

CITY COUNCIL  
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS

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NOVEMBER 22, 2021  
Start: 10:31 A.M.  
Recess: 10:40 A.M.

HELD AT: REMOTE HEARING (VIRTUAL ROOM 4)

B E F O R E: ROBERT E. CORNEGY, JR. CHAIRPERSON

COUNCIL MEMBERS: FERNANDO CABRERA  
MARGARET S. CHIN  
MARK GJONAJ  
BARRY S. GRODENCHIK  
FARAH N. LOUIS  
BILL PERKINS  
CARLINA RIVERA  
HELEN K. ROSENTHAL

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

2 JOHANNA CASTRO: We're live.

3 SGT. BIONDO: Recording to the PC has  
4 begun.

5 SGT. HOPE: Recording as well.

6 SGT. PEREZ: Back up is rolling.

7 SGT. BIONDO: Thank you. Good morning  
8 and welcome to today's remote New York City Council  
9 Hearing Vote for the Committee on Housing and  
10 Buildings. At this time, would all panelists please  
11 turn on their videos for verification purposes and to  
12 minimize disruption we ask you to please place your  
13 electronic devices on vibrate or silent mode. Thank  
14 you for your cooperation. Chair Cornegy, we are  
15 ready to begin.

16 CHAIRPERSON ROBERT CORNEGY: Thank you  
17 and good morning everyone and thank you for coming.  
18 I'm Council Member Robert Cornegy Chair of the  
19 Council's Committee on Housing and Buildings. We are  
20 here to hold a vote on two bills. One that will help  
21 beautify our City and one that will protect tenants  
22 for penalties for vacating a residence between the  
23 end of their lease term. Proposed Intro 1635A  
24 sponsored by majority leader Laurie Cumbo who  
25 required that the Department of Cultural Affairs or

2 DCLA to establish a program to solicit artwork to be  
3 placed on sidewalk sheds and scaffolding. The  
4 Department of Buildings would be required to approve  
5 40 works of art solicited by DCLA together with 10  
6 works of art received by solicitation from other  
7 agencies. Owners of properties with sidewalk sheds  
8 and scaffolding would be required to select a piece  
9 of artwork even from the solicited artwork or by  
10 seeking site specific artwork although properties,  
11 property owners would also be able to opt out. This  
12 Bill will help improve the City's landscape by  
13 turning common eye sores into canvases. Proposed  
14 Intro Number 2312A sponsored by Council Member Riley  
15 would limit the fees that a landlord can charge a  
16 tenant who vacates a residence before the expiration  
17 of a lease. The landlord is required to mitigate  
18 damages, i.e. attempt to re-rent the premises for the  
19 remainder of the lease term. Where a tenant breaks a  
20 lease the bill would allow a landlord to collect  
21 certain costs related to prepare a unit for re-rental  
22 from the tenant who breaks such a lease but would not  
23 allow a landlord to collect any additional costs,  
24 penalties or fees. I apologize I cannot see who I'm  
25 joined by so if the Committee Clerk or the Council

2 Staff would please announce. I can only see for  
3 whatever reason Council Member Carlina Rivera. Hi  
4 Carlina. But I know that we do have a full house if  
5 we could somehow.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Good morning Chair.  
7 Thanks so much. I'll just welcome Council Members  
8 Cabrera, Chin, Gjonaj, Grodenchik, Louis, Rivera and  
9 Rosenthal of the Committee who are here with us and  
10 we are also joined by Council Member Yeager and  
11 Majority Leader Cumbo.

12 CHAIRPERSON ROBERT CORNEGY: Thank you.  
13 Majority Leader Cumbo would you like to say something  
14 on your Bill?

15 MAJORITY LEADER LAURIE CUMBO: Of course,  
16 I would. Thank you so much Council Member Cornegy  
17 and thank you so much for chairing this Committee  
18 Hearing today. This is such an important topic and I  
19 certainly appreciate you prioritizing it in the midst  
20 of many members wanting to pass Bills before the  
21 session closes out. So, I am very appreciative of  
22 it. When we talk about scaffolding and we look at  
23 those green scaffolds that are placed all over our  
24 City we know it's just ugly. Every single building  
25 under construction in this City is painted dark

2 forest green, like a barrage of visual noise lacking  
3 any value whatsoever, we are besieged with this  
4 constant reminder of uniformity. A bland uniformity.  
5 Anyone walking down our streets knows this site.  
6 It's on our scaffolding and our pedestrian sheds.  
7 These structures dominant so much of our city. For  
8 too long our City has been deplorable in it's ability  
9 to showcase the vibrant and prolific art community  
10 that exists here. Yet, before our eyes, we have  
11 unlimited structures that could be a virtual blank  
12 canvas for our community. That opportunity for  
13 artists to showcase gives each and every one of us an  
14 opportunity to show everyone the talent that is here  
15 and share its creativity and beauty. Look, we know  
16 New York City is the epicenter of art and culture.  
17 We cannot allow for scaffolding that's painted in  
18 this dark green to overrun our City. Our artists  
19 need the opportunity to create, they need the ability  
20 to showcase their talent and creativity. Over the  
21 last few years, street artists came to the World  
22 Trade Center to bring more life to the rest of the  
23 construction site that existed there. These  
24 paintings and installations have been well received  
25 and take attention away from the ongoing work that is

2 occurring there. Construction sites across the City  
3 can do the same simply by working with artists who  
4 are ready to get to work on projects. That's why  
5 I've introduced legislation that will bring these  
6 structures to life by requiring the public design  
7 commission to commission art pieces at construction  
8 sites annually. Addition to encourage more artwork  
9 across the City on these structures this legislation  
10 would permit business owners to work with artists to  
11 install artwork on these temporary structures  
12 themselves. Not only do artists get a chance to have  
13 a public space to display their work but owners can  
14 show their commitment to neighborhoods that they are  
15 doing work in. The possibilities of art that can  
16 come from this new initiative is endless and with the  
17 abundance of artists here, the variety of artwork can  
18 be as well. Arts and culture have always been what  
19 makes New York City a place of attraction. It brings  
20 people here from all over the world. We should be  
21 continuing to encourage these communities and giving  
22 them the space they need to express themselves. We  
23 can do so and at the same time rid our city of an  
24 eyesore and bring our streets to life. I also want  
25 to add that this dynamic is a way of life for so many

2 countries across the world. This is really a no  
3 brainer. We need to make sure that our artists have  
4 opportunities to exhibit their work that we bring  
5 light and vibrancy to communities that we employ our  
6 artists to be able to have an opportunity to have  
7 their work visually seen. Every community deserves  
8 the ability to have their art, culture and creativity  
9 exhibited throughout New York City. Art is the soul  
10 of our City and in everything we do art should be at  
11 the table in determining how we move forward. Thank  
12 you.

13 CHAIRPERSON ROBERT CORNEGY: Thank you so  
14 much Majority Leader Cumbo. Thank you for your  
15 passion around the arts and thank you for fighting to  
16 the bear end to make sure that this city is  
17 beautified in the way I mean, I mean that with the  
18 most seriousness. No one has demonstrated, you and  
19 Jimmy Van Bramer quite frankly demonstrated a real  
20 true commitment to the vibrancy of this City through  
21 the arts and I really truly appreciate it. I believe  
22 this is the part where I ask the Committee Clerk to  
23 call the roll. Unless Council Member Riley is here  
24 and would like to speak on his bill. If not,  
25 Committee Clerk would you please call the roll.



1 COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS 9

2 WILLIAM MARTIN, COMMITTEE CLERK: William  
3 Martin, Committee Clerk roll call vote Committee on  
4 Housings and Buildings on proposed introduction 1635A  
5 and 2312A. Both items are coupled. Chair Cornegy?

6 WILLIAM MARTIN, COMMITTEE CLERK: Thank  
7 you. Cabrera?

8 FERNANDO CABRERA: Aye.

9 WILLIAM MARTIN, COMMITTEE CLERK: Chin?

10 MARGARET CHIN: Aye.

11 WILLIAM MARTIN, COMMITTEE CLERK:  
12 Rosenthal?

13 HELEN ROSENTHAL: I vote aye,  
14 congratulations.

15 WILLIAM MARTIN, COMMITTEE CLERK:  
16 Grodenchik?

17 BARRY GRODENCHIK: I vote aye and for the  
18 record I do like forest green but I do understand  
19 that other people might not like it so I congratulate  
20 Council Member Cumbo on this Legislation and will be  
21 looking forward to seeing what develops from it.  
22 Thank you.

23 WILLIAM MARTIN, COMMITTEE CLERK: Gjonaj?

24 MARK GJONAJ: Aye.

25 WILLIAM MARTIN, COMMITTEE CLERK: Rivera?

2 CARLINA RIVERA: I vote aye.

3 WILLIAM MARTIN, COMMITTEE CLERK: Louis?

4 FARAH LOUIS: I vote aye.

5 WILLIAM MARTIN, COMMITTEE CLERK: Thank

6 you. One moment. By a vote of eight in the

7 affirmative, zero in the negative and no abstentions

8 both items have been adopted by the Committee.

9 CHAIRPERSON ROBERT CORNEGY: Today's

10 hearing on Housing and Building, I'm sorry, today's

11 vote on Housing and Buildings. If we don't have any

12 outstanding members and we don't need to hold it open

13 I will bring this hearing to a close.

14 WILLIAM MARTIN, COMMITTEE CLERK: I'll

15 confirm, one second. Yes sir, we're good to close.

16 CHAIRPERSON ROBERT CORNEGY: This hearing

17 is officially closed. Thank you so much everybody.

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1 COMMITTEE ON HOUSING AND BUILDINGS

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C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date December 28, 2021