land Use Testimony <landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov>

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I am a resident in the neighborhood and I would vote against the just Home proposal. This is a residential area with young families and schools, and this proposal should be denied

Elisa Cioffi

Sent from my iPhone



Outlook

[EXTERNAL] Please Approve the Just Home Project at Jacobi Hospital

From Emily Smith **Date** Wed 9/17/2025 11:47 PM**To** Land Use Testimony <landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. Report suspected phishing emails with the Phish Alert Button or forward them to phish@oti.nyc.gov as an attachment.

I am writing to respectfully urge you to approve the Just Home project at Jacobi Hospital.

Please approve this project to create a healthier, safer, and more compassionate city.

Sincerely,

Emily Smith

NYC resident

Dear City Council Land Use Committee,

My name is Evan Woo, and I am a medical student at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, located just a short walk from Jacobi Hospital. In my training, I see every day how deeply health and housing are connected and how much our patients' well-being depends on having a safe, stable place to live.

I strongly support the Just Home project because it reflects the values of dignity, safety, and health that we should be advancing as a city. Every individual in our neighborhood deserves to be treated with respect. In a moment when an estimated 350,000 New Yorkers are experiencing homelessness, we cannot afford to turn down an opportunity to create permanent, affordable, supportive housing in our community.

As a future physician, I am particularly moved by the health impact this project will have. Jacobi and NYC Health + Hospitals have identified dozens of patients each year with significant medical needs such as advanced cancer, end-stage kidney disease, and severe heart failure, who are released from Rikers with nowhere to go. Managing these kinds of illnesses is nearly impossible without a stable place to live. Just Home will provide that stability, saving lives and improving health outcomes, while also reducing reliance on expensive emergency care and hospitalizations.

This project also makes our neighborhood safer. Research is clear: when justice-involved individuals have access to stable housing and supportive services, they are far less likely to reoffend. The Fortune Society has demonstrated across the city that housing programs like this not only support residents but also strengthen the neighborhoods around them. Past incarceration does not predict what kind of neighbor a person will be, and meeting people's basic needs makes all of us safer.

Ultimately, Just Home is about building the kind of Bronx community we want to live in: one rooted in compassion, dignity, and health. I urge the Committee to support this project.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Evan Woo (*he/him*)

Medical Student, Albert Einstein College of Medicine



**TESTIMONY OF
THE FORTUNE SOCIETY**

**THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL
Committee on Land Use
Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Sitings and Disposition**

City Hall,
New York, NY

September 18, 2025

SUBJECT: Land Use Application,
NYC Health & Hospitals/Jacobi Just Home, Bronx (G 230033 HHX)

PURPOSE: To seek approval for the Just Home permanent supportive
and affordable housing development.

Presented by

Stanley Richards
President and Chief Executive Officer

The Fortune Society
29-76 Northern Blvd.
LIC, NY 11101
212-691-7554

<http://www.fortunesociety.com>

Chair Hanks and members of the Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Sitings and Dispositions: thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony today. My name is Stanley Richards and I am the President and CEO of The Fortune Society, which has been my professional home for over 30 years. For 58 years, The Fortune Society has been committed to supporting people returning from incarceration and providing meaningful alternatives to incarceration. We make a lifetime commitment to the people that we serve and our work is deeply rooted in the belief that people can undergo transformation when given the right support. We have seen firsthand how comprehensive, community-based interventions, including supportive housing, can change lives, break cycles of incarceration, and create safer communities.

In Fiscal Year 2025, Fortune served over 18,000 individuals through our sixteen program areas, including Alternative to Incarceration and reentry programming, employment and education services, mental health and substance use treatment, and across our continuum of housing programs. We housed over 1200 people across our six different housing sites in Brooklyn, the Bronx, and Manhattan, offering a continuum of emergency, transitional, and permanent supportive housing.

At Fortune, we always say that we counterfear with facts. The fact is that providing formerly incarcerated people with supportive housing does not make our neighborhoods less safe; to the contrary, it makes us all safer. As former HUD Secretary Marcia Fudge said, denying housing to people with convictions “makes our communities less safe because providing returning citizens with housing helps them integrate and makes them less likely to reoffend.”¹ We know this from research² and we know this from our own decades of experience operating housing across New York City.

Over twenty-five years ago, when we purchased the property on West 140th Street that would become the Fortune Academy, we got into the business of developing housing because far

¹ U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development, Office of the Secretary. (2022, April 12). *Eliminating Barriers That May Unnecessarily Prevent Individuals with Criminal Histories from Participating in HUD Programs*. https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/Main/documents/Memo_on_Criminal_Records.pdf; see, e.g., Kimberly Burrowes, Can Housing Interventions Reduce Incarceration and Recidivism?, HOUSING MATTERS, AN URBAN INSTITUTE INITIATIVE (Feb. 27, 2019) available at [Can Housing Interventions Reduce Incarceration and Recidivism? | Housing Matters](#).

² See, e.g., Burrowes, K. (2019 Feb. 27). *Can Housing Initiatives Reduce Incarceration and Recidivism?*. Retrieved from [Can Housing Interventions Reduce Incarceration and Recidivism? | Housing Matters](#)

too many of the people we served simply could not access it. Today, we are seeking your approval for Just Home to fill another gap, the lack of permanent supportive housing for people leaving incarceration with complex medical needs who would otherwise be homeless. Shelters are not equipped to manage the care of people who are managing late-stage cancer or who rely on assistive devices such as wheelchairs and oxygen tanks. Shelters also do not offer the full range of wraparound supports that we do, let alone the kinds of supports often needed by people who have experienced the trauma of incarceration. Just Home would prevent physically vulnerable individuals from entering our overburdened shelters, winding up on the streets, or languishing on Rikers Island simply because the court will not release them without a stable housing plan.

Just Home will be located on the campus of Jacobi Hospital. Just Home's permanent supportive housing residents will have on-site case management and care management. We will also offer on-site wraparound services as needed by the residents, which may include behavioral health treatment, recreational activities, and arts programming. In addition, Fortune case managers will coordinate their medical care in collaboration with Jacobi staff and other health care providers. As individually appropriate, and depending on their mobility, we will arrange transportation for them to access all of the programs and events in our main service center in Long Island City, as well as at other organizations. To ensure a safe environment for all residents, staff, and the community, we will follow the protocols we have successfully implemented for years in our other supportive housing locations. Those protocols include installing cameras throughout the common areas of the building and having residential aides on site, 24 hours/seven days a week. These staff members will conduct regular rounds as well as monitor the cameras, welcome guests, and support tenants.

While Just Home would be the first program of its kind in New York City, successfully operating this kind of housing is not new to Fortune. Just Home will offer a mix of affordable housing and permanent supportive housing, just like Castle Gardens in West Harlem, which we opened in 2010 and which includes 50 units of affordable housing and 63 units of permanent supportive housing. Because of our success in developing and operating Castle Gardens, we were granted state funding to provide technical assistance to our sister organization, the Center

for Community Alternatives, in replicating the Castle Gardens model in Syracuse in partnership with the Syracuse Public Housing Authority.³

I am very proud to say that Fortune has received national, and international, recognition for our expertise in developing and safely operating housing for people in reentry. Former HUD Secretary Marcia Fudge chose Castle Gardens as the location for her April 2023 announcement, in honor of Fair Housing Month, that HUD would seek to implement new rules easing access to housing for people with convictions.⁴ We have hosted visitors to the Academy and Castle Gardens from all over the country who are interested in developing supportive housing for people returning from incarceration, including Colorado, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, New Orleans and Virginia, as well as from the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Jamaica, Denmark, Japan and Turkey. We have also offered national trainings on reentry housing development and recently co-authored the Housing as a Pathway to Justice National Toolkit with Enterprise Community Partners, published in July of ⁵.⁵

Just Home is based on the Castle Gardens model of providing a mix of affordable and permanent supportive housing, and service center space, under one roof. Castle Gardens is proof of concept that people who have been incarcerated can and do make excellent neighbors. Our residents are a stable part of the West Harlem community. The average length of stay of our residents is a little over nine years. People have raised their children in Castle Gardens. One of the best testaments to the stable and healing environment we foster in Castle Gardens comes from Nemiah, the adult daughter of one of our longest residents who has lived with us for fifteen years. Nemiah and her mother Barbara moved into Castle Gardens the same year that it opened, in 2010. Nemiah said when she and her mom moved in, “it felt like we joined a family.”⁶ Nemiah was part of our Garden Club, right alongside her mom who still gardens on the rooftop. She developed a passion for cooking which ultimately led her to successfully pursue a Baking and Pastry Arts degree from SUNY Delhi. Fortune staff helped her purchase her chef coat and

³ Senator Rachel May Helps Secure Nearly Half a Million Dollars in Funds for Several Central York Organizations and Programs (2022, June 13). The New York State Senate. Retrieved from [Senator Rachel May Helps to Secure Nearly Half a Million Dollars in Funds for Several Central New York Organizations and Programs | NYSenate.gov](https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2022/10000)

⁴ Turner, T. (2023, April 26). “HUD Rule Changes Will Ease Housing Barriers for Tenants with Criminal History, Officials Say.” City Limits. Retrieved from [HUD Rule Changes Will Ease Housing Barriers for Tenants with Criminal History, Officials Say - City Limits](https://www.citylimits.org/article/hud-rule-changes-will-ease-housing-barriers-for-tenants-with-criminal-history-officials-say/).

⁵ [Housing as a Pathway to Justice \(H2J\) National Toolkit | Enterprise Community Partners](#).

⁶ [Growing Up at Castle Gardens: Nemiah's Story | The Fortune Society](#).

knives and even helped to move her into her dorm room. This is the same spirit and sense of family that Fortune staff will bring to Just Home.

Our direct service work is key to enhancing public safety and overall community well-being across our city. It is an intrinsic part of that work to ensure that our Fortune residents live in settings where we model respect for the surrounding community and foster opportunities for community involvement and integration. In Castle Gardens, we have a beautiful, windowed community space overlooking the Hudson River that the local Community Board and precinct use for public meetings. We gladly offer Castle Gardens as a polling site during elections. Every year, we throw a block party on West 140th Street, providing our neighbors food, entertainment, and connections to community partners. We also offer a weekly fresh produce giveaway on Wednesdays, providing a weekly average of 350 bags of New York state-grown produce, eggs, and pantry items to neighborhood residents. In Fiscal Year 2024, we served over 1,350 local Harlem residents.

As the number of our program and housing sites have grown, we have expanded our outreach to surrounding communities. In the South Bronx we established a Fortune Fresh Food Pantry at one of our locations to support not just our participants, but also their families. We serve 100 participants each week, providing them with credits based on their household sizes so they can shop for one week's worth of food through our online "store." I am proud to say that in May, in partnership with Food Bank NYC, we were able to launch our first monthly giveaway of food and other grocery items to all members of the local community.

Community engagement is critically important to us and has always been a core component of our housing development process. We began the community engagement process on the Just Home project shortly after being selected as the developer by HPD in July of 2022. As you may know, the public meetings to which we were invited to present were highly emotionally charged, and thus we did not have the opportunity to engage in real dialogue.⁷ While we would continue to welcome the opportunity to engage with area residents on a regular basis if this project moves forward. Every community has different needs, and if given the opportunity

⁷ Schneider, A. (2022, July 28). "Jacobi Hospital's 'Just Home' seeks to house formerly jailed with medical needs, but residents say 'criminals' not welcome." Bronx Times. Retrieved from [Jacobi Hospital's 'Just Home' seeks to house formerly jailed with medical needs, but residents say 'criminals' not welcome – Bronx Times](#); Schneider, A. (2022, Oct. 6). "Chaos ensues as CB11 Just Home public hearing leaves little room for disagreement." Bronx Times. Retrieved from [Chaos ensues as CB11 Just Home public hearing leaves little room for disagreement – Bronx Times](#).

we will gladly solicit feedback from District 11 residents about how we can be the best neighbor possible.

We take community concerns very seriously. In fact, a few years ago we withdrew from a planned housing project in Council District 16 because we were presented with well-reasoned concerns, raised by Council Member Stevens and others, about over-saturation of that specific district. Going back to our housing roots, when we purchased the property that became the Fortune Academy on West 140th Street in 1998, it was already zoned for group living. Therefore, we did not even need to seek Council or community approval and could have moved ahead with construction without engaging our new neighbors. We did so, however, to ensure that we would have an open relationship of mutual respect with the surrounding community. That relationship grew so strong that when we sought community approval to build permanent supportive housing, the community told us they wanted us to include affordable housing; that is how the design for Castle Gardens developed, through community request for more housing, not less, because they had learned that our housing residents were excellent neighbors. As Manhattan Community Board 9 stated in a previous letter of support for this project, “The Fortune Society has been a strong community neighbor since moving into our district over two decades ago...The residents, and Fortune Society, have proven to be assets in the neighborhood...Its model is one that can be - and should be - replicated not just across the city but across our country.”⁸

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony today regarding Just Home. As a city, we have a duty to ensure that people who have been incarcerated and have complex medical needs do not languish in our jails or shelters, or on our streets, simply because they have nowhere else to go. As we say at Fortune, everyone deserves a home. This City Council upheld that belief in three ways in the recent past: by passing the Fair Chance for Housing Act with an overwhelming majority; by negotiating a budget that includes additional funding for the Justice Involved Supportive Housing program, after years of calling for it in the Preliminary Budget Response; and just this August, unanimously voting to pass Intro. 1100, which will expand access to supportive housing for homeless people leaving incarceration. We hope that you will continue on this path of ensuring access to safe and stable housing for some of our most vulnerable fellow New Yorkers by approving Just Home.

⁸ Letter from Manhattan CB 9 District Manager, August 8, 2022 (on file with The Fortune Society).



Outlook

[EXTERNAL] Against Just Homes at Jacobi

From Gina Passafiume **Date** Wed 9/17/2025 1:49 PM**To** Land Use Testimony <landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. Report suspected phishing emails with the Phish Alert Button or forward them to phish@oti.nyc.gov as an attachment.

To Whom it May Concern,

> My name is Gina Passafiume and I have parents, elderly grandparents and siblings who live in the area of Jacobi Hospital and they walk to their cars at night and walk around the neighborhood on a daily basis. I am against this going up and asking to please reconsider putting this in a residential neighborhood. It will increase the crime in the area and they are concerned for their safety.

>

> Thank you,

> Gina Passafiume

>

> Sent from my iPhone

Dear City Council Land Use Committee,

My name is Hudson Jakubowicz, and I am a medical student living at the apartments near Albert Einstein College of Medicine, located just a short walk from Jacobi Hospital. In my training, I see every day how deeply health and housing are connected and how much our patients' well-being depends on having a safe, stable place to live.

I strongly support the Just Home project because it reflects the values of dignity, safety, and health that we should be advancing as a city. Every individual in our neighborhood deserves to be treated with respect. In a moment when an estimated 350,000 New Yorkers are experiencing homelessness, we cannot afford to turn down an opportunity to create permanent, affordable, supportive housing in our community.

As a future physician, I am particularly moved by the health impact this project will have. Jacobi and NYC Health + Hospitals have identified dozens of patients each year with significant medical needs such as advanced cancer, end-stage kidney disease, and severe heart failure, who are released from Rikers with nowhere to go. Managing these kinds of illnesses is nearly impossible without a stable place to live. Just Home will provide that stability, saving lives and improving health outcomes, while also reducing reliance on expensive emergency care and hospitalizations.

This project also makes our neighborhood safer. Research is clear: when justice-involved individuals have access to stable housing and supportive services, they are far less likely to reoffend. The Fortune Society has demonstrated across the city that housing programs like this not only support residents but also strengthen the neighborhoods around them. Past incarceration does not predict what kind of neighbor a person will be, and meeting people's basic needs makes all of us safer.

Ultimately, Just Home is about building the kind of Bronx community we want to live in: one rooted in compassion, dignity, and health. I urge the Committee to support this project.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,
Hudson Jakubowicz
Medical Student, Albert Einstein College of Medicine

Dear City Council Land Use Committee,

My name is Isabelle Baird, and I am a medical student at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, located just a short walk from Jacobi Hospital. In my training, I see every day how deeply health and housing are connected and how much our patients' well-being depends on having a safe, stable place to live.

I strongly support the Just Home project because it reflects the values of dignity, safety, and health that we should be advancing as a city. Every individual in our neighborhood deserves to be treated with respect. In a moment when an estimated 350,000 New Yorkers are experiencing homelessness, we cannot afford to turn down an opportunity to create permanent, affordable, supportive housing in our community.

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Ultimately, Just Home is about building the kind of Bronx community we want to live in: one rooted in compassion, dignity, and health. I urge the Committee to support this project.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,
Isabelle Baird, she/her
Medical Student, Albert Einstein College of Medicine



Outlook

[EXTERNAL] Just Home Project - Rikers Island housing at Jacobi Hospital Campus

From Ivy Maria Moreno [REDACTED]**Date** Fri 9/19/2025 4:35 PM**To** Land Use Testimony <landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov>

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I am a 74 year old senior pleading with you NOT to house Rikers Island detainees at Jacobi Hospital!! I live just blocks from where they will be housed and I live alone and worry about my safety with them in the neighborhood.

My 27 yr. old granddaughter takes her 6 yr. old son and 1 month old daughter to Jacobi for doctor and emergency visits. You are also putting them in danger!

Please understand this whole community is scared and worried about having them in our neighborhood!! Please, please reconsider this project and consider our safety concerns!!!

Sincerely, Ivy Moreno [REDACTED]

From: JPC il.com
Subject: City Council Public Hearing "Just Homes" September 18, 2025
Date: Sep 14, 2025 at 6:57:25 PM
To: landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov
Bcc: -mail.com

To: NYC Council, NYC Health & Hospitals Corporation, & Fortune Society
Re: Just Homes Program at Jacobi Hospital Campus

Dear Decision-Makers:

I write as a Morris Park resident to voice firm opposition to the manner in which the proposed "Just Homes" housing project at the Jacobi Hospital Campus has been pushed upon our community.

From the outset, this proposal has lacked transparency and genuine outreach. Although the city claims there were opportunities for public feedback, residents repeatedly encountered unanswered questions and disregarded concerns. These so-called forums only reinforced the impression that the decision had already been made, regardless of neighborhood opposition. That approach undermines trust and disrespects the hardworking, family-oriented community that will bear the full impact of this project.

The "Just Homes" plan raises profound concerns for Morris Park. Placing housing for formerly incarcerated individuals with complex medical and social needs next to long-established residential areas, families, and schools jeopardizes safety and erodes the suburban character of our neighborhood. I call on the City Council to demand that Health & Hospitals Corporation and the Fortune Society present clear, transparent plans to address public safety, additional traffic, support services, and risk mitigation before advancing this project any further.

Morris Park is not shirking its responsibility. We already carry more than our fair share of supportive housing and related services within the Bronx. Equity requires that these burdens be distributed fairly across the city, not loaded disproportionately onto specific communities. Decisions of this magnitude must account for cumulative impacts on resources, infrastructure, and quality of life.

Accordingly, I urge the City Council to require Health & Hospitals Corporation and the Fortune Society to re-engage with residents in an honest, inclusive process. Our community must have genuine opportunities to contribute ideas, shape alternatives, and hold decision-makers accountable. Only through respectful, transparent engagement can trust be restored and solutions achieved that balance the needs of vulnerable populations with the concerns of our community.

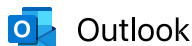
Thank you for your attention. I urge you to show genuine commitment by working with us to find a path forward that is both fair and sustainable.

Sincerely,

Joseph P. Cordasco



Sent from my iPad



Outlook

[EXTERNAL] City Council Public Hearing "Just Homes" September 18, 2025

From JPC [REDACTED]
Date Sun 9/14/2025 6:57 PM
To Land Use Testimony <landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov>

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To: NYC Council, NYC Health & Hospitals Corporation, & Fortune Society
Re: Just Homes Program at Jacobi Hospital Campus

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Thank you for your attention. I urge you to show genuine commitment by working with us to find a path forward that is both fair and sustainable.

Sincerely,

Jose h P. Cordasco
[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPad



Outlook

[EXTERNAL] JUST HOME PROPOSAL JACOBI CAMPUS BRONX

From J Vaini [REDACTED]**Date** Wed 9/17/2025 9:17 AM**To** Land Use Testimony <landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. Report suspected phishing emails with the Phish Alert Button or forward them to phish@oti.nyc.gov as an attachment.

I strongly oppose the “Just Home” project which seeks to permanently house formerly incarcerated Rikers’ detainees at 1900 Seminole Ave, an unused building on the Jacobi campus within close proximity to residential homes and schools. There are at least 13 schools that I am aware of within a mile of the building.

One area of major concern with is the fact that neither severity of offense or criminal history (including but not limited to acts of violence or crimes against children) will disqualify any former inmate from tenancy. Screening will be performed solely by the Fortune Society and tenancy will be granted solely at the discretion of the Fortune Society- an organization advocating for the lightening of NY’s already practically nonexistent residency restrictions on sex offenders , more relaxed registration requirements for sex offenders and for financial incentives to be provided at the City and State levels to housing developers and providers who agree to house and serve people with sex-related convictions.

During a public meeting on Just Home the residents were made aware of the story of Roderick Compass. Mr. Compass was a landlord who rented an apartment in his Springfield Garden Queens home to the Fortune Society. The Fortune Society then housed Sylvia Cruz and Jason Hermidas, a formerly incarcerated couple, in that apartment.

Many of us saw the media stories of how Ms. Cruz and Mr. Hermidas trashed the apartment they were placed in and the problems they gave Mr. Compass. But there is one part of this story that didn’t receive the coverage that the trashing of this apartment received. Mr. Hermidas, who was placed in an apartment in the same home as Compass’ two young daughters, is a registered sex offender.

How effective can the Fortune Society’s screening process be if it can result in the placing of a registered sex offender in the same home as two young children?

When this proposal was first disclosed to the public NYCHH and Fortune indicated that tenants would be gravely ill and practically at death’s door. We learned later on such presentations were misleading and that was not to be the case. The inmate tenants may not be as gravely ill as described and will in all probability include those suffering from mental illness and substance addiction. The tenants will be referred by Correctional Health Services ("CHS") to the Fortune Society from a subgroup of Rikers’ inmates who have “complex medical needs” and are homeless. Based upon CHS' own disclosures- the most prevalent medical conditions suffered by Rikers inmates seem to be mental health and substance abuse problems.

There have been far better uses proposed for the Just Home building besides housing dedicated for former Rikers inmates. Veteran’s housing and senior housing have been proposed. Affordable housing for Jacobi employees has been proposed. A STEM school has been proposed. All alternatives far more palatable and far less risky for the community.

Joseph Vaini



Outlook

[EXTERNAL] JACOBI RIKERS PROJECT NEEDS TO BE SHUT DOWN

From Julianna Ciaccia [REDACTED]**Date** Wed 9/17/2025 4:15 PM**To** Land Use Testimony <landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. Report suspected phishing emails with the Phish Alert Button or forward them to phish@oti.nyc.gov as an attachment.

I am writing to express my strong and unequivocal opposition to the proposed “Just Home” project at Jacobi Hospital. This project is unacceptable, unsafe, and an insult to the hardworking families who live in this community.

We have lived here our whole lives and worked hard to maintain safe, stable lives for our families. We pay our taxes, maintain our homes, and contribute to a neighborhood we are proud of. Now, this project threatens everything we have built. Turning Jacobi’s campus into housing for individuals coming directly from Rikers Island — individuals with complex medical, mental health, and substance abuse issues, and the obvious criminal record — is absolutely the worst decision for our community.

This is not about being against affordable housing. We are already doing our fair share. We support housing for seniors, veterans, and working families which would be the obvious and better use for this building. But dumping pretrial detainees with medical and mental health needs in the middle of a residential neighborhood, surrounded by schools and parks, is reckless, dangerous, and completely disrespectful to the people who call this area home.

Jacobi Hospital already has a failing track record. It has a one-star rating and has not been transparent with the community for years. And yet, the City is trying to fast-track this plan without proper outreach or accountability. Our neighborhood is not a testing ground for failed policies. We will not stand by silently. We demand that you shut this project down immediately. Protect our homes, protect our families, and protect the quality of life we worked so hard to achieve.

Respectfully,
Julianna Ciaccia



**TESTIMONY OF DR. MEGAN FRENCH-MARCELIN, SENIOR DIRECTOR OF NEW YORK
STATE POLICY AT LEGAL ACTION CENTER**

**Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Sitings, and Dispositions
September 18, 2025**

Thank you to the Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Sitings, and Dispositions for the opportunity to provide testimony on the Just Home program at Osborne Association. My name is Megan French-Marcelin, I am the Senior Director of New York State Policy at the Legal Action Center. The Legal Action Center is a non-profit law and policy organization that fights discrimination, builds health equity, and restores opportunity for people with substance use disorders, arrest and conviction records, and HIV and AIDS.

The Just Home initiative is critical to safeguarding the quality of life for medically frail people returning home from incarceration, and ensuring public safety for the communities to which they return. This program applies to medically frail people with complex health needs; people with congestive heart failure, stage-4 cancer, and people who need assistance with daily life activities - people who cannot care for themselves. These are elderly New Yorkers whose needs are too complex even for homeless shelters to meet their needs. Without Just Home, these individuals would otherwise be street homeless, suffering from debilitating health conditions with no access to care.

The New York prison and jail population is aging, and the mental and physical stress of incarceration, coupled with exposure to infectious disease and lack of adequate medical care, mean incarcerated people over 50 have the health needs of someone 10-15 years older.¹ Individuals released from incarceration contend with higher rates of chronic health conditions that require immediate care, such as HIV and hepatitis, diabetes and hypertension, and serious mental illnesses (SMIs) and substance use disorders (SUDs).²

This population is more likely than the general population to have mental health needs and substance use disorders, which, combined with persistent stigma and discriminatory policies, are likely to lead to more frequent rejections from housing and care facilities.³

¹ Office of the New York State Comptroller. "[New York State's Aging Prison Population: Share of Older Adults Keeps Rising](#)," January 2022.

² Rachel Crumpler, "[Prison system works to combat health care coverage gap by enrolling people in Medicaid before release](#)," February 13 2024, *North Carolina Health News*

³ Anuja Gore & Akua Amaning, "[Expanding access to basic reentry services will improve health, wellbeing, and public safety](#)," October 29 2024, *Center for American Progress*.

Moreover, justice-impacted people have significant difficulties securing housing after incarceration. Across the state, 23 percent of individuals leaving state prison turned to emergency shelter while another 8 percent were listed by DOCCS as un-domiciled.⁴ In New York City, more than a quarter of individuals detained on Rikers report being street homeless. And while any time spent unhoused exacerbates risk factors that lead to re-incarceration, systemic and structural racism intensifies these barriers for Black, Latine, and Indigenous New Yorkers leading to their overrepresentation in both incarceration and homelessness.⁵

In a moment where New York is facing an affordable housing crisis that is exponentially more dire for people with conviction histories seeking shelter, we must ensure permanent housing solutions for our most vulnerable neighbors.⁶

Without access to permanent, supportive housing, formerly incarcerated people with complex healthcare needs will end up on the street or in our already over-burdened shelter system, where, quite frankly, they will not have access to the necessary medical care for their conditions. When justice-impacted individuals have access to appropriate care and housing, they are less likely to be a burden on hospital emergency departments, they are less likely to recidivate, and their quality of life improves.⁷ Housing is essential to community safety - and, in turn, public safety writ large.

It is imperative that the Just Home program can continue to provide supportive housing to medically frail New Yorkers returning from jail - for their health, and also for the benefit of the greater community.

⁴ Lennon, John J. "How Do People Released From Prison Find Housing? (Published 2023)." *The New York Times*, 31 March 2023, <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/03/20/realestate/prison-parole-housing-shelters.html>.

⁵Rovner, Joshua. "Report to the United Nations on Racial Disparities in the U.S. Criminal Justice System – The Sentencing Project." *The Sentencing Project*, 19 April 2018, <https://www.sentencingproject.org/reports/report-to-the-united-nations-on-racial-disparities-in-the-u-s-criminal-justice-system/>.

⁶ "Why Housing Matters for Successful Reentry and Public Safety | HUD USER." *HUD User*, 19 April 2022, <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/pdredge/pdr-edge-frm-asst-sec-041922.html>.

⁷ Hannah Maniates, "[Medicaid's changing role in re-entry from jails and prisons](#)," January 9 2024, *National Association of Medicaid Directors*; Michelle Rippy, "[Navigating Homelessness: The Effect of Housing Navigation Centers on Recidivism](#)," June 12 2023, *Federation of American Scientists*.

Dear City Council Land Use Committee,

My name is Lillian Tushman, and I am a medical student at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, located just a short walk from Jacobi Hospital. In my training, I see every day how deeply health and housing are connected and how much our patients' well-being depends on having a safe, stable place to live.

I strongly support the Just Home project because it reflects the values of dignity, safety, and health that we should be advancing as a city. Every individual in our neighborhood deserves to be treated with respect. In a moment when an estimated 350,000 New Yorkers are experiencing homelessness, we cannot afford to turn down an opportunity to create permanent, affordable, supportive housing in our community.

As a future physician, I am particularly moved by the health impact this project will have. Jacobi and NYC Health + Hospitals have identified dozens of patients each year with significant medical needs such as advanced cancer, end-stage kidney disease, and severe heart failure, who are released from Rikers with nowhere to go. Managing these kinds of illnesses is nearly impossible without a stable place to live. Just Home will provide that stability, saving lives and improving health outcomes, while also reducing reliance on expensive emergency care and hospitalizations.

This project also makes our neighborhood safer. Research is clear: when justice-involved individuals have access to stable housing and supportive services, they are far less likely to reoffend. The Fortune Society has demonstrated across the city that housing programs like this not only support residents but also strengthen the neighborhoods around them. Past incarceration does not predict what kind of neighbor a person will be, and meeting people's basic needs makes all of us safer.

Ultimately, Just Home is about building the kind of Bronx community we want to live in: one rooted in compassion, dignity, and health. I urge the Committee to support this project.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,
Lillian Tushman
She/her/hers
Medical Student, Albert Einstein College of Medicine



[EXTERNAL] No to Just Homes written Testimony

From Luana Malavolta [REDACTED]
Date Sat 9/20/2025 11:57 AM
To Land Use Testimony <landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov>
Cc District13 <District13@council.nyc.gov>

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To whom it may concern,

The strategy to exhaust a community until it stops complaining about the “Just Homes” project is lost in this Bronx neighborhood. I write for many who have shown up to town halls, several times, who have written to city agencies, several times, whom this committee has exhausted and now utilize, to lower the dissident count.

Placing undesirable criminals under the vague guise of “treatment” in a hardworking neighborhood is environmental injustice and there are plenty of attorneys willing to file charges of unequal protection.

Residents are empowered to hire an attorney to fight a legal battle. We have done it before.

Environmental Injustice violations against Jacobi and Just Homes for negligent and unfair practices and policies that harm our community along with civil rights violations against homeowners and residents are provable. I wonder the compensation possible to area property owners, residents and renters, who might become victims in the future.

We elected a strong City Councilwoman Kristy Marmorato to fight this injustice against our safety. She has. This District got rid of a previous minority politico who was bought off. We will continue to rid our community of leaders that do not represent the residents and use the Bronx as a dumping ground.

Please stop dumping in the Bronx.

Luana Malavolta, Associate Broker, NS & Associates



Outlook

[EXTERNAL] Expressing Support for Just Home Proposal

From Max Roland Davidson [REDACTED]
Date Thu 9/18/2025 8:00 AM
To Land Use Testimony <landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov>

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Dear Councilwoman Marmorato and Council Land Use Committee,

I am writing to express my support for the proposed Just Home supportive housing proposal. I am a supporter of housing that creates opportunities for all New Yorkers, including those who are trying to reintegrate into society. Every New Yorker deserves the opportunity to live with dignity, and the Just Home proposal will help ensure that the formerly incarcerated will be able to join our City. If Just Home is rejected, what will happen to those who would be housed in its facilities? More likely than not, they will end up on our streets, where existing medical and mental health issues will be exacerbated. The formerly incarcerated also have a greater likelihood of re-offense when they lack proper supportive housing.

This proposal will strengthen our city's social safety net while creating more supportive housing for those who need it.

I urge you to support this proposal.

Best,
Max Davidson



Outlook

[EXTERNAL] Just Home

From Michelle Del Pozzo [REDACTED]
Date Mon 9/22/2025 9:17 AM
To Land Use Testimony <landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov>

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Good morning.

I am opposed to the Juse Homes project with its ever changing program.

The Fortune Society does not distinguish the crimes when vetting, they have stated so publicly at city council hearings, so their vetting means nothing.

This is not an appropriate location for such a facility. It is too close to schools and private residences.

This area needs senior housing for those with medical needs and/or veteran housing also with medical needs.

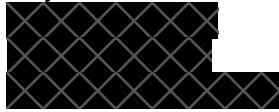
Why is it that year over year we ask for senior/veteran housing, it gets overlooked or completely disregarded? Then you want to come in and input unstable, unpredictable and possibly dangerous individuals into our area with our tax paying dollars. NO!

Start listening to the needs of the community. We consist of a mass group of voters along with our seniors and veterans.

We DO NOT WANT JUST HOMES in our area at all.

Respectfully yours,
District 13 Resident

Mirjam Arnold



Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Sitings & Dispositions
New York City Council
New York, NY 10007

September 19, 2025

Dear Members of the City Council,

My name is Mirjam Arnold. I both live near and work on the campus where the proposed Just Home project would be located, and I am writing to express my strong support for its approval.

To deny housing and access to health care on the basis of a prior incarceration is, in my view, both unethical and discriminatory. Formerly incarcerated individuals are often left without stable networks of social or financial support, making them especially vulnerable to homelessness. This vulnerability is compounded in New York City, where safe and affordable housing remains in critically short supply. Research consistently shows that secure housing, particularly supportive housing, significantly reduces the risk of homelessness and recidivism, while fostering healthier and more stable communities.

It is also important to recognize the profound challenges faced by people living with severe or even terminal medical conditions. Managing those health struggles alone is already daunting; attempting to do so while homeless or unstably housed places individuals in an acutely precarious situation. A project like Just Home can make the difference between continued hardship and the possibility of stability, dignity, and health.

This project's location is uniquely well-suited to meet these needs: it is close to two of New York's top hospitals; it offers a residential setting that is quiet yet accessible; and it is part of a community that includes compassionate neighbors and open-minded medical students. These conditions make it highly likely that Just Home will succeed in supporting its residents and fostering positive connections in the neighborhood.

Finally, I believe that a community such as Morris Park, which benefits from wealth, stability, and a strong civic fabric, has both the responsibility and the capacity to support a project as vital as Just Home. Providing housing and care for those in vulnerable circumstances reflects the very best of community values.

I respectfully urge you to approve and support the Just Home project.

Sincerely,

Mirjam Arnold

Testimony to NYC City Council

Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Sitings, and Dispositions
Subcommittee

Public Hearing

September 18, 2025

Wendell Walters

Executive Vice President, Chief Housing Officer



My name is Wendell Walters and I am Executive Vice President and Chief Housing Officer at the Osborne Association. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to this subcommittee. Osborne is one of the largest and oldest criminal justice service organizations in the state. We have offices in Brooklyn, Buffalo, White Plains, Newburgh, Troy and our headquarters in the Bronx. We serve 10,000 participants each year from arrest to reentry. We also have programming in 41 state prisons and on Rikers Island. I testified on behalf of Osborne in support of the Just Home project at the Health and Hospitals public hearing in December 2023. Osborne is happy to do so again.

There are currently about 32,000 people incarcerated in NY State prisons, and about 7,300 in NYC jails (a dramatic increase since an historic low during the pandemic of 3,800 people). In our prisons, this includes an aging population that continues to make up a growing proportion of those in custody; people in their 50s, 60s, 70s, and 80s who have been in prison for decades. Each year, thousands of people are released who have served their time as mandated by our courts. Many are returning back to their families and communities, but far too many are returning to shelters and to unstable housing situations. In recent years, nearly half of those returning home from state prison enter the overburdened NYC shelter system, transitioning from one institutional setting to another. The same goes for those on Rikers Island. Finding stable housing during reentry is by far the most important issue confronting these individuals as most also lack income and are persistently discriminated against because of their conviction history.

This dire need for stable, affordable housing is why groups like Osborne and The Fortune Society, with the help of the city and state government, have increasingly pursued opportunities to create housing for this community of people. While organizations like Osborne, Fortune, Hour Children and others are there to assist individuals as they reintegrate back into society and support them with programming and extensive case management, we need far more supportive housing to provide a safe landing for people at a transitional and often vulnerable and overwhelming time.

Last year Osborne opened the Fulton Community Reentry Center in the Bronx. Similar to Fortune's Castle Gardens, Fulton is a 140-bed transitional housing facility for previously incarcerated older men who have been away for many years and need time to re-acclimate to a changing, fast-paced, digital world, and who would otherwise be homeless.

While transitional housing is critical to support reentry, finding and creating permanent and affordable supportive housing for the previously incarcerated is equally, if not more, important as it provides the long-term stability we all need. Osborne's Marcus Garvey Supportive Housing program in Brooklyn is an example of a project that provides that stability. In its fourth year of operation, Marcus Garvey and its soon to be completed extension project, has 140 apartments which are permanent, supportive, affordable housing for previously incarcerated older men and women. These units fill up quickly, with the need far exceeding the number of units. Residents here take solace in knowing that they have a place to permanently call home, where they can also receive support and be connected to resources that allow them to explore their strengths,

talents, and hobbies, and build community as they face and overcome the other challenges of reentry.

Fortune's Just Home project promises to offer this critical stability and support, and rightfully addresses the housing needs of a segment of those incarcerated on Rikers that does not get enough attention and needs more support; individuals with complex medical conditions. Just Home will create permanent housing for those who have complex medical needs - conditions such as congestive heart failure, stage-4 cancer, end-stage renal disease, oxygen dependence--and those who need assistance with daily life activities and may be geriatric or non-ambulatory, and who would otherwise experience homelessness or be in homeless shelters that cannot meet their medical needs. Shelters are ill-equipped and unable to provide the necessary care in these cases, and without a project like Just Home, individuals would be left to survive on the street, which is inhumane and can lead to unsafe situations and jeopardize public safety. Without Just Home, individuals would have no recourse but to seek medical care through Emergency Rooms which is the most costly way to access healthcare.

Just Home has smartly partnered with Jacobi Hospital, NYC Health + Hospitals' Correctional Health Services, and the NYC Department of Housing Preservation & Development to create 58 units of supportive permanent housing for these individuals who need convenient access to medical care. The project also provides 24 units of affordable housing that the city so desperately needs.

Fortune has extensive experience and success in implementing supportive housing for those previously incarcerated. Osborne regularly refers people to Castle Gardens and has learned so much from Fortune as we embark on developing our own housing programs. We have the utmost confidence in their ability to successfully implement this urgently needed housing resource for very vulnerable New Yorkers.

We understand that the community might initially have concerns about security. Media stories and headlines fuel a fear of those incarcerated that is often assuaged by meeting the actual individuals we are speaking about. In this case those with significant medical conditions. It is important to acknowledge the humanity of those who would be moving into Just Home. Additionally, Fortune, Osborne, and other groups that provide housing for the previously incarcerated also take security seriously. Just Home would have 24 hour security coverage and offer a range of comprehensive services to address any safety concerns that do arise. Fortune has more than a decade of experience operating reentry housing programs in ways that contribute positively to their surrounding communities, rather than bringing disruption or negativity.

From our experience at Marcus Garvey, those who return home from incarceration want to focus on creating a stable life for themselves and their families. They want to give back, to contribute, and to prevent others from following in their path, and they are tremendous assets to their community. The individuals who are to occupy the units at Just Home want the same thing their neighbors do: to live fulfilling lives in a safe and caring community.

We unequivocally support this project and hope that you will, too.

Thank you.

Contact: Wendell Walters: wwalters@osborneny.org

TO: Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Sitings, and Dispositions

FROM: Raffaella Elmi, Policy Associate at From Punishment to Public Health (P2PH) at John Jay College of Criminal Justice

DATE: September 18, 2025

RE: City Council Just Home Hearing

Thank you for the opportunity to submit a written testimony in support of the Just Home initiative. My name is Raffaella Elmi, and I am the Policy Associate at From Punishment to Public Health at John Jay College. P2PH works to transform the infrastructure of public health and public safety. We do this by convening stakeholders across systems of care and drawing on their expertise to build and scale equitable solutions grounded in the health and well-being of families and communities. As a native New Yorker, I have observed the real-life implications of housing policies on this city's most vulnerable populations. Through the non-profit sector, I have worked closely with community-based housing solutions, observing how access to permanent housing supports have created stability for houseless individuals with complex medical needs and disabilities. Gaps in housing services have had detrimental effects on formerly-incarcerated individuals with complex medical needs, leading to worse housing and health outcomes long-term.

Chronic homelessness, incarceration, and healthcare access have long been treated as distinct issues but research and personal narratives suggest that these issues are interlinked, directly impacting community public health. The Prison Policy Initiative revealed that formerly incarcerated individuals are 10 times more likely to experience housing insecurity in comparison to the general population (Couloute, 2018). According to a National Institute of Health (NIH) study, 80% of formerly incarcerated individuals leave prison with a chronic health condition that requires consistent medical care (Hadden et al., 2018). Furthermore, the 2023 report on healthcare in New York City revealed that 79% of individuals with high medical needs experienced greater housing insecurity in comparison to those without such needs (Maury et al.). Residents in District 13 experience a disproportionate number of rent burden in comparison to the city wide average. The NYC Housing Tracker Report revealed that this district has one of the lowest housing production rates in comparison to the city average, producing only 58 units as of May 2022.

Through our Cross-Sector Advocacy group, which brings together stakeholders from separate sectors to explore how public health can drive equity, the Fortune Society has been an essential partner in advocating for supportive housing initiatives and reentry services. During the numerous cross sector meetings, Fortune Society has highlighted efforts to promote access to housing by monitoring Fair Chance Housing implementation. Expanding on the Fair Chance Housing Act, which ends discriminatory housing inaccessibility for individuals with a criminal history, Just Home further promotes equitable housing opportunities for vulnerable individuals seeking stability

upon community re-entry. In simpler terms, housing is a fundamental right for all individuals, regardless of demographic or criminal history. This initiative emphasizes the critical need for formerly incarcerated, chronically ill individuals to have access to immediate medical care.

The Fortune Society has produced a plethora of housing and re-entry services which have resulted in tangible supports and stabilities for vulnerable populations and communities throughout New York City. For example, the Mandela Community in the Bronx is a residential building for seniors with a criminal justice program, providing residents with on-site wrap around services, including 96 affordable homes for seniors at least 55+ and 57 affordable, supportive homes for formerly-incarcerated seniors. Through their Scatter-Site Housing Program, Fortune staff act as liaisons between landlords and tenants to ensure that formerly incarcerated individuals experiencing housing insecurity have access to stable, safe, and affordable housing. The Just Home initiative would further cement the Fortune Society's influence in communities struggling with housing insecurity, providing second chances to formerly incarcerated individuals upon re-entry who seek to gain stability and make meaningful contributions to society.

In consideration of the information presented, the Just Home initiative presents a solution to chronic homelessness and can disrupt the revolving door cycle of incarceration. This initiative will also help to cut costs for crisis services such as hospitalizations. A healthier New York City begins with community-based, person-centered approaches that meet the intersectional needs of vulnerable populations. Thank you again for this opportunity to testify and submit a written testimony.



[EXTERNAL] Landmark siting committee project # 364 - Just Home

From [REDACTED]
Date Sun 9/21/2025 3:55 PM
To Land Use Testimony <landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov>

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Dear Committee Member:

I have lived in the Bronx for over 60 years, more than 50 of them steps from Jacobi. I am a widow who lives alone, directly across the street from building two. I am writing to strongly object to the placement of Just Homes at this location.

Seminole avenue is an access road for Jacobi hospital, but it is not a populous street. From the windows of this building residents would be able to see into my home, my yard, monitor my comings and goings. As I stated, I live alone and my neighbors on either side are also elderly. I would no longer feel safe in my home or leaving my home for fear that I would be an easy target with little protection.

I've stayed in the Bronx because I love the Morris Park area. My children stayed to raise their families here bc they love it as well. When all of our friends and many of our family members left the Bronx for westchester, Rockland, Connecticut, Long Island, we stayed. We stayed through the bad years and enjoyed the good years. I love what the Bronx has to offer and I hoped to be able to spend my golden years in the house where I raised my children. If this project comes to fruition, I don't know if I will be able to stay here. And that pains me.

I'm fortunate to have all of my children nearby to support me. Many of my neighbors have had to leave their homes after 50+ years to move in with children who relocated out of the Bronx. Others want to stay, but either can no longer afford to keep their homes or aren't blessed with children who are nearby.

If H&H had asked the community what type of housing would be best for building two, they would have heard that senior housing is what we need. We need to support people being able to stay in communities that they know, with people that they know. An added benefit to this would be the proximity to healthcare, be that Jacobi or Montefiore.

Sincerely;

Patricia Velella

(Submitted by my daughter as I do not have email)

Sent from my iPhone



Outlook

[EXTERNAL] Testimonial Against the Housing of Rikers Island Detainees and Formally Incarcerated in Residential Neighborhoods

From Patrizia Cambria [REDACTED]**Date** Sun 9/21/2025 2:52 PM**To** Land Use Testimony <landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov>

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I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposal to house former or current detainees and formally incarcerated from Rikers Island in our residential neighborhood. This project was first leaked to our community in 2022, but in the almost **two years since then**, there has been **no communication or outreach** from the Health + Hospitals Corporation (HHC) and Just Homes. Now, with city council approval being sought, it feels as though this critical decision is being rushed through without any meaningful engagement with the people most impacted—residents of this neighborhood.

The location of this housing project is especially concerning. Our community is home to **five schools** and **three parks**, spaces that are central to the well-being and safety of our children, families, and elderly residents. Introducing a facility housing individuals from Rikers Island so close to these institutions creates a heightened sense of fear and uncertainty, and we strongly believe it would compromise the peaceful, family-oriented environment we've worked hard to nurture. In contrast to this proposal, the community has put forward a more suitable and constructive plan for the site: **housing for senior citizens** and a **community center**. These alternatives would better serve the needs of our neighborhood, providing much-needed resources for vulnerable populations while maintaining the safety and security that we value so highly. Our proposed solutions prioritize inclusivity, support for our aging residents, and opportunities for youth and families to come together.

The fact that this project has moved forward without proper consultation or consideration for our concerns is deeply frustrating. We are not opposed to rehabilitation and second chances, but we do believe that **location matters**. This neighborhood is simply not the right place for this type of housing, given its proximity to schools, parks, and families. The safety of our children and the well-being of our residents must be a priority, and the lack of transparency and disregard for community input in this process only adds to our concerns.

We urge the city council to reject this proposal and take into account the needs and desires of the people who actually live here. Let's work together to find solutions that are thoughtful, responsible, and considerate of the entire community.

Sincerely,

Patrizia Cambria
[REDACTED]

Bronx, New York

Sent from my iPhone



Matthew Klein, Chief Program & Impact Officer, Robin Hood
Testimony to Subcommittee on Landmarks, Public Sitings, and Dispositions
September 18, 2025
NYC Health + Hospitals Jacobi Just Home

Thank you for the opportunity for Robin Hood, New York City's largest poverty-fighting philanthropy, to submit testimony supporting the ground lease application of The Fortune Society for Just Home on the Jacobi Hospital campus. For more than two decades, The Fortune Society has been one of Robin Hood's core partners, providing support for individuals and families impacted by the criminal justice system. Under The Fortune Society's leadership, Just Home is an innovative initiative in partnership with NYC Health + Hospitals and the Department of Housing Preservation and Development for about 83 permanent supportive and affordable housing units, including wrap-around services for medically complex, homeless New Yorkers after they leave jail.

Just Home advances two Robin Hood program and policy priorities:

- Preventing homelessness by cutting off the prison-to-shelter pipeline and
- Providing a foundation of housing stability to escape poverty and to secure employment, unique challenges for those who were formerly incarcerated and have significant health conditions

Accessing stable, affordable housing and preventing criminal justice system interactions are two critical milestones documented in research that are key to increasing economic mobility and reducing poverty. Criminal justice involvement makes it harder to [secure reliable housing](#).¹ Indeed, research shows justice involved individuals are [drastically more likely to be homeless or housing insecure](#) than the general public.²

Supportive housing prevents and reduces homelessness, as well as decreases reliance on more expensive temporary shelter and hospital care. A [2023 evaluation](#) of the NY/NY III Supportive Housing Agreement showed statistically significant cost savings, as well as increased housing stability and improved health outcomes for tenants,³ while a [Department of Health and Mental Hygiene interim report](#) found City shelter, health care and jail cost savings.⁴ [Research](#) also has found that stable housing reduces recidivism, with the New York City assessments finding supportive housing tenants spent fewer days in jails.⁵ In general, [affordable](#)

¹ Prison Policy Initiative, Who pays? The true cost of incarceration on families, Sept. 2015, available at <https://static.prisonpolicy.org/scans/who-pays%20Ella%20Baker%20report.pdf>

² Prison Policy Initiative, Nowhere to Go: Homelessness among formerly incarcerated people, Aug 2018, available at <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/housing.html>

³ Gouse, et al, Evaluation of New York/New York III permanent supportive housing program, 2023, available at <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0149718923000228#ab0010>

⁴ New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, New York City Human Resources Administration, New York State Office of Mental Health, New York/New York III Supportive Housing Evaluation Interim Utilization and Cost Analysis, available at <https://shnny.org/images/uploads/NY-NY-III-Interim-Report.pdf>

⁵ Urban Institute, Can Housing Interventions Reduce Incarceration and Recidivism?, Feb. 2019, available at <https://housingmatters.urban.org/articles/can-housing-interventions-reduce-incarceration-and-recidivism>; Lutze, F. E., et al, Homelessness and reentry: A multisite outcome evaluation of Washington State's reentry housing program for high risk offenders. Criminal Justice and Behavior, 2013, available at <https://doi.org/10.1177/0093854813510164>



[housing, made possible with rental assistance, provides a sustainable path for New Yorkers to move out of poverty.](#)⁶

Fortune Society's Just Home is also responsive to New Yorkers' top priorities for making neighborhoods safer - increasing affordable housing and reducing homelessness -- according to a recent Robin Hood-funded survey, NYC Speaks. Just Home will not only create housing and health care for individuals impacted by the justice system, it will also help make New York a more safe, stable, and fair city for all our neighbors.

⁶ Robin Hood, New Poverty Tracker Report Finds Housing Assistance Programs Reduce Poverty Rate Among Recipients by a Third, Lifting More Than 150,000 New Yorkers Above the Poverty Line, July 2025, available at <https://robinhood.org/news/2025-poverty-tracker-report-housing-affordability-housing-assistance/#:~:text=Report%20Finds%20Housing%20Assistance%20Programs,50%25%20of%20the%20poverty%20line>.

Dear City Council Land Use Committee,

My name is Roula Kouvatas, and I am a fourth-year medical student at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, applying to family medicine residency. Training in the Bronx over the past few years has been the privilege of my life, and I am writing in support of my local community and the Just Home initiative, which addresses the urgent housing needs of people leaving jail with serious medical and mental health conditions.

As an aspiring family physician, I spend countless visits discussing patients' social needs and have seen firsthand how lack of access to basic necessities—food, affordable healthcare, and especially housing—prevents people from not just living, but living healthy lives. Housing improves health and saves lives. Without a stable home, even basic treatments fail, because unstable environments do not support the routines, safety, and resources that care depends on.

Formerly incarcerated individuals are nearly 10 times more likely to experience homelessness than the general population. Discrimination, limited supportive housing, and economic barriers, despite protections like the Fair Chance for Housing Act, perpetuate the cycle of homelessness and incarceration, highlighting the urgent need for expanded housing access.

This project addresses that need directly. NYC Health + Hospitals estimates that over 50 people each year leaving Rikers have serious medical conditions, including end-stage renal disease, stage 4 cancer, or severe heart failure. These illnesses require continuous care, careful monitoring, and strict adherence to treatment plans, tasks that become nearly impossible without secure, stable housing. Without a safe place to live, these individuals face higher risks of medical complications, repeated hospitalizations, and premature death. By providing both housing and supportive services, Just Home ensures some of the city's most medically vulnerable residents can survive.

We know this model works. Supportive housing stabilizes health, reduces emergency room use, and dramatically lowers reoffending, keeping communities healthier and safer. Simply put, it is safer and more effective for all of us to provide housing and rehabilitation than to leave people homeless and untreated.

Supporting Just Home is about building the kind of Bronx community we all want to live in: one rooted in compassion, dignity, and health. I urge the Committee to support this vital project.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Roula Kouvatas (she/her/hers)

MD Candidate, Albert Einstein College of Medicine



Testimony for NYC City Council Committee on General Welfare

Subcommittee on Landmarks Public Sitings & Disposition

September 18, 2025

Samaritan Daytop Village (www.samaritanvillage.org) is a nationally recognized human services organization serving more than 43,000 New Yorkers annually across 80+ facilities throughout the five boroughs, Long Island, and the Hudson Valley. Our programs span behavioral health treatment, transitional and permanent housing, services for families experiencing homelessness, innovative recovery and workforce initiatives, and targeted supports for veterans, youth, and older adults.

Support for Just Home

We are here today to voice our strong support for the Fortune Society's Just Home project, a permanent supportive and affordable housing initiative to be located on the Jacobi Hospital campus in the Bronx.

New York City faces a profound and persistent housing crisis. On any given night, over 60,000 individuals experience homelessness, and over 105,000 public school students are without stable housing. This crisis is especially acute among people with complex medical needs, those cycling between the justice system and homelessness, and families struggling to secure safe, affordable homes.

Just Home offers a critical, forward-looking solution:

- 58 permanent supportive apartments for medically fragile individuals leaving city jails—those with conditions like congestive heart failure, late-stage cancer, renal disease, or other severe health needs that cannot be managed in shelters.
- 24 affordable studio apartments for low-income New Yorkers.
- A permanent, green, affordable housing development—not a shelter or transitional program—where every resident will hold a lease.

This model is grounded in evidence and practice. Fortune Society's Castle Gardens development in West Harlem, now 15 years strong, has shown what's possible: 82% of residents remained housed for at least two years, and 94% achieved housing stability and independence.

Why It Matters

At Samaritan Daytop Village, we see every day how housing is the foundation for recovery, health, and community stability. Without housing, individuals struggle to manage chronic illness, access consistent treatment, secure employment, or reunite with family. For people returning from incarceration with serious medical needs, the lack of appropriate housing options creates unnecessary cycles of homelessness, hospitalization, and recidivism.

Just Home's location on the Jacobi Hospital campus is both practical and compassionate. It ensures residents can access the specialized healthcare they need, while integrating case managers, peer specialists, and social workers on site to provide wrap-around supports.

This project is not only humane—it is fiscally prudent. Supportive housing reduces costly emergency room visits, inpatient hospitalizations, and repeated justice system involvement. It is an investment in healthier individuals and a stronger city.

A Call to Action

As partners in the human services sector, we urge the City Council to move Just Home forward without delay. The voices of opposition must not overshadow the evidence: supportive and affordable housing works. It strengthens neighborhoods, reduces crime and recidivism, saves taxpayer dollars, and—most importantly—restores dignity and stability to New Yorkers who need it most.

On behalf of Samaritan Daytop Village, we thank the City Council for its ongoing commitment to expanding affordable and supportive housing. We look forward to continuing to work alongside you, the Fortune Society, and our colleagues across the sector to address this housing crisis head-on.

Thank you for your time and for your commitment to New Yorkers in need.

Respectfully submitted,



Mitchell Netburn

President & CEO

Email: Mitchell.Netburn@samaritanvillage.org

Samaritan Daytop Village

Dear City Council Land Use Committee,

My name is Sanya Nair, and I am a medical student at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, located just a short walk from Jacobi Hospital. In my training, I see every day how deeply health and housing are connected and how much our patients' well-being depends on having a safe, stable place to live.

I strongly support the Just Home project because it reflects the values of dignity, safety, and health that we should be advancing as a city. Every individual in our neighborhood deserves to be treated with respect. In a moment when an estimated 350,000 New Yorkers are experiencing homelessness, we cannot afford to turn down an opportunity to create permanent, affordable, supportive housing in our community.

As a future physician, I am particularly moved by the health impact this project will have. Jacobi and NYC Health + Hospitals have identified dozens of patients each year with significant medical needs such as advanced cancer, end-stage kidney disease, and severe heart failure, who are released from Rikers with nowhere to go. Managing these kinds of illnesses is nearly impossible without a stable place to live. Just Home will provide that stability, saving lives and improving health outcomes, while also reducing reliance on expensive emergency care and hospitalizations.

As NYC Health and Hospitals President Mitch Katz wrote in the Daily News, "Permanent housing for our patients experiencing homelessness or lacking stable housing can [save lives, improve health outcomes, reduce reliance on expensive emergency health care and in-patient resources](#), reduce the likelihood of re-incarceration, and stabilize communities."

This project makes our neighborhood safer. Research is clear: when justice-involved individuals have access to stable housing and supportive services, they are far less likely to reoffend. The Fortune Society has demonstrated across the city that housing programs like this not only support residents but also strengthen the neighborhoods around them. Past incarceration does not predict what kind of neighbor a person will be, and meeting people's basic needs makes all of us safer.

Ultimately, Just Home is about building the kind of Bronx community we want to live in: one rooted in compassion, dignity, and health. I urge the Committee to support this project.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,
Sanya Nair (she/her)
Medical Student, Albert Einstein College of Medicine

To the members of the City Council's Land Use Committee,

I am writing in support of the Just Home housing initiative to provide affordable housing to individuals released from jail with complex medical needs on the NYC Health + Hospitals Jacobi Campus. I am a physician trained in internal medicine and am currently serving as a chief resident at the James J. Peters VA Medical Center in the Bronx. Additionally, I attended medical school at Albert Einstein College of Medicine in the Bronx and lived for four years in the Einstein housing complex on Eastchester Road, adjacent to the Jacobi campus.

As a doctor who has trained and practiced in the Bronx, I feel very strongly about providing excellent care for members of the Bronx community. This care extends beyond what can be provided in clinic. True comprehensive care includes advocating for patients in all realms, including access to safe and affordable housing.

Patients released from jail with complex medical needs are at high risk of homelessness and are very likely to be experiencing worsening of their disease without stable housing. Just Home will allow these high-risk individuals to live independently while remaining close to vital medical services. Supportive housing in these situations can decrease both interactions with the criminal justice system and reduce more expensive healthcare expenditures such as emergency department visits.

While new projects that bring change to our neighborhood always come with anxiety, we should not let that stop us from seeing the benefit. Just Home will provide an invaluable resource to formerly-incarcerated individuals with medically complex needs, while providing affordable housing to a district that was in the bottom quarter for affordable housing production between 2014 and 2023.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Shira Yellin, MD



[EXTERNAL] Re: Please Reject Just Home proposal

From STEM DUP INSTITUTE 
Date Thu 9/18/2025 8:35 PM
To Land Use Testimony <landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov>

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Contact: Sheikh Musa Drammeh



Dear City Council Members,

Re: Community Rejected 'Just Home' imposition.

New York City, New York- Thursday, September 18, 2025 - The residents of Indian Village, Morris Park, Van Nest and Pelham Parkway have united in their opposition to the proposed 'Just Homes' slated to be placed at Jacobi Hospital's building 2, the worst possible location for such community-destroying housing initiative that is only backed by outside investors hiding behind a noble organization, Fortune Society. The constituents' wishes should matter more than the outside investors' interests to righteous elected officials.

The resident stakeholders would like to deliver their unified message to Mayor Eric Adams, Council Speaker Adrienne Adams and all the council members voting for this project on September 18th to unanimously reject it as it should be because there is a resident community-backed substitution to this community-rejected 'Just Home' proposal. The above residents, their elected officials and all the relevant community stakeholders are demanding STEM DUP ACADEMY, a specialized STEM elementary public school, to be housed at 1900 Seminole Avenue, Bronx, New York 10461 as opposed to the proposed 'Just Homes'. "If we don't educate, we will incarcerate." Mayor Eric Adams.

All city council members who believe as we do that we need more specialized STEM schools in New York City instead of continuing to subsidize failed programs should support the wishes of the aforementioned stakeholders. At a moment when our government is making it more difficult for high achieving foreign students to continue to enroll into our prestigious Ivy League universities, our marginalized minority students especially must now be prepared to fill the gaps. If they're not enrolled into specialized STEM K-12 schools, they will not be expected in our national STEM labor force.

"Public resources must be prudently used for public benefits therefore housing the community-backed proposed specialized STEM elementary public school is the most effective use of building 2 at Jacobi Hospital. We have too many jails and shelters because we don't prioritize investments in

specialized STEM schools in the Bronx." Sheikh Musa Drammeh.

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Outlook

[EXTERNAL] Just homes

From Stephanie Ramos **Date** Fri 9/19/2025 6:57 PM**To** Land Use Testimony <landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov>

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Sent from my iPhone

I am opposed to just homes project. As a mother and now a grandmother we have enough to fear. No more! No to just homes!

Stephanie Ramos



Outlook

[EXTERNAL] Just no to just home

From**Date** Fri 9/19/2025 7:40 PM**To** Land Use Testimony <landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. Report suspected phishing emails with the Phish Alert Button or forward them to phish@oti.nyc.gov as an attachment.

Good Afternoon ,

I'm opposed to the Just Homes project with its ever changing program . The Fortune Society does not distinguish the crimes when vetting, they have stated so publicaly at city council hearings , so their vetting means nothing . This is not an appropriate location near schools . This area needs senior housing for seniors with medical needs or veterans housing for veterans with medical needs . Why is it every time a community asks for such , it's never put forth .Are you not including seniors and veterans in your housing plans ? You should ! They vote too .
Just No ! To Just Homes !

District 13 citizen

[Sent from the all new AOL app for iOS](#)



[EXTERNAL] Just home project

From TA Ferr [REDACTED]
Date Wed 9/17/2025 4:48 PM
To Land Use Testimony <landusetestimony@council.nyc.gov>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe. Report suspected phishing emails with the Phish Alert Button or forward them to phish@oti.nyc.gov as an attachment.

I strongly oppose the "Just Home" project which seeks to permanently house formerly incarcerated Rikers' detainees at 1900 Seminole Ave, an unused building on the Jacobi campus within close proximity to residential homes and schools. There are at least 13 schools that I am aware of within a mile of the building. One area of major concern is the fact that neither severity of offense or criminal history (including but not limited to acts of violence or crimes against children) will disqualify any former inmate from tenancy. Screening will be performed solely by the Fortune Society and tenancy will be granted solely at the discretion of the Fortune Society- an organization advocating for the lightening of NY's already practically nonexistent residency restrictions on sex offenders , more relaxed registration requirements for sex offenders and for financial incentives to be provided at the City and State levels to housing developers and providers who agree to house and serve people with sex-related convictions. During a public meeting on Just Home the residents were made aware of the story of Roderick Compass. Mr. Compass was a landlord who rented an apartment in his Springfield Garden Queens home to the Fortune Society. The Fortune Society then housed Sylvia Cruz and Jason Hermidas, a formerly incarcerated couple, in that apartment. Many of us saw the media stories of how Ms. Cruz and Mr. Hermidas trashed the apartment they were placed in and the problems they gave Mr. Compass. But there is one part of this story that didn't receive the coverage that the trashing of this apartment received. Mr. Hermidas, who was placed in an apartment in the same home as Compass' two young daughters, is a registered sex offender. How effective can the Fortune Society's screening process be if it can result in the placing of a registered sex offender in the same home as two young children? When this proposal was first disclosed to the public NYCHH and Fortune indicated that tenants would be gravely ill and practically at death's door. We learned later on such presentations were misleading and that was not to be the case. The inmate tenants may not be as gravely ill as described and will in all probability include those suffering from mental illness and substance addiction. The tenants will be referred by Correctional Health Services ("CHS") to the Fortune Society from a subgroup of Rikers' inmates who have "complex medical needs" and are homeless. Based upon CHS' own disclosures the most prevalent medical conditions suffered by Rikers inmates seem to be mental health and substance abuse problems. There have been far better uses proposed for the Just Home building besides housing dedicated for former Rikers inmates. Veteran's housing and senior housing have been proposed. Affordable housing for Jacobi employees has been proposed. A STEM school has been proposed. All alternatives far more palatable and far less risky for the community.

Theresa Ferri Bronx NY

Sent from my iPad

Dear City Council Land Use Committee,

My name is Zoe Videlefsky, and I am a medical student at the Albert Einstein College of Medicine, located just a short walk from Jacobi Hospital. In my training, I see every day how deeply health and housing are connected and how much our patients' well-being depends on having a safe, stable place to live.

I strongly support the Just Home project because it reflects the values of dignity, safety, and health that we should be advancing as a city. As a member of HOPE, the Homeless Outreach Project at Einstein, I have met community members experiencing homelessness who would directly benefit from this project, and I have spoken with doctors, nurses, and social workers who work with this population that can also attest to its desperate need. I have also seen through shadowing at The Brook, how well a model like this works in getting people on their feet and on a path of success and healing, that they otherwise would struggle to achieve with the many barriers to care. In a moment when an estimated 350,000 New Yorkers are experiencing homelessness, we cannot afford to turn down an opportunity to create permanent, affordable, supportive housing in our community.

As a future physician, I am particularly moved by the health impact this project will have. Jacobi and NYC Health + Hospitals have identified dozens of patients each year with significant medical needs such as advanced cancer, end-stage kidney disease, and severe heart failure, who are released from Rikers with nowhere to go. Managing these kinds of illnesses is nearly impossible without a stable place to live. Just Home will provide that stability, saving lives and improving health outcomes, while also reducing reliance on expensive emergency care and hospitalizations.

This project also makes our neighborhood safer. Research is clear: when justice-involved individuals have access to stable housing and supportive services, they are far less likely to reoffend. The Fortune Society has demonstrated across the city that housing programs like this not only support residents but also strengthen the neighborhoods around them. Past incarceration does not predict what kind of neighbor a person will be, and meeting people's basic needs makes all of us safer.

Ultimately, Just Home is about building the kind of Bronx community we want to live in: one rooted in compassion, dignity, and health. I urge the Committee to support this project.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Zoe Videlefsky

Medical Student, Albert Einstein College of Medicine