

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES
Of the
COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING

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HELD AT: Council Chambers - City Hall

B E F O R E: Chris Banks
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

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Erik D. Bottcher
Justin L. Brannan
Darlene Mealy
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A P P E A R A N C E S (CONTINUED)

Celines Miranda

Marqis Jenkins

Dr. Keshia Crawford

Teresa Scott

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Christina Chaise

Carla Hollingsworth

Manuel Martinez

Ted Burrows

Metin Sarci

Kevin Bravo

Galligno Francois

Christopher Leon Johnson

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

Sharon Brown

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April Summars

Karen Blondel

Simone Hall

Lisa Hall

Christine Burke

Cynthia Tibbs

Ramona Ferreyra

Jeannie R. Lopez

Rosemarie Williams

Danette L. Chavis

Carmen Quinones

Dana G. Elden

Beverly MacFarlane

Louis Bertot

Sadie

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

Sabrina Dingle

Lisa Hall

1
2 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Please find your
3 seats. Please find your seats. Good morning. Good
4 morning. Welcome to the New York City hearing on the
5 Committee on Public Housing. At this time, please
6 silence all electronics and do not approach the dais.
7 I repeat, please do not approach the dais. If you
8 haven't filled out a slip and are testifying, please
9 fill out a slip at the back of the room with the
10 Sergeant at Arms. You can submit one online at
11 testimony@council.nyc.gov. That is
12 testimony@council.nyc.gov. Any further questions or
13 concerns, please contact the Sergeant. Chair, you
14 may begin.

15 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you. I'm
16 calling this meeting to order. Good morning everyone
17 and welcome to this hearing on the Committee for
18 Public Housing at New York City Council. I am
19 Councilman Chris Banks, the Chair of this Committee,
20 and I'm glad to be joined by my colleague, Justin
21 Brannan, and we're also glad to be joined by the
22 public who's here today. I am also happy to welcome
23 the New York City Comptroller's Office who is here at
24 our hearing this morning, and also I will be
25 expecting the Public Advocate in a few. Today's

1 hearing focuses on transparency. Transparency is an
2 essential expectation for all city agencies. An
3 essential role of the city of the Council and its
4 demands for transparency when it is not freely given,
5 but transparency is especially vital for NYCHA due to
6 its dual role as both a public authority and a
7 landlord. NYCHA is accountable not only to the city
8 in general, but to its over 300,000 public housing
9 residents who rely on and deserve clear and honest
10 answers about the safety and the conditions of their
11 homes. Without transparency residents are left in
12 the dark about critical issues that affect their
13 daily lives from the physical conditions of their
14 apartments to the decisions about building management
15 and governance. NYCHA should be held at a minimum to
16 the same standard as private landlord in the city,
17 and ideally even a higher standard as the government
18 body tasked with providing safe and affordable for
19 mixed-income New Yorkers. One of the most pressing
20 areas where NYCHA lacks transparency is housing
21 conditions and maintenance. We've heard that
22 residents struggle to access clear and up-to-date
23 information about the status of repairs. Outstanding
24 code violations, long-term capital improvements in
25

1 their buildings, and too often work orders are marked
2 as completed when repairs are still unfinished. And
3 there is little visibility into the criteria
4 considered by NYCHA whether it prioritizes
5 maintenance requests or selects contractors to
6 complete repairs. At this hearing, we hope that
7 NYCHA can shed light on these processes, and commit
8 to making that information more accessible to
9 residents moving forward. Another major concern is
10 transparency around Permanent Affordability
11 Commitment Together, or PACT. Under the PACT NYCHA
12 converts conventional Section 9 housing to private
13 management under the federal rental assistance
14 demonstration model. Despite prior hearings by the
15 committee seeking transparency around PACT, NYCHA has
16 not offered clear answers as to how developments are
17 selected for conversions, and what impacts
18 conversions will have on the services and rights
19 available to the residents, and how oversight is
20 maintained once private entities take over. NYCHA
21 has repeatedly affirmed that residents under PACT
22 have the same rights as residents under Section 9
23 housing. Yet, we've heard that PACT residents are
24 evicted at higher rates, have limited ability to
25

1 transfer to new apartments and are not given access
2 to the same services that they were guaranteed under
3 at NYCHA under Section 9, risks that are not informed
4 of before the conversion. As developments continue
5 to be selected for potential conversions to PACT or
6 considered PACT when in the voting process for the
7 permanent housing Preservation Trust, NYCHA has an
8 opportunity to provide greater transparency about
9 these alternatives to ensure that residents can make
10 informed decisions and are not pushed into making a
11 choice that will harm them down the line. Look to
12 hear such commitments from NYCHA today, but if we
13 don't, I have serious reservations about the future
14 of the PACT program and its ability to truly serve
15 the residents. Moving forward, it is imperative that
16 NYCHA provide timely and accurate information to
17 residents about decisions and operations that affect
18 the safety and livability of their homes. Otherwise,
19 harmful cycles of mismanagement, deteriorating living
20 conditions, and erosion of the trust will continue. I
21 hope that today's forum provides an opportunity for
22 us to make meaningful steps towards stopping these
23 cycles and ushering in a new era of proactive
24 transparency in the city's public housing. I would
25

1 like to thank my staff, Michael Lambert [sp?], along
2 with the Public Housing Committee staff, Jose,
3 Charles, Jack, Reese [sp?], Sierra Townsend, and for
4 all the work they've put in to making this hearing
5 possible. In keeping with tradition for this
6 committee, before we hear from NYCHA, we will first
7 hear from the testimony of a panel of NYCHA residents
8 and advocates. We will now call for the pre-panel:
9 Marqis Jenkins, Celines Miranda, and Doctor Kesha
10 Crawford. I now open the hearing for public
11 testimony. I remind members of the public that this
12 is a government proceeding and that decorum shall be
13 observed at all times. As such, members of the
14 public shall maintain silent at all times. The
15 witness table is reserved for people who wish to
16 testify. No video recording or photography is
17 allowed from the witness table. Further, the members
18 of the public may not present audio or radio
19 recordings at testimony, but may submit transcripts
20 of such recordings to the Sergeant of Arms for
21 inclusion into the hearing record. We will begin
22 with-- Celines, would you like to begin? Thank you.

24 CELINES MIRANDA: My name is Celines
25 Miranda. I'm here representing the Fulton and

1
2 Elliott Chelsea tenants against demolition. We have
3 been fighting with the City against the proposed
4 demolition of our NYCHA building in Chelsea, two
5 separate developments, Fulton and Elliot Chelsea
6 Houses. There are several false narratives being
7 circulated by NYCHA, our City Council Member Erik
8 Bottcher, and the developers Essence and Related
9 Companies regarding the demolition of our public
10 housing. I want to remind the Public Housing
11 Committee that the demolition of public housing in
12 any community threatens the public housing in your
13 respective district as well. We cannot allow this
14 reckless demolition proposal to move forward as it
15 threatens the future of public housing throughout New
16 York City. The following three arguments are being
17 used by NYCHA and the private developers Essence and
18 Related Companies to support the demolition of our
19 public housing. One, the residents want and chose
20 demolition. Two, the buildings are falling apart,
21 and three, it will cost more to renovate. I want to
22 explain how these are all false. First, we have a
23 petition of 949 signatures from the Fulton and
24 Elliott Chelsea tenants who are against the
25 demolition which far exceeds the 550 tenants who

1 selected new construction. I personally knocked on
2 hundreds of doors to speak with my neighbors about
3 this demolition proposal, and most of them do not
4 want it. Our City Council Member is choosing to side
5 with NYCHA and the developers by ignoring our
6 petition. Two, second, if our buildings were falling
7 apart, they would not be habitable. We would be
8 required to vacate immediately. The fact that
9 families, elderly, the sick, disabled are living
10 there today means that the buildings are habitable.
11 My apartment is in great shape and so are the
12 apartments of many of my neighbors. In addition to
13 this, Essence, Related Companies and NYCHA admitted
14 in a letter to our Community Board that they are not
15 aware of any significant structural damages of our
16 FEC building. In other words, the buildings are not
17 falling apart. And lastly, the cost of demolition--
18 Related Companies recently admitted at a Community
19 Board meeting that the cost to demolish our buildings
20 and rebuild is higher than the renovation with a
21 total of \$1.9 billion. This is an increase from the
22 original projected cost, while NYCHA said that the
23 renovation of our FEC building would cost more than
24 demolition. NYCHA and the private developers have an
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1 agenda. They want to demolish public housing, even
2 though it's more expensive than rehabilitating our
3 NYCHA buildings. We demand to view all relevant
4 documents that are vital to this proposal. Number
5 one, an independent audit that was completed for
6 Related Companies. This audit is the one that
7 demolition proposal is being based on. We have asked
8 to see this audit, and NYCHA has not answered us. We
9 need to see the audit conducted by Related Companies,
10 the one being used to justify the demolition of our
11 homes. Two, we must see the [inaudible] Report, a
12 document that is supposed to detail how our buildings
13 are in disrepair. All housing authorities must
14 provide all [inaudible] Reports prior to any public
15 housing demolition-- can I get 30 seconds--

17 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: 30 seconds to wrap it
18 up.

19 CELINES MIRANDA: according to HUD's
20 rules. NYCHA has yet to disclose this report. We
21 have requested this report over and over again. Why
22 are they not making this available for public
23 disclosure? We insist that these documents be made
24 available and our representatives should also be
25 requesting to see these documents. Otherwise, you

1
2 are all allowing the demolition of public housing to
3 continue without any actual proof that anything is
4 wrong with the building. Thank you for the platform.

5 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you.

6 [applause]

7 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Order, guys. Order,
8 order. Thank you guys. Please reserve your
9 applause. There's no applause in the committee
10 hearing. Please. Thank you. We're going to
11 maintain order. Marqis?

12 MARQIS JENKINS: So, I do want to
13 applaud and thank Celines, Lenae [sp?], Jackie [sp?]
14 and the members of FEC, as well as Doctor Crawford
15 who have been fighting this Herculean fight. Going
16 back and continuing what we discussed outside. We
17 have a huge problem with transparency. Everyone in
18 public housing, everyone working with public housing
19 residents wants to see the repairs done. The
20 question is how do we do it, and how do we do it in a
21 way where the residents are at the decision-making
22 table? We have-- or the New York Housing Authority
23 has estimated a \$78 billion deficit, but what
24 continues to get left out of that number is the fact
25 that is a 20-year projection. And so simple math,

1 when you divide \$78 billion by 20 years, how much
2 money do we need for public housing each year? And
3 why can we not get nearly \$2 billion from all three
4 levels of government? Further, when we look at the
5 \$78 billion deficit and we look at the amount of RAD
6 conversions that have taken place thus far, the New
7 York City Housing Authority has been mentioning the
8 \$78 billion for well over a year, and that number
9 jumped from nearly two years ago. So how is it that
10 we have all of these conversions and yet the deficit
11 is not going down? When we also think about
12 transparency, we're also talking about the access
13 that residents have to the information, not just the
14 information about the repairs that need to be done in
15 their home and how much it cost to do those repairs,
16 but the contracts that are being signed. When tenant
17 association presidents are being asked to sign non-
18 disclosure agreements. That is a problem. It goes
19 completely against their role as tenant association
20 presidents, and when there is a block, something, a
21 physical document that is blocking them from
22 communicating what is happening in their development,
23 that becomes the inability to do their job
24 effectively. And so we need to put measures in to
25

1
2 make sure that tenant association presidents are not
3 signing non-disclosure agreements. The other thing I
4 want to talk about is the evaluation of RAD. We only
5 have one study of RAD and that is the Human Watch
6 Report. New York City with all the RAD that has been
7 conducted, there has been no evaluation on the
8 overall program. And in the New York City Housing
9 Authority will tell you in their testimony that with
10 each conversion they have made changes. So that
11 suggests that they have not created the ideal model
12 of RAD thus far, and part of that is because they
13 haven't included the residents in a real way. We
14 have dozens of organizations all across the city that
15 are perfect experts at community engagement that they
16 should be utilizing. One more thing about
17 transparency is today we will hear from the New York
18 City Housing Authority, but who we will not hear from
19 is the developers. So how much oversight do we truly
20 have over these developers when our residents or when
21 these developments cross over in t their custody. 30
22 seconds to go-- what we are asking for is we're
23 asking for real resident engagement. Residents,
24 there's no one-size-fits-all plan. So there might be
25 some residents who want RAD, but if we are not arming

1 residents with the information that they need by
2 conducting an actual evaluation of RAD by conducting
3 actual independent physical needs assessments of
4 their development so that they can understand how
5 much it costs to fix all the repairs and where they
6 can get that funding, and further, we need tools.
7 We need tools to be able to hold private developers
8 accountable. There should be an evaluation mechanism
9 that's put in place to evaluate these private
10 developers on an annual or biannual basis. And
11 finally, we need funding. The scariest part about
12 RAD is that they are taking mortgages out on these
13 properties, and for the first time in history public
14 housing can fall threat to foreclosure. And in
15 putting forth legislation like the Public Housing
16 Preservation Trust, there was no conversation about
17 what happens if there is a default. If the city and
18 the state thinks that this is a great plan, then why
19 not back it up by saying if there's a default, we
20 will guarantee the funding to pay back the funding so
21 that public housing does not go into foreclosure. So,
22 thank you, and I apologize for going over.

24 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: It's alright. Thank
25 you for your testimony. Dr. Crawford?

1
2 DOCTOR KESHA CRAWFORD: Yes. Thank you.
3 Thank you for the opportunity to be heard. My name
4 is Doctor Kesha Crawford, and I stand before you only
5 as long-- as a long-time resident of Stuyvesant
6 Gardens, but as the duly elected Resident Management
7 Corporation, RMC, Chair. Today, I speak on behalf of
8 the residents who have endured years of neglect,
9 deception and now direct retaliation by RAD/PACT and
10 NYCHA. I have threatened, lied upon, and retal--
11 excuse me-- retaliated--

12 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Take
13 your time.

14 DOCTOR KESHA CRAWFORD: against simply for
15 exercising my rights, advocating for my community and
16 demanding transparency, ability and fairness. I
17 moved into Stuyvesant Gardens with the hope of
18 providing my family with a stable home. Instead, for
19 decades I along with my neighbors have suffered
20 through deplorable living conditions. The lack of
21 installations-- insulation, malfunctioning radiators
22 that spew steam, and the bathroom vents that have
23 never worked have led to chronic mold infestations in
24 our closets and bathrooms. Leaks from above are
25 routinely-- excuse me, y'all, I'm just-- above--

1 without addressing the root cause, allowing moisture
2 to fester, attracting roaches and mice that scurry
3 through our walls. When we ask about the future of
4 our development, we are met with silence, half-
5 truths, our upright misinformation. I was personally
6 approached by individuals pushing RAD/PACT's agenda,
7 asking me what I wanted. My answer was simple
8 accountability. Instead of a meaningful response, I
9 was told I should simply be happy with a nice
10 apartment and accept whatever is handed to me. That
11 is unacceptable. Renters are being harassed,
12 intimidated, and told that they must sign documents
13 without being given full and honest disclosures. We
14 have seniors in Gardens who were told that the heat
15 would not be turned back on unless they signed new
16 leases. Where's the morality in that? Where is the
17 legal justification? Where is the oversight? We have
18 submitted multiple requests for reasonable
19 accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities
20 Act, ADA, and those requests have been ignored or
21 denied without cause. This is a clear violation of
22 federal law under 24CFR42USC and New York City Human
23 Rights Law. The My NYCHA system is riddled with
24 conflicts of interest, and maintenance tickets are
25

1
2 regularly closed without resolution, allowing these
3 hazardous conditions to persist. Beyond [inaudible]
4 excuse me. Beyond the deteriorating conditions, we
5 are witnessing a coordinated effort to silence and
6 coerce residents into compliance. We have reports
7 of-- we have reports of tenants being told that if
8 they do not open their doors, their locks will be
9 drilled open. Let me ask-- let me ask you this? Is
10 this what transparency looks like? Why is RAD/PACT
11 threatening residents to force them into conversion?
12 Who benefits from this scheme? Certainly not the
13 residents.

14 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: You have a minute to
15 wrap it up.

16 DOCTOR KESHA CRAWFORD: Okay. Instead,
17 NYCHA [inaudible] developer's profit-- NYCHA dodges
18 accountability, developers profit, financial
19 institutions rake in the rewards, and tenants left--
20 and tenants are left in the dark confused,
21 misinformed, and struggling with the mental and
22 emotional toll of this manufactured chaos. Enough is
23 enough. The residents of Stuyvesant Gardens have
24 passed a binding resolution rejecting RAD/PACT
25 [inaudible]. We have asserted our rights, and we

1 will take [inaudible] legislative and watchdog
2 measures to prevent the conversion of our
3 development. this letter show as a form of cease and
4 desist demand to NYCHA and all associate entities if
5 the harassment, intimidation, and fraudulent tactics
6 do not immediate cease within seven business days, we
7 will number one, file formal complaints with the US
8 Department Of Housing and Urban Development, HUD, the
9 New York Comptroller, the New York Attorney General,
10 and federal watchdog agencies. Two, pursue legal
11 action against NYCHA and all involved parties for
12 violation of federal housing laws, ADA non-
13 compliance, and tenant harassment. Three, petition
14 legislators to conduct oversight hearings into
15 NYCHA's mismanagement and misconduct under RAD/PACT.
16 Four, mobilize media coverage and expose the
17 corruption, intimidation and coercion being exposed
18 on tenants. We will not be forced into conversion
19 against our will. Other developments were given the
20 right to choose their future. Why is that right
21 being stripped from us? We demand a freeze on
22 RAD/PACT-- we demand a freeze on RAD/PACT conversions
23 until a full transparent investigation is conducted,
24 and we demand in-- and we demand an independent
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1
2 oversight body that does not direct conflict of
3 interest with NYCHA or private developers. Doctor
4 Martin Luther King, Jr. once said, "Our lives begin
5 to end the day we become silent about things that
6 matter." Stuyvesant Gardens matter. Our voices
7 matter. Our rights matter. NYCHA, RAD/PACT and all
8 involved parties, you-- NYCHA, RAD/PACT and all
9 involved parties, you have seven days to correct your
10 course-- your course. If not, we will escalate every
11 legal legislative and public action available to us.
12 We refuse to be ignored, and we refused to be
13 silenced. Respectfully, Doctor Kesha Crawford,
14 Resident Management Corporation Chair, Stuyvesant
15 Gardens. Thank you.

16 [applause]

17 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you. Now, let
18 me-- before we proceed with the pre-panel, I want to
19 recognize some of my colleagues that are here. We
20 have Council Member Darlene Mealy, Council Member
21 Avilés, and also we've been joined by Public
22 Advocate. And before we proceed to the pre-panel, we
23 will have our public advocate give a statement.
24 Thank you.

25

1
2 PUBLIC ADVOCATE WILLIAMS: Thank you so
3 much, Mr. Chair. Thank you for your testimony. As
4 the-- can't hear me? Is that better? Alright, thank
5 you, Mr. Chair. Thank you for your testimony.
6 Thanks for giving me the opportunity to give-- for
7 giving an opening statement. Good morning. My name
8 is Jumaane Williams. I'm Public Advocate for the
9 City of New York. Thank you again, Chair Banks, for
10 holding this hearing and allowing me the opportunity
11 to provide a statement. Over the last few decades,
12 the New York City Housing Authority, NYCHA, has
13 earned the reputation for being one of the worst
14 landlords in New York City. Their physical needs
15 assessment, or PNA, was conducted in 2023 by United
16 States Housing and Urban Development or HUD. There
17 are 335 NYCHA developments consisting of 170,000
18 units that have violations. NYCHA has been on my New
19 York City Worst Landlord List in prior years for
20 multiple years. Between 2023 to 2024 NYCHA's work
21 orders decreased from 618,310, the most in history,
22 to 600,233. Furthermore, there need to be complete
23 transparency from NYCHA to determine whether repairs
24 were actually addressed, since work order tickets are
25 often closed without repairs being done, and it's

1 important to know many units have violations today,
2 as well how many are C violations. NYCHA still needs
3 almost \$80 billion with a "b" to resolve necessary
4 repairs across the city. Elected officials continue
5 to hear frustrations of constituents who have had to
6 brave another winter with lack of heat or hot water
7 in their NYCHA buildings, a problem that has been
8 exacerbated as a result of the chronic underfunding
9 by the federal government. The Housing Authority
10 advocated for Emergency Rental Assistance Program, or
11 ERAP, funding and there were other reports that NYCHA
12 was to distribute \$185,000 million to aid households
13 that owed rent. Yet, there's been an increase in
14 nonpayment cases, probably as a result of the
15 pandemic, as well as NYCHA and its residents waiting
16 for ERAP inclusion and dispersement [sic]. NYCHA
17 created the Permanent Affordability Commitment
18 Together, PACT or PACT initiative, as part of the
19 next generation plan back in 2015. Almost 10 years
20 later as of July 2024 it was reported by the CEO Lisa
21 Bova-Hiatt that 138 development across the City are
22 either in the planning and engagement phase, under
23 construction, or have completed the conversion of
24 PACT, resulting in an estimated \$13.2 billion worth
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1 of renovations. 138 out of 335 or 41 percent of
2 NYCHA developments have converted to PACT, but a
3 great number of NYCHA residents have shared mistrust
4 during transition periods at their developments.
5 Unfortunately, we've seen Mayor Adams grow closer to
6 President Trump since November 2024, but it is
7 unclear how their relationship translate into
8 assisting NYCHA and New Yorkers. Moreover, we need
9 to know how Trump heavy-handed federal agency
10 headcount reductions and cuts to agency budgets will
11 impact HUD and public housing residents. While it is
12 clear that NYCHA needs a considerable amount of
13 infusion of cash, they also must do better with
14 transparency and communication when it comes to a
15 variety of issues, such as mold remediations, ground
16 soil arsenic contamination, and automatically closing
17 out work order tickets when someone is not home. I
18 believe NYCHA has failed to create a healthy
19 environment for its residents, because many pre-
20 existing challenges have been exacerbated as a result
21 of the pandemic. Hopefully we can continue to work
22 together to better understand what meaningfully
23 practices NYCHA has taken to strengthen the majority
24 of the residents' quality of life, and that's in
25

1 management even without some of the funding, because
2 both of those things are necessary. In terms of
3 RAD/PACT, particularly around Fulton Elliott, this is
4 really, really important to get correct since a lot
5 of people are looking at what's happening here. And
6 I always want to make it clear that many things can
7 be true at the same time. It is 100 percent true
8 that we need funding on multiple years, and it is
9 probably true that we are not going to get much of
10 that funding from the Federal Government. Trying to
11 figure out how we address the tenants' needs are
12 really, really important. Any proposal that's put
13 forward gets pushed back. So we're trying to figure
14 out how best to have tenants themselves lead and what
15 they prefer. Sometimes it's the best on some very
16 tough decisions. That means some residents are going
17 to agree with RAD/PACT, and some are not, and we
18 should allow tenants to be the lead there. What has
19 concerned me about Fulton Elliott is how some of the
20 votes around this took place. And I do think we
21 should take some opportunities here, really dig in
22 just to make sure that tenants have the ability to
23 have their voices heard. I've been really concerned
24 about that, how NYCHA and developer handled that
25

1 situation. So I would like some more information
2 about that. But if indeed, it is tenants that have
3 had their voices heard, and that's the direction
4 they're going, then we should allow the tenants to
5 lead. Also, it's really important because we have a
6 very bad history when it comes to this type of stuff
7 whether it is NYCHA or others where people are going
8 to be removed or stay in place or land is going to be
9 taken. This is very, very valuable land, and the
10 make-up of NYCHA is that which sometimes those voices
11 get ignored, particularly when there's land involve.
12 So this is really, really something we have to pay
13 attention to and get correct, and I have a lot of
14 concerns about what's going on. So thank you, Chair,
15 for doing this hearing.

17 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Alright, thank you,
18 Mr. Public Advocate. We're going to proceed with our
19 pre-panel testimony. We will-- oh, you have a
20 question? Let me-- what we'll do, let's get through
21 the panel, then you can ask the question to the
22 entire. We're going to move forth with Ms. Eve,
23 Penn-Wortman Houses.

24 EVE: I really [inaudible] speak, and the
25 reason why I didn't prepare one is because I want to

1 speak freestyle, because everything that NYCHA,
2 everybody that the PACT/RAD program, all they do is
3 they say what they going to do-- what they going to
4 do is what they're not doing and what they're being
5 very secretive. They keep saying about transparency,
6 there is no transparency. They keep emphasizing
7 conversion. It's not conversion. It's coercing, and
8 what they're doing, they're lying about a lot of
9 things and they're very bold and they speak to you in
10 an indignified [sic] way where they treat you not as
11 tenants, but they treat you as if you're in an
12 inmate, that you have no rights. Police officers was
13 called at me, because I'm expressing my rights,
14 because I refuse to sign an attendance sheet. By
15 law, there is no law to state that I have to sign any
16 sheet. I have the right to be there because I'm a
17 tenant. Whether even if you're a squatter and you
18 attend and it's a community meeting, you're entitled
19 to do. So, I was pressured into signing an
20 attendance sheet. They dictate what we're going to
21 do. They only allow the board to speak. They say
22 things that's not correct, and I blame NYCHA, and
23 NYCHA is the cause of it because they use people to
24 make people go against. Since the conversion, I've
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1
2 been harassed. I've been followed. They tried to
3 enter my apartment. They make things that's so
4 uncomfortable that even family members are going
5 against me where we're all at odds, because everybody
6 is afraid to speak up and speak out. Like I said
7 before, at the end of the day, they stated that the
8 reason that they're going private is to be able to
9 get the funding. They received the funding and we're
10 still at the same place before they got conversion.
11 And all they use is Section 8 this, Section 8 that.
12 Section 8 has law. The only thing that they're
13 trying to do is because they know that Section 9 is
14 ironclad and they are purposely not fixing things to
15 force the hand at federal-- at the federal government
16 for them to be able to get the funding. That's
17 number one. And they're very bold. And when I say
18 they're very bold, they bold to tell the tenants
19 because they know nothing is being recorded. Nothing
20 is-- nothing but hearsay. It's for us to prove how
21 is it that in-- since they received the contract on
22 December 29th of 2022, that up until now, Penn-
23 Wortman Houses along with Linden Houses, [inaudible]-
24 - I'm saying just for Linden, how is that management
25 has been switched five times? All they keep is

1 rolling out, and there are politicians, okay, that
2 are working for L&M that violates people rights and
3 you're a person who says that you want to be in
4 politics where they sit and they watch. They watch
5 when people go to court. I-- the last time I was
6 able to come to speak was April of last year, is
7 because they kept me booked and busy at the
8 courthouses because none of the judges know anything
9 about the PACT/RAD conversions because they don't
10 know. The premise of RAD-- and it's ironclad.
11 There's many things that Brian Honan-- and I want to
12 say one thing with Brian Honan, alright, he saved my
13 life, and the only reason I'm going to say he saved
14 my life is because I'm stressed out. When I say I'm
15 stressed out to the point I can't go to no one. The
16 Police Department is because they have [inaudible] as
17 if I'm crazy. I'm not crazy. The reason why they
18 want to label me as I'm crazy because one, I keep
19 telling them, because we live in public housing
20 whatever it is, doesn't mean that we're dumb. I'm
21 not dumb. And it's because they feel that I am-- I'm
22 a threat. Like I stated, the premise of the tenants
23 signing the lease was for able to get the funding.
24 They got it. They still not doing anything. They
25

1 didn't change the pipes. Right now, I brought proof
2 of everything that they're doing. They keeping
3 things very secret, very quietly. At the end of the
4 day, there is no way that a person has to go putting
5 risers where it's not supposed to be. Things-- I
6 brought proof like I'm done. When I say Brian Honan
7 saved my life, when I say he saved my life is because
8 they stressed me out so much, that I called him three
9 o'clock in the morning. I said, if he didn't answer
10 that I didn't know what I was going to do. But you
11 know what, but he answered. So at the end of the
12 day, like I said, my great nephew is the one who keep
13 giving me courage, a seven-year-old that keep giving
14 me courage to keep going is because you know why?
15 They are our future. People are afraid to speak out
16 is because they are being harassed. Shootings on--
17 they put cameras. It's not working. Why? Why? It
18 makes no sense. They took NYCHA cameras out. Why?
19 NYPD--

21 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Alright,
22 you got 30 seconds to wrap it up, Eve.

23 EVE: And the premise six to eight weeks
24 now, okay, the front door in my lobby has been broke
25 since a week after Christmas. It's still broke now.

1
2 And the reason being that it's not fixed is because,
3 right, they didn't get insurance warranty because
4 it's vandalism. Does that make sense? They said
5 this in meeting. Mr. Butler [sic] and Ms.-- it makes
6 no sense. So I would said-- and there was a
7 shooting, an attempted-- a lot of things. They just
8 want to keep everything secret. Like the young
9 person said, this young lady-- I can't remember if
10 she said-- right. But at the end of the day, the
11 Tenant Association President, they're a tenant just
12 like us. They're supposed to keep us informed. They
13 don't keep us informed. Had it not be for me to go
14 to other meetings and I'm saying going across the
15 tristate for me to be able to know about certain
16 things here, I would not know about it. I'm tired.
17 At the end of the day, they can evict me. They can
18 evict me, but they're still going to have to explain
19 as to the reason why I am being evicted and people--
20 okay. A lot of people don't like Trump, but he's
21 going to-- he's bringing out the fraud, and it's
22 right, and I'm a Democrat.

23 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. Alright, Eve,
24 we got to wrap this up. Thank you for your
25 testimony. Now we going to--

1
2 EVE: [interposing] And I'm going to
3 submit it.

4 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you. We have
5 Teresa Scott who's also part of this particular panel
6 and she's on Zoom. Ms. Scott?

7 TERESA SCOTT: Peace and blessing
8 everyone.

9 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you.

10 TERESA SCOTT: What's happening here is
11 very traumatic to know what people are experiencing.
12 I'm Teresa Scott and I'm one of the leaders of Save
13 Section 9 and thank you all for expressing your pain
14 and your hurt of the disrespect that's happening with
15 us here at NYCHA. I've been living-- I love public
16 housing, because public housing saved my life, and if
17 I hadn't been in public housing I might not be here.
18 By me being part-- by being part of Save Section 9
19 and other advocate-- advocate for other people, I was
20 able to help other people that are disabled. Also,
21 what they're saying is true. The people are being
22 harassed. My business hasn't been taken over by
23 NYCHA, but there are members who spoke here that I
24 know of that they are being-- NYCHA has been
25 [inaudible] with real estate dealers that have

1
2 forgotten the promise of public housing. And it seems
3 the only thing that they seem to be want it just to
4 privatize everything. There has been a lot of
5 privacy, like, you know, speaking things and people
6 are not aware of what's going on. They're not
7 explained. We work with tenants that they're telling
8 them to sign, sign paperwork that they don't even
9 understand what they're signing. So there is no
10 transparency as far as RAD/PACT. I want to thank
11 everyone. Thank you for even allowing us to speak.
12 This is the first time in history that I've ever been
13 in a hearing where the tenants were able to speak
14 first. Thank you so much for that. The other
15 solution is that HUD need to be part of the
16 community, because HUD is the one who creates what
17 goes and what doesn't happen in New York. Tenants
18 have been bullied as they said. There has not been
19 no transparency. The lack of improvement as the
20 young lady said, she's living in RAD and she's still
21 being harassed. She's still not getting treatment.
22 And we-- and Herman Rice [sic] did a story already to
23 let us know what was going on, and no one else as Mr.
24 Marqis said, there has not been no other person who's
25 done an investigation. I'm asking that the Public

1 Advocate-- y'all thinking RAD is good for us, but RAD
2 is not good for us. RAD removes our home from public
3 housing and we no longer have public housing, so that
4 means that they're trying to get rid of our house. I
5 would like to know, can I come stay with one of y'all
6 if that happens to me? Because where else am I
7 supposed to stay. I don't-- I am a disabled person
8 and I have lived here and my neighbors help take care
9 of me. I don't have family members that come and see
10 about me like my neighbors, and so-- if I'm put on
11 the street, I have a wheelchair. I'm going to be out
12 in the street in a wheelchair. What I would like for
13 y'all to do is I would like for y'all to adopt a
14 resolution called 0730-205 and conduct a thorough
15 study on the RAD/PACT program to assess the effects
16 of conversion on residents and the program's impacts
17 on tenant rights, security and wellbeing. I'm also
18 asking that the City Council do a meeting to
19 immediately issue a moratorium on NYCHA RAD/PACT
20 conversions pending the completions of the
21 [inaudible] impact studies inclusive for all our
22 properties currently being served by project Section-
23 - project-based Section 8. We ask that the Council
24 hosts the joint hearings with [inaudible]
25

1 counterpoints on RAD/PACT. During this hearing,
2 NYCHA and HUD offers a public [inaudible] should be
3 asked. We need y'all to provide [inaudible] for the
4 success of the program nationally. Success should be
5 defined on improving the quality of life for previous
6 Section 9 tenant living. I'm sorry improving--
7 improved quality for the life of previous section 9
8 tenants living in a specific pretty. And explanation
9 of the lifetime for RAD conversions need to be-- you
10 know--
11

12 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] You have
13 a minute to wrap it up.

14 TERESA SCOTT: okay, so now, I want to
15 explain on how we oppose-- expand on how opposition
16 is waived in the larger application to Section 9 to
17 RAD/PACT to section 19 [sic]. And so what I want to
18 say is that it's sad that we have to come here and
19 then cry about the abuse and the harassment. How can--
20 - y'all are giving NYCHA a right to steal our homes,
21 because-- a lot of people don't even know what
22 RAD/PACT means. They don't even know. Thy don't
23 even know that Section 9 is the only affordable
24 housing, only affordable low-income housing, and it's
25 based on your income, not based on your zip code,

1
2 because I live-- I live in a zip code where there are
3 a million dollar houses, and a lot of times they're
4 not basing the income when they coming on the
5 creation that they coming out here an where we live
6 at. And so we need you to save our home. Our homes
7 are a part of us. If you move some people out of
8 their homes, they die instantly. Are you will to
9 have people's deaths on your hand because you did not
10 take the time to investigate, and made RAD, make
11 NYCHA make HUD be accountable for a place to lie that
12 is called our home. I am a very intelligent black
13 woman. I just wrote a book called thriving elders.
14 But if I have to worry about where I'm going to live
15 at, how can I be thriving elder thriving in this
16 society if you don't protect me, and y'all have not
17 protected us.

18 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you.

19 TERESA SCOTT: I'm so thankful that you
20 let us speak today. Thank you very much.

21 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you. Thank
22 you, Ms. Scott, for your testimony. Now, we going to
23 move to the Admin. Thank you. Council Member Mealy,
24 hold on a minute. Did you have any-- you had any
25 questions. Okay, we'll wait to the regular session

1 of questions, of testimonies. Thank you to the pre-
2 panel. Thank you for your advocacy. We'll get you
3 that answer. Just wait until-- thank you. We're
4 going to move on to Administration. Thank you, Eve.
5 As the admins takes their seat, we've been joined by
6 Arvind Sohoni who's the EVP for Strategy and
7 Innovation of NYCHA, Jonathan Gouveia, the EVP of
8 Real Estate at NYCHA, Laura Bellrose, the Chief
9 Landlord and Tenant Division of NYCHA, and we've also
10 been joined by Brian Honan, the EV Intergovernmental
11 Affairs for NYCHA.
12

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Good morning. If you
14 could all raise your right hand, please? Do you
15 affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing
16 but the truth before this committee and to respond
17 honestly to Council Member questions?

18 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: You may begin with
19 your opening statement.

20 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT SOHONI: Chair
21 Banks, members of the Committee on Public Housing,
22 residents, and members of the public, good morning.
23 My name is Arvind Sohoni, Executive Vice President
24 for Strategy and Innovation at the New York City
25 Housing Authority. Pleased to be joined by Jonathan

1 Gouveia, Executive Vice President for Real Estate
2 Development; Laura Bellrose, Chief of the Landlord
3 and Tenant Division; Brian Honan, EVP of
4 Intergovernmental Affairs; and other members of the
5 Authority's leadership team. In 2019, the Authority
6 signed a regulatory agreement with the City, HUD, and
7 the US Attorney's Office for the Southern District of
8 New York. The Agreement was an acknowledgement of the
9 agency's poor performance and mistakes, including a
10 systemic lack of transparency. Over the past six
11 years, we have executed on several reforms to open
12 the doors to the agency. As stated in our
13 Transformation Plan, the Authority is wholeheartedly
14 committed to transparency and accountability. We
15 believe that data about our performance and other
16 matters helps our partners better understand our work
17 while supporting our efforts to transform the
18 Authority and better serve residents. Thank you for
19 this opportunity to discuss how we are ensuring and
20 expanding that transparency. Our website is the
21 primary repository of our publicly available data and
22 information. Service outages, individual work orders,
23 and lead paint testing progress can all be tracked.
24 Reports are available with extensive information
25

1 about the capital needs at all our properties and
2 progress with meeting various mandates of the HUD
3 Agreement. The action plans we developed to meet
4 different HUD Agreement pillar areas are also
5 available. Metrics on wide ranging elements of our
6 operations, from the productivity of maintenance
7 workers and the skilled trades staff to the number of
8 vacant apartments and rent collection rates are
9 updated monthly. Dashboards on PACT and our capital
10 projects, including sustainability and Sandy work are
11 also available. The Housing Authority also maintains
12 data in the City's Open Data portal and voluntarily
13 participates in Checkbook NYC. Board meetings can be
14 viewed live in person and on YouTube, where we also
15 keep videos and transcripts of all prior meetings.
16 Our Community Engagement and Partnerships map enables
17 residents to access workforce programs and other
18 vital services and resources available from our
19 partners. We also include background information on
20 the Authority's scope, developments, and population,
21 along with detailed information and reports about our
22 long-term plans, policies, contracts, spending, and
23 resident hiring. We even catalogue the public artwork
24 at Housing Authority developments, which include a
25

1 Marion Greenwood mural at Red Hook East and Richmond
2 Barthe's sculptures at Kingsborough and Johnson.
3 We've also used the MyNYCHA app to connect residents
4 with a wealth of personalized information at their
5 fingertips. In the app, residents can create new work
6 orders, check the status of existing tickets, and
7 find information on service outages. Our Self-Service
8 Portal enables public housing residents to complete
9 their annual re-certifications, request transfers,
10 and more. Section 8 participants and landlords can
11 also access a range of functions through their
12 respective portals. We also believe that
13 transparency and resident engagement are fundamental
14 to the success of our PACT program, which has
15 improved the physical conditions and quality of life
16 for thousands of residents. Residents are not only
17 involved at every step of the PACT planning process
18 but also help lead the selection of development
19 teams. They also prioritize investments and work
20 closely with our PACT partners after conversion.
21 During the planning process, we coordinate with
22 resident leaders to share information, keep residents
23 informed, and answer any questions about the process.
24 With these leaders, we host regular meetings and
25

1 evictions at PACT sites. The PACT program, in
2 accordance with federal rules and regulations,
3 provides strong anti-displacement protections for
4 residents. At the time of conversion to Project-
5 Based Section 8, all authorized residents are offered
6 a new lease regardless of whether they owe back rent.
7 We also require our PACT partners to work with on-
8 site social service coordinators to conduct proactive
9 outreach to help connect families with resources
10 which would include access to public benefits or
11 setting up payment installment plans. PACT partners
12 must make every effort to avoid bringing a lease
13 issue to Housing Court, and the Housing Authority
14 closely monitors those outreach efforts. Eviction is
15 always a measure of last resort, after all other
16 methods to resolve tenant issues have been exhausted.
17 Section 8 lease agreements under PACT automatically
18 renew every year and cannot be terminated except for
19 good cause, which includes criminal activity and non-
20 payments. Residents can continue to add people to
21 their household, and permanent members will continue
22 to have succession rights. We believe in the power
23 of affordable housing to stabilize and support
24 communities and provide a pathway to opportunity, and
25

1
2 our goal at the Housing Authority is to keep
3 residents housed. As a result, eviction rates are
4 very low across the Housing Authority sites,
5 including PACT developments, lower than the citywide
6 rate. Transparency and accountability are core
7 values that drive our work. Providing information to
8 the public about our progress and our ongoing
9 challenges are vital to our efforts to better serve
10 residents. Transparency is also essential for
11 effective collaboration with our partners, including
12 members of the Council. We look forward to our
13 continuing partnership with you and are happy to
14 answer any questions you may have. Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you. Okay, I
16 guess we'll now go into questions. Alright, so,
17 again, thank you guys. Thank you for your testimony.
18 We're going to begin with the questions surrounding
19 transparency around housing conditions and
20 maintenance, and we're going to start with repairs on
21 capital improvements. Why does NYCHA require Section
22 8 participants to request a reasonable accommodation
23 in order to submit their annual ratification-- I'm
24 sorry-- recertification by mail instead of on self-
25 service portal-- on the self-service portal?

1
2 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: So,
3 Council Member, we-- in order to process re-
4 certifications, you can do this online. You can do
5 it at the self-- at the kiosk that's at the
6 management office. Housing Assistance can assist you
7 in order to do that. We do prefer that that's the
8 method. You have-- it's immediately received. You
9 also get a receipt, but if you do need-- if you do
10 need a paper copy--

11 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Excuse
12 me. Hold on one minute, Brian.

13 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Yes.

14 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: There will be order,
15 guys. Everybody will have the opportunity to give
16 testimony if you choose to, but outburst in the
17 audience will not be accepted. You may proceed.
18 Thank you.

19 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: so, that
20 is the preferred method to do it. It either works--
21 you know, but if that's not possible for you, we will
22 provide a paper copy, but we would like to see a
23 reason why.

24 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. The residents
25 have voiced concerns about the quality of repairs,

1 repair work, by contractors. In November of 2024, it
2 was reported by the City Comptroller that 30 percent
3 of the residents rated the work performed by
4 contractors as poor. And less than half rated the
5 work performed as good or better. How does NYCHA
6 obtain feedback from the residents about work
7 performed by the contractors?
8

9 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT SOHONI: Thanks,
10 Council Member, for that question. I'll say a couple
11 things to that. One, that is certainly the case.
12 We've heard that consistently for years. Back in
13 2019-2020 when I first started here, there's a lot of
14 engagement on our transformation plan, what residents
15 were most concerned about. This came up basically in
16 every single session we had. In the last year or so,
17 we've actually implemented new policies to do
18 different kind of oversight for vendor work. So we
19 have a complete new role at the neighborhood level.
20 So, neighborhoods, we have 29 of them in the City--
21 so local governance. A new contract manager has
22 actually now been installed to oversee all those
23 contracts locally. That means somebody who's going
24 to go out and inspect work to make sure we're not
25 being fleeced by contractors to sort of obviously

1
2 avoid the issues we had last February. So, that's a
3 complete new process that's come in place in the last
4 12 months to really enforce the fact that we do have
5 this issue with vendors. So that is something on the
6 management side of things. We've changed that.

7 There are structural issues, too, with vendors who
8 are often forced to take the lowest responsive bidder
9 to contracts which can in some cases be not the best
10 firm to do that work. We're not sort of-- we don't
11 have a ton of wiggle room on that side, but on the
12 management side we have made a lot of changes in the
13 last year to try and improve that number.

14 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: A straight question,
15 how is NYCHA generally verifying and assessing the
16 contractor's work? I think it's a straightforward
17 question.

18 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT SOHONI: Sure.
19 So a couple things on this. So, given the value of
20 in-unit contractor work, we're not doing 100 percent
21 checks on all of that. We're doing now quality
22 assurance checks on a certain percentage of those.
23 So, if you have a contractor doing let's say 20
24 apartments in one development on floor tiles, we'll
25 have our Neighborhood Contract Manager go check three

1 of them to make sure the work has been done. That's
2 not going to catch every single instance of a vendor
3 performing poorly, but it's going to catch much more
4 than we have been in the last sort of five, six
5 years.

6
7 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Obviously, that's not
8 enough. What is the timeframe to establish an
9 apparatus or system where we can accurately track or
10 assess the work that's being done by the contractors?

11 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT SOHONI: Yeah,
12 we're happy to engage in that question with you,
13 Council Member, and with any of the other members of
14 the committee, too. So, we've had this process in
15 place the last 12 months. We're happy to engage in
16 sort of a more aggressive effort on this if you think
17 there's additional work to do, but we're always
18 trying to continuously improve these efforts. We
19 know this has been a huge pain-point for residents
20 for a long time. We've made the first step on it,
21 but it's really not the last step on this either.

22 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: The-- that-- as of
23 November 20-- the November 2024 report recommended
24 that NYCHA provide residents an opportunity to rate
25

1 the vendors and view other resident's reviews. Does
2 NYCHA plan to implement that recommendation?
3

4 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT SOHONI: There's
5 no immediate plan. That has been under consideration
6 for a while since that came up. It's not been-- it's
7 not been-- it's not sort of imminent right now.

8 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Why is it taking so
9 long?

10 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT SOHONI: Well, I
11 think we have to sort of put into our existing
12 standard procedures and process. We're not against
13 that suggestion, necessarily, but it's just not--

14 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] What's
15 the hold-up?

16 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT SOHONI: It's
17 sort of under consideration. I'm not saying there's
18 against--

19 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] But why
20 is that--

21 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT SOHONI:
22 [interposing] We're happy to--

23 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Why is
24 that not a priority?
25

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT SOHONI: Well, I think that it is. I think that the response to the--

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Obviously, it's not, because we're not seeing a process put in place--

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT SOHONI: [interposing] Sure.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: to hear from the tenants as to the service that they're getting or the lack thereof service they're getting.

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT SOHONI: I appreciate that, Council Member. So, one thing I'll say to this--

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] I don't want you to appreciate it. We--

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT SOHONI: [interposing] We get it.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: We want to see something put in place.

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT SOHONI: Given the new procedure after February of 24 with the bribery issues, we didn't want to load too many things at once. Again, we're happy to prioritize

1
2 this as a next step. But again, we're happy to take
3 that feedback and--

4 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] So,
5 then, let me ask you a more pointed question. By what
6 date do you plan to commit to implementing the
7 recommendation? Give us a date.

8 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT SOHONI: I can't
9 give you a date today because that's not my team that
10 would do it, but we're happy to give you a date--

11 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Well, if
12 you can get that date back to us by tomorrow, or--

13 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT SOHONI:
14 [interposing] Absolutely.

15 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: hopefully by the end
16 of this week, we greatly appreciate it.

17 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT SOHONI: Sure.

18 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Because it seems like
19 we have to force you to prioritize this concern and
20 that shouldn't be.

21 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT SOHONI: And one
22 thing I will note, I'm talking about the operation
23 side of things. I know we've got some capital
24 programs that are different on this that I also want
25 to have our capital team just mention quickly.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Did you want to say
3 something? Go ahead.

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Sorry, before you
5 begin, can I just give you the oath first? If you
6 could raise your right hand, please? Do you affirm
7 to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but
8 the truth before this committee and to respond
9 honestly to Council Member questions?

10 CHIEF MAVANI: Yes, I do.

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: and if you could
12 state your name and title for the record, too,
13 please.

14 CHIEF MAVANI: My name is Shaan Mavani.
15 I'm Chief Asset and Capital Management Officer at
16 NYCHA. I just wanted to supplement the answer that my
17 colleague has provided. I think the report that you
18 referred to, Chair Banks, looked at both contractors
19 that are doing smaller scale repairs as Arvind
20 mentioned, in-apartment work, tiles, painting, things
21 like that, as well as large capital contractors. So,
22 on both of your questions, for any type of larger
23 capital contracts, we have daily monitoring of
24 quality of work, photos, things like that that are
25 done on these contracts through construction

1 management teams that are out there at the site. We
2 review quality throughout the project. We also do
3 independent quality inspections. We do about 4,000
4 of those a year across all of our projects, and at
5 the end of the projects we go through a quality punch
6 list process where we look through the work. Many of
7 those can involve the resident leader joining that
8 walk-through to assess quality and then to sign off
9 what additional quality work needs to be done to
10 finalize the project. on the second part of your
11 question, we're actually currently working with the
12 citywide Council of Tenant Leader Presidents to
13 design a survey or set up surveys that would be done
14 during capital projects to get feedback from the
15 resident leadership of that property, how they feel
16 about the engagement, the vendor work, our team's
17 engagement with them and coordination, etcetera, and
18 hoping to roll that out during the second quarter of
19 this year after we receive the input from the CCOP
20 and other stakeholders on that. So, on that part of
21 the portfolio where we're spending a large amount of
22 our funding to make renovations to the property, we
23 are moving forward with those recommendations, and in
24 fact, these efforts have been in play for some time.
25

1
2 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So, your testimony
3 today is that residents who are informed about
4 NYCHA's process selecting contractors?

5 CHIEF MAVANI: Sorry, could you repeat
6 that?

7 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: I said your testimony
8 today is that residents from NYCHA are informed about
9 when they selecting of contractors?

10 CHIEF MAVANI: yeah, for the area that I
11 oversee which again is the capital projects Section 9
12 work that's grant-funded, yes. After we work through
13 the design with resident input, we then update them
14 after we go through the procurement process and the
15 selection of the contractor as well.

16 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. We've heard
17 that when some developments are converted to PACT,
18 the new property manager does not have a functioning
19 work order or services request system is not in
20 place. This leaves residents with a way to document
21 the need for repairs or track maintenance work on
22 their units. How does NYCHA ensure that the PACT
23 partners provide the same or greater level of
24 transparency about repairs to PACT residents?

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COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING

COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Hi, if you could raise your right hand as well, please? Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth before this committee and to respond honestly to Council Member questions? And if you could state your name and title for the record.

MANAGING DIRECTOR CONNELL: Gillian Connell, Managing Director of Strategic Operations in the Real Estate Development Department. So, I think the question was about the work order systems that--

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Re-read it again for you.

MANAGING DIRECTOR CONNELL: Thanks.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: You could answer it correctly. We've heard that when some developments are converted to PACT, the new property manager does not have a functioning work order or service request system in place. This leaves residents without a way to document the need for repairs or track maintenance work on their repairs. How does NYCHA ensure that PACT partners provide the same or greater level of transparency about repairs to PACT residents?

MANAGING DIRECTOR CONNELL: Sure. So, each of the PACT partners does have an individual

1
2 work order system specifically for their sites. And
3 NYCHA collects information on a monthly basis about
4 those work orders from all of our different PACT
5 partners. Additionally, residents have a couple of
6 different ways that they can submit repair requests
7 to our PACT partners. They're able to go into the
8 management office directly and speak to an assistant
9 there. They're able to phone-in a repair complaint.
10 They're able to send an email. So there are a number
11 of different ways that--

12 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Are you
13 aware of Linden Houses? Are you familiar with Linden
14 Houses?

15 MANAGING DIRECTOR CONNELL: I'm familiar
16 with Linden Houses.

17 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Are you familiar or
18 aware that the management company I think over the
19 last-- maybe the last month or two developed a ticket
20 repair type service where a tenant can call in and
21 get a confirmation number. Are you aware of that?

22 MANAGING DIRECTOR CONNELL: So, they
23 definitely track tickets on a work order number
24 basis. We're absolutely aware of that, yes.

25

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2 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So-- no, no. Are you
3 aware that they just implemented a system I think
4 within the last two months or so? It was brought to
5 their attention that residents would call in and they
6 won't give any type of confirmation number or work
7 order number. Are you aware that they just recently
8 I think within the last month or two when it was
9 brought to their attention at a TA meeting, that they
10 just recently put in a system? And they've had the
11 development for the last three and a half years,
12 going on probably four years??

13 MANAGING DIRECTOR CONNELL: Right, so
14 they've always been able to track the work orders at
15 the address and the unit level. It sounds like
16 they've recently issued a process where they can
17 communicate that number to residents, and that's a
18 positive--

19 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Do you
20 think that's important when it comes to tracking
21 repairs, that the tenants get a confirmation number
22 or work order number?

23 MANAGING DIRECTOR CONNELL: I think the
24 property managers are able to track the work orders
25 regardless of whether a work order number is

1 distributed, because they're able to track it to the
2 particular unit.
3

4 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. How does NYCHA
5 handle and record the records and work orders from a
6 development once it's converted to PACT?

7 MANAGING DIRECTOR CONNELL: So, we
8 receive information on a monthly basis from all of
9 our PACT partners about various work orders, and the
10 information about those work orders is ultimately
11 published on our dashboard that's available on our
12 website.

13 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Does NYCHA perform
14 any follow-up with the new property manager to verify
15 whether they have all the work orders or service
16 requests information for a newly converted
17 development? So, in the transition-- let me break
18 this question down for you. In the transition, what
19 information is transferred over? Is it a orderly
20 transition when a development is converted?

21 MANAGING DIRECTOR CONNELL: Yes. So,
22 when the property transitions from NYCHA to PACT, the
23 work orders that were opened under NYCHA are
24 transferred over to the PACT partner, if that's what
25 you're referring to, to close out.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Well, let me just go
3 a little further. What about documents? Because
4 we've seen in situations where documents during a
5 conversion are not transferred over to the new
6 management company.

7 MANAGING DIRECTOR CONNELL: So, all of
8 the relevant documents that the property manager will
9 need in order to operate the site are transferred
10 over at the time of conversion.

11 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: You will hear
12 testimony down the line where residents have said
13 that there were documents that-- the management
14 company basically said that there were documents that
15 weren't transferred over. So I want to get into
16 whether or not there is an orderly transition of
17 documents, because we're seeing residents being
18 dragged into court because it's like a document
19 chase. Well, we don't have the document. NYCHA has
20 the documents. It's back and forth, and that has
21 been a very contentious issue because residents again
22 are being dragged into court and obviously when
23 there's no clarity on the composition of household,
24 and these controversies arise, and we haven't seen
25 NYCHA engage in these matters at all. So I want to

1
2 know again, what is being done to track this? What is
3 NYCHA's engagement?

4 MANAGING DIRECTOR CONNELL: So,
5 specifically you originally asked about work orders,
6 for example. So information about work orders that
7 were open under NYCHA are transferred over to PACT
8 partners, and then six months after conversion the
9 PACT partners are required to submit a certification
10 to NYCHA regarding the closeout of those work orders
11 to ensure that the open work order tickets were
12 addressed.

13 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So, you're tracking
14 each work order you're saying?

15 MANAGING DIRECTOR CONNELL: So, we're
16 tracking that each of the work orders have been
17 closed out, yes.

18 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So, every work order
19 that comes through, you're tracking it?

20 MANAGING DIRECTOR CONNELL: So, every new
21 work order that's created, we're collecting itemized
22 information about, and the work orders that were
23 transferred after conversion, we get a certification
24 from the partners confirming--
25

1
2 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] And it's
3 your testimony that every work order that was
4 established under NYCHA up until the conversion was
5 transferred over to the new management company?

6 MANAGING DIRECTOR CONNELL: That's right.

7 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. I beg to
8 disagree, but that's your testimony. Does NYCHA
9 perform any follow-up with the new property manager
10 to verify whether they have all the work orders or
11 service request information for-- did that already.
12 Let's go to the next question. In 2024, NYCHA
13 launched a new version of its capital tracker, a
14 needs tracker, which allows residents to see biweekly
15 updates on building renovations. Has NYCHA received
16 feedback from residents about the usefulness of this
17 tracker?

18 CHIEF MAVANI: Thank you for the
19 question, Chair Banks. So, this tracker is a version
20 two of the tracker. We had released an earlier one
21 about a year and a half before that. In the
22 development of both trackers, we did seek input from
23 residents and from resident leaders. In particular,
24 when the first tracker was up we put up a public
25 survey so that anybody who was using that tracker

1
2 could immediately provide feedback on what they
3 wanted to see improved on that tracker, and on the
4 basis of that feedback we got from residents as well
5 as other public folks and through focus groups where
6 we met with resident leaders to ask them for their
7 feedback and their needs, we designed that second
8 tracker and then launched it. So there are a number
9 of resident committees that NYCHA also works with,
10 the Resident Roundtable, the CAC [sic] where we have
11 regular engagement with different groups of residents
12 to input on NYCHA initiatives. We took the tracker
13 designs to those groups and sought resident feedback
14 there and also incorporated that in what we finally
15 built out.

16 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay, thank you.
17 when it comes to complaints and code violations, by
18 what methods can residents file complaints and
19 service requests with NYCHA, and what is the average
20 like wait time to connect with NYCHA staff members
21 when a resident calls a customer contact center, and
22 how does NYCHA track the performance of its customer
23 contact center? And does NYCHA also track the number
24 of times or calls that get disconnected? How does
25 that look?

1
2 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT SOHONI: Thanks,
3 Chair. So, a couple things on this. Residents can
4 create new tickets through, yes, calling the contact
5 center. If they have the MyNYCHA app on their phone
6 they can use that as well. They can actually also
7 create it sometimes in the management office with the
8 receptionist there if they need to. Most new
9 tickets, though, are created through the contact
10 center and the MyNYCHA app. The contract center last
11 year or so in calendar 24 had sort of funding and
12 staff cuts in January of that year. We saw fairly
13 immediate increases in wait times. So what used to
14 be a two to three-minute wait for a call was all of a
15 sudden taking some people 30, 40 minutes. We
16 restored some of those cuts in July of 24 adding
17 staff back, especially temporary floating staff. It
18 is still not back to where it was prior to 23. So we
19 still have long wait times. We do track that and we
20 do report on that, but we're happy also to discuss
21 [inaudible] we're doing there, too.

22 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you. Can
23 residents of a PACT development call the customer
24 contact center to report issues or request repairs?
25

1 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: So, for
2 repair issues, the residents should go to the
3 management office. They also could go to 311, impact
4 development. If they have Section 8 issues, the
5 issues with their subsidy, they can call the CCC and
6 there is a whole unit there that deals with Section 8
7 issues.

8 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. When there's a
9 conversion that is taking place, are residents
10 informed of this prior to the conversion?
11

12 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: It is
13 something that often comes up, because one of the
14 biggest questions during conversion is what is the
15 difference between the two programs.

16 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Correct.

17 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: so,
18 people ask, you know, do I still call the contact
19 center? Will I still have the same management? Will
20 I-- you know, and people want to know the difference.
21 So this is one of the differences in the two
22 programs. You will not be calling the call center,
23 which I know a lot of people complain about. You'll
24 now-- you have the ability to call a new system,
25 whatever the system of that particular management

1
2 company has. And in addition, you could also call
3 311.

4 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Local Law 127 during
5 the 2021 allows NYCHA residents to file housing
6 complaints by calling 311. Are you aware of how
7 NYCHA-related calls are logged with 311 as far as the
8 service request system? And are you aware of what
9 residents-- what residents have experienced when
10 they've called 311 with complaints?

11 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: I don't.
12 I'm not aware of what they experience, because that's
13 a question for DoITT, you know, they manage it. I
14 will say that yes, they do take those calls. They do
15 refer them to us, and so we create work orders, you
16 know, for that and follow up, you know, the same as
17 if they came in through our call center.

18 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: How many customer
19 contact center-- walk-in centers does NYCHA currently
20 operate?

21 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Two. We
22 have two. We have one in Atlantic Avenue and we one
23 in Water Street in the Bronx.

24 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Does NYCHA turn away
25 residents who do not have a prior appointment?

1 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: It is--
2 since COVID, we-- preferred method is for
3 appointments, and if the day is booked we will turn
4 residents away if everybody else has an appointment,
5 yes.

6 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Is there a website or
7 any formal communication that warns residents of this
8 limitation?
9

10 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: I'm not
11 aware.

12 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: You're not aware?

13 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: I'm not
14 aware, no.

15 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Can you commit to
16 changing the name or posting the certifications if
17 residents can't-- they can't-- they have traveling
18 issues? Hold on. Could we go back and get my
19 question together. Can you commit to changing the
20 name or posting a clarification so that residents can
21 avoid traveling to a center just to be turned away?

22 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: I can
23 commit to raising it. It is something that I've
24 heard not only from you, Council Member, but from
25

1
2 other advocates, and I will speak to leadership about
3 it.

4 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Does NYCHA share
5 information publicly or with its residents about the
6 code violations issued about the Department of
7 Preservation-- Housing and Preservation? Is that
8 public?

9 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: So, we
10 are working literally weekly with HPD to come up with
11 a way that they'll be able to show on their site.
12 We'll be able to show on our site the number of open
13 code violations, and we expect to have that done
14 fairly shortly. But yes, it will be--

15 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Your
16 testimony is that they don't--

17 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN:
18 [interposing] It's not right now currently, but--

19 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: provide that
20 information to the residents when there's a--

21 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN:
22 [interposing] Not currently, but we will.

23 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: code violation?
24 Okay. In 2022, the state passed a law requiring the
25 New York City Department of Housing and Preservation

1
2 to post NYCHA's housing code violations online. That
3 means you're not in compliance. It appears that HPD
4 has not yet complied and leading some tenants to file
5 lawsuits against HPD.

6 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: I can't
7 speak to HPD, but I will say that there was a funding
8 issue, you know, here. The money has been found, and
9 I will say we literally-- as I stated, you know, just
10 a few minutes ago, we literally meet weekly in order
11 to get this up and running. It is a priority for
12 both agencies and we will see it soon.

13 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Well, has NYCHA heard
14 the concern from residents about this issue, and has
15 NYCHA taken any steps to assist HPD and making this
16 information public?

17 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: We have
18 a standing meeting with HPD, and we're happy to give
19 them all the information that we have so this way it
20 could be, you know, up on both sites and easily
21 understand-- easily understood. As to whether we've
22 heard complaints, I personally have not heard
23 complaints from residents. I have heard from
24 advocates, though.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: While NYCHA is not
3 subject to any obligations under the state law, has
4 NYCHA considered publishing its code violations on
5 its own accord to provide greater transparency to the
6 residents?

7 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: We-- the
8 code violations that we get are from HPD, and they
9 will-- you know, we will work with them in order to
10 make sure that everything we have is the current--

11 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Well,
12 the question is will you publicize it to the tenants,
13 to the residents?

14 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: It will
15 be. It will be up for tenants and residents, both on
16 this site and--

17 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] What's
18 the time--

19 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: the other
20 site.

21 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: What's the time frame
22 to?

23 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: I don't
24 have a timeframe, and believe me, you will know
25 before it-- you know, we will let-- we will let this

1
2 committee know before it's out, and we will make sure
3 that it's heavily publicized once it is out. But we
4 do expect it in the next few months.

5 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: We'll be waiting.

6 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Okay.

7 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: When it comes to
8 financial transparency, we're aware that there's a
9 degree of uncertainty about the status of federal
10 funding from-- for public housing across the country.
11 Has NYCHA taken steps to prepare for potential
12 decreases or pauses in federal funding? And what
13 information has NYCHA provided to the residents about
14 the reality and any potential impacts on Section 9
15 and Section 8 housing?

16 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: We're
17 watching what's going on in Washington literally
18 daily, and we are in unprecedented times right now. I
19 will say that. From what-- you know, from what we're
20 hearing, many of our colleagues at HUD who have been
21 there for decades who have been great assets to NYCHA
22 into public housing publicly have now left the
23 agency. But right now, we do not-- you know, until
24 the President's budget comes out which is in a few--
25 probably a few days, maybe the next few weeks, we

1
2 won't have a good idea. I mean, from what I'm
3 hearing is that, you know, public housing should
4 expect very deep cuts. Section 8 probably a bit more
5 stable, but we will have to make real decisions and
6 we will commit to both residents and also to the
7 Council and other elected officials that we will be
8 in close contact to let you know, you know, our plan.

9 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: The Governor recently
10 released a 2026 Executive Budget proposal which
11 includes about \$25 million for rehabilitation of
12 vacant NYCHA units over five years. How many vacant
13 units could NYCHA rehabilitate for occupancy within
14 the proposed \$20 million?

15 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: So, the
16 \$25 million which was part of the City of Yes
17 funding--

18 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Excuse
19 me. Hold on a minute, Brian. Can we maintain order?
20 Everybody will have their opportunity to give
21 testimony, and that will be your opportunity to
22 speak. So, please, while the admin is giving their
23 testimony, we want to make sure we hear clear from
24 them, alright? Thank you. You may proceed.

1
2 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: So, the
3 \$25 million that is in the state budget that is part
4 of the City of Yes funding, will contribute to
5 bringing about-- in between somewhere between 500 and
6 600 apartments back online.

7 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: You said 500 and 600
8 apartments?

9 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Between
10 500 and 600, correct.

11 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And what's the time
12 frame from starting these repairs?

13 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: So, it--
14 state money is not unlike city money, it doesn't
15 automatically go into our account. We will have to
16 negotiate with the state on something that's called
17 the GDA, a grants disbursement agreement, and then we
18 spend the money and they reimburse us. So, a lot has
19 to-- a lot, you know, plays on how quickly we can get
20 that done. I will say to Governor's credit, her team
21 has been very helpful in approving GDAs quickly
22 compared to the last administration. So, we expect a
23 smooth transition, but we'll have to see. We've
24 never negotiated a GDA like this one before.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: so you're saying that
3 the 5-600 units will be rehabilitated within another
4 year or so?

5 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Again,
6 all depending on how the DGA is agreed upon and other
7 factors, but the faster that's agreed upon, the
8 faster we could start, you know, with a plan to do
9 that work.

10 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. I'm going to
11 give another round of questions, and then I'm going
12 to hand it over to Council Member Avilés. When it
13 comes to financial transparency,-- hold on. When it
14 comes to transparency around the PACT selection for
15 conversion, since 2023 five NYCHA developments have
16 voted on whether to remain Section 9 public housing,
17 move to the PACT program or join public housing
18 Preservation Trust. How does NYCHA select which
19 development will have the opportunity to vote?

20 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Sure.
21 So, the voting came about through legislation that
22 was passed by the State of New York in 2022. We
23 looked-- there were many tenant associations that had
24 very strong opinions on the Trust legislation in that
25 year. Many of them who were in favor of it and really

1
2 wanted, you know, did advocate in Albany to make sure
3 that the legislation passed. We did take the desire
4 for a vote in their development into account, and
5 that was one of the-- one of the selection-- one of
6 the criteria. We also looked at conditions of
7 developments. It's safe to say that almost any
8 development that you see in New York City can
9 definitely use an influx of capital in order to bring
10 about repairs. So we looked at conditions. We looked
11 at, you know, whether there was support for an
12 election. We also looked at, you know, can we close
13 one of these deals once, you know, once we're able to
14 hold a vote successfully. So all those things were
15 taken into account.

16 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: When it comes to a RAD
17 development being select-- or a development being
18 selected for the RAD program, what engagement is
19 done, and is there a formal voting process for the
20 residents?

21 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT SOHONI: So, I'm
22 going to ask my colleague Simon Kawitzky from
23 Portfolio Planning within the Real Estate group to
24 talk about the extensive engagement that we do. We
25 typically work with residents for almost a year

1 before we put out a request for expressions of
2 interest and get into the actual conversion. But
3 there's significant engagement and we think about
4 some of the factors--

5 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Yeah,
6 they--

7 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT SOHONI:
8 [interposing] that Brian mentioned.

9 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: We would really like
10 to-- I hear extensive engagement, but that to me, you
11 know, we don't see that. But maybe you can--

12 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT SOHONI:
13 [interposing] Well, again, as I--

14 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Maybe
15 you can walk us step by step--

16 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT SOHONI:
17 [interposing] I've asked Simon to come up because
18 it's evolved over the last--

19 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] And
20 [inaudible].

21 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT SOHONI: several
22 years.

23 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you.
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25

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2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: And before you start,
3 if you could raise your right hand for me, please?
4 Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth and
5 nothing but the truth before this committee and to
6 respond honestly to Council Member questions?

7 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: Yes.

8 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: And if you could
9 state your name and title, please?

10 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: My name is
11 Simon Kawitzky. I'm the Vice President for Portfolio
12 Planning in the Real Estate Department at NYCHA. So,
13 good morning, Council Member. Thanks for your
14 question. To give a little bit more detail, the way
15 that we identify developments for the PACT program is
16 pretty straightforward. Where are developments that
17 have the highest level of physical distress that need
18 critical investments? Which developments have
19 serious operational challenges that are difficult for
20 NYCHA to manage? These are developments that are
21 located across many different buildings in a
22 neighborhood where there's no centralized management
23 office, for example. And there are also developments
24 which we have already brought through the program
25 which for various reasons have not been receiving any

1 level of federal support. So, those different
2 criteria have been really important for us as we
3 identify developments for the PACT program. When we
4 have a development that we think could benefit from
5 these investments, we reach out to the resident
6 leadership as the first point of contact to describe
7 the benefits that the program can bring, share
8 information about how this works, what the process
9 would look like, and then from there talk to them
10 about how we would engage with their community and
11 their residents about moving that process forward.
12 And I can get into, you know, as much detail as you'd
13 like--

14
15 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] So
16 you're saying that the tenant association is working
17 hand-in-hand with you when you're doing these
18 community engagements?

19 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: Resident
20 leaders are a really critical stakeholder for us, and
21 absolutely. Before we launch any process at a
22 development, we engage with the resident leadership
23 before bringing it to the wider community.

24 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So, would you agree
25 that a vote would be-- should be needed to allow the

1
2 residents to weigh in when these conversions are
3 taking place?

4 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: There's no
5 regulatory or statutory requirement for NYCHA to hold
6 a vote.

7 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: I'm not talking about
8 what the requirement is. I'm asking you, again, would
9 you agree that residents should have the right to
10 determine how their communities look?

11 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: I absolutely
12 agree that residents should inform and help us
13 determine the design and the investments that are
14 coming as part of these initiatives. It is NYCHA's
15 responsibility to maintain habitable communities and
16 make sure that we can preserve our housing stock to
17 serve residents into the future.

18 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Is this after you
19 select them?

20 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: After we select
21 a development for the PACT program?

22 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Yeah, after you
23 select the development, because after you select the
24 development, then you move-- you're moving forward.
25 engagement meetings, you're having these

1 inform what those investments are going to look like.
2 We also at the end of that predevelopment phase
3 before the renovations actually begin, we publish a
4 community plan that codifies and documents all of the
5 investments, physical, programmatic. So, what kinds
6 of operational enhancements, what kinds of security
7 and social services are going to be provided? So all
8 residents across the community can be aware and
9 informed of what investments are coming.
10

11 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: I just want to back
12 up a little when you say that there's misinformation
13 put out. Can you dive in a little to what type of
14 misinformation you say is put out about the RAD/PACT
15 program? Because I-- you know, it's-- we have
16 multiple developments that already have been
17 converted. So there's a report card already that
18 exists, and any misinformation per say would be
19 coming from the residents who are not in support or
20 have had-- can talk about the experience under
21 conversion. So can you give us some of the
22 misinformation that you say is out there?

23 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: Absolutely. So
24 there is a lot of misinformation out there about the
25 rights and protections that are afforded to residents

1 under the PACT program. I am out in the community
2 every week talking to residents who are-- we're
3 engaging with as part of the PACT program and other
4 initiatives, and I'm always hearing people concerned
5 about the fact that they would not qualify for
6 Section 8 and therefore, would not stand to benefit
7 from the program. So, that is a falsehood, because
8 any authorized tenant at a development that
9 transitions to project-based Section 8 through the
10 PACT program automatically qualifies per federal
11 regulations. I hear concerns that their rent would
12 go up, which again is also a falsehood, because rent
13 is calculated in the same way that it is under the
14 public housing program.

15
16 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: let me-- let me
17 interrupt you on that one so we can go step by step.
18 The-- there's been reports that residents have to
19 fill out multiple certifications. Have you heard
20 about that?

21 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: are you
22 referring to income certifications?

23 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Income
24 certifications.

1
2 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: So, certain
3 developments, and I believe it's only two
4 developments in our portfolio. I'm speaking to the
5 PACT portfolio specifically that use different
6 sources--

7 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Well,
8 even--

9 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: of funding.

10 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Even in the RAD--

11 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: [interposing] to
12 finance the renovations, because of the nature of
13 those transactions and the mixing of those sources.
14 There are different levels of income certification
15 that is required, but for all of our other projects,
16 including the ones that are currently going through
17 the pipeline and the planning stages, there's only
18 annual income certification that is required. In
19 addition, any resident can file an interim, same as
20 under the public housing program if they have a
21 change in income and want to adjust their rent.

22 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Well, in a RAD/PACT
23 converted development, there's been reports of
24 residents having to have filled out or have to fill
25 out multiple re-certifications--

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VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: [interposing]

That's correct at two developments.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: At two developments,
okay.

VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: That have
already converted, correct.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: No, I'm talking about
RAD converted developments, not PACT developments.
Well, PACT--

VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: PACT is the New
York City implementation of the RAD program.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Correct, right.

VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: So, there are
two developments that I'm aware of under the PACT
portfolio where that multiple step income
verification as--

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] well,
what about under the RAD portfolio?

VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: The RAD and the
PACT portfolio are one in the same.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: No, no. There have
been multiple developments that have been converted
under RAD/PACT, am I correct?

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2 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: There are over
3 160.

4 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Right. So, under
5 those particular developments that I'm talking about,
6 particularly Linden Houses, there's been reports that
7 residents had to fill out multiple certifications.

8 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: If there are--

9 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] And
10 that's like, say if they did overtime during that
11 month, they would be-- management would reach out to
12 them and inform them that they would have to fill out
13 another certification. So you have this seesaw of--

14 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: [interposing]
15 So, there should not be any circumstance where
16 property manager is asking somebody to file an
17 interim re-certification because of a change in
18 income, but if you want to provide us with any
19 specific--

20 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Yeah,
21 we'll--

22 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: circumstances,
23 we can look into that, because that, again, that's
24 not a factor or a facet of the program.

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2 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Alright. Given that
3 the RAD program does not have a resident voting
4 requirement, NYCHA has previously stated it may
5 transition developments to PACT on its own initiative
6 even absent of a resident vote. Under what
7 circumstance will NYCHA initiate a PACT conversion
8 without a vote?

9 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Well,
10 again, Simon walked through the engagement process
11 that we've been following over the last few years.
12 Again, we have been in various hearings in the past
13 where we have acknowledged that some of the early
14 PACT conversions, we didn't have the same level of
15 engagement. Over the last three or four years, we do
16 this robust engagement before we even contemplate a
17 conversion, and Simon outlined that. So, what we
18 want to do when we're doing that engagement process
19 is see that there's support from the tenant
20 leadership as well as the broader community.

21 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. What criteria
22 does NYCHA consider in making-- when making a
23 decision of such? And are those criteria, is it made
24 public?

1 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Yes,
2 and again, Simon mentioned earlier, it's looking at
3 the physical conditions of each of the buildings.
4 It--

5 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Is it
6 made public?

7 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Yes,
8 we disclose this all the time, absolutely.

9 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Once a NYCHA
10 development has been selected for PACT transition,
11 what resource if any does residents have to pause or
12 stop the transition?

13 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: I
14 mean, once we've made the decision collectively with
15 our residents to move forward, we will move forward.
16 We don't have the luxury of--

17 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing]
18 Collectively with the residents the decision is made?

19 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Yes.

20 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: How does that process
21 look?

22 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Well,
23 we described it earlier, right?

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2 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: I want you to explain
3 it.

4 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Like
5 to walk through the process again?

6 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: How does that process
7 look?

8 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: So, again, I
9 want to emphasize that it's NYCHA's duty, right, to
10 invest in our properties to make sure that this is a
11 resource for residents into the future. While we
12 value and very strongly prioritize the input and
13 partnership with our residents, it ultimately is
14 NYCHA's decision to move forward with a PACT
15 transaction.

16 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So your testimony is
17 that the residents don't have a say as the direction
18 or how their community looks. NYCHA can usurp their
19 input and move forward with the program.

20 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: that's not what
21 I'm saying. What I'm saying is that we seek
22 partnerships with our residents to help inform the
23 future of their communities.

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2 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: But you just said
3 that NYCHA, it's NYCHA's decision to make. They have
4 the final decision.

5 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: In the context
6 of making critical investments that we are
7 responsible for making.

8 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Right. So, my
9 question to you is should the tenants-- should the
10 tenants make that final decision. Should that
11 decision be made by the majority of the tenants and
12 not NYCHA?

13 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: It is NYCHA's
14 responsibility and NYCHA's decision.

15 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So, it's-- so the
16 tenants have no-- the level of engagement, once the
17 engagement is done, once input is given they
18 basically-- it's advisory and the NYCHA can just make
19 a decision.

20 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: These projects
21 are not going to be successful without resident
22 support and resident input into the plans. So,
23 again, that is a critical facet of what we're doing--

24 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Well, I
25 mean, the support comes--

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2 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: [interposing]
3 and what we're prioritizing as part of the--

4 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] after
5 the fact.

6 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: PACT program.

7 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: But the support comes
8 after. It seems like once you tell them that they're
9 selected to this program, then you want them to
10 comply.

11 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: That's
12 not accurate. Again, we go through our portfolio
13 planning process and we identify sites that we think
14 would be good candidates for PACT, and then Simon and
15 his team begins the engagement process, and talks
16 about what PACT could potentially do. And as those
17 conversations evolve, as Simon mentioned, we are
18 hoping that we will get a place of partnership, and
19 over the last several years, for the most part, that
20 has been the case. We have been in partnership with
21 our residents. They sit on our review committees and
22 help select the PACT partners, and that very much
23 demonstrates that level of partnership and the
24 agreement to move forward with PACT.

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2 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: How are the
3 developers selected? I mean, is it a multitude of
4 developers, go through a real vetting process, and
5 the tenants engaging in that, or has it been-- is it
6 the practice-- is it still the practice that NYCHA
7 selects three developers and then gives it to this
8 particular review committee?

9 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: We do
10 an annual request for qualifications. So we pre-
11 qualify contractors, developers, and property
12 managers, and from that pool of folks that are within
13 the pre-qualified lists, we invite them to respond to
14 RFEIs, requests for expressions of interest, and the
15 residents review all the responses that we get. They
16 help us select the teams that will be interviewed,
17 and then they help us select the ultimate team that
18 will-- to do the renovations.

19 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: so, that selection
20 process, that committee, a review committee, how many
21 residents serve on that committee? And is the major-
22 - is the committee composed of a majority of
23 residents?

24 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: The committee
25 for purposes of, you know, the practicality of

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2 facilitating these processes consists by default of
3 the Resident Association Executive Board, and we also
4 defer to the Executive Board to invite other members
5 of the community into that process as they see fit.
6 Generally, a board representation would be about five
7 individuals, but for different projects we have
8 allowed about 10 or 12 different participants in
9 those review committees.

10 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And if the-- are the
11 majority tenants?

12 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: They're all
13 tenants of the developments in question.

14 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: so you're saying that
15 the majority of the tenants on that committee then
16 will make a decision?

17 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: The-- right,
18 yes. So we have--

19 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing]
20 [inaudible] majority--

21 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: [interposing]
22 But it's a very formal process that we go through.
23 For any kind of procurement, we can imagine the--
24 that it needs to be high-integrity process, and
25 residents complete score cards ranking each proposal

1 based on a number of different factors, and those
2 scores are tallied up, and that's used to make a
3 decision.
4

5 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Is that public
6 information?

7 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: No, those are,
8 you know, proceedings that take place with the
9 Resident Review Committee as part of the selection
10 process. The Resident Review Committees are also
11 supported by independent resident advisors. These
12 are organizations with experience in affordable
13 housing, real estate, architecture, planning, legal
14 services that the resident committees select, and who
15 provide guidance and support to them in reviewing
16 development proposals and ultimately helping them
17 make a selection.

18 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Are those minutes
19 public, made public? Can we request a copy of those
20 minutes of every reviewing committee? Are there
21 minutes made available to the public?

22 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: We have
23 documentation of the score cards. We do not maintain
24 minutes of all of our meetings.
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COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Well, whatever-- so you have documentation of the actions that come from the committee, or this particular committee?

VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: For projects that are closed out, I don't see an issue if there's a request to provide score cards to validate a selection.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. Would NYCHA have the authority to transition a development to PACT even if residents of the development have already rejected the option in a vote?

VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: so, if NYCHA were to facilitate a voting process and residents decide through that voting process that they do not want to move forward with PACT, then NYCHA is going to honor that decision.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Are residents informed of this possibility during the engagement period leading up to a vote?

VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: The circumstances of any formal NYCHA voting process are made public prior to that voting process beginning.

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COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Alright. I'm going to-- Council Member Mealy, did you have any questions? Council Member Mealy?

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: I just have a few questions. You just said that if the TA does not have to agree with you to become RAD and PACT, true or not? Y'all would just do it automatically or take over the building?

VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: When we begin our outreach to--

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing] A yes or no?

VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: When we begin our outreach to resident leaders to start a process for planning for PACT investments, we seek the support of resident leaders, and we have-- today, we have not moved forward with a project where there's not that level of support at the beginning stages of the project.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: How many are they? How many are they that is not in RAD and PACT right now? They chose not to get in?

VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: Oh,--

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing] Could
3 you give me how many?

4 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: It's hard to
5 give that number because we're out in the fields
6 constantly talking to people about the PACT program,
7 so it's hard to give an exact number right now.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Y'all could give
9 me statistics of my district. I'm 41.

10 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: Yep.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Y'all gave
12 Fairstead [sic] 14 developments in my district. They
13 never had no experience with doing development. So,
14 give me how many of those 14 developments agreed to
15 be RAD and PACT. Y'all have people, right?

16 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: So, for the
17 Reid and Park Rock consolidated portfolio that you're
18 referring to, Council Member, we did all the robust
19 engagement that we previously described with the
20 resident leaders of those developments.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [inaudible]

22 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: And moved
23 forward based on--

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing]
25 Something different.

VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: that process.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: But how many agreed that they want to become RAD and PACT. Could you give me that number?

VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: They all did, because we did robust engagement with the resident leaders at those developments.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: A lot of people still do not want to be in RAD and PACT, and they saying that y'all moving straight along. So, you have to give me some kind of concrete document that say everyone said that they wanted to get RAD and PACT, and the ones who said no, what are you doing to talk to them in regards to it?

VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: Well, again--

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing] Not threatening them.

VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: Absolutely.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Not demanding them sign, and that's a issue also. I don't understand why people are being harassed in order to find documents. Isn't that illegal?

VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: So, well, with all respect for your questions, again, I want to say

1 that we don't seek 100 percent consensus for-- from
2 our residents before moving forward with the program,
3 and we don't expect that everybody would be in
4 agreement all the time either. If there are specific
5 instances of, you know, alleged harassment or
6 inappropriate communication with our residents at a
7 PACT development or elsewhere, we definitely want to
8 know about it and can follow up, because that's
9 unacceptable. But again--

11 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing] When
12 I--

13 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: we're not
14 required to hold a vote or to ask every resident if
15 they want to participate in the PACT program before
16 actually bringing that program to their development.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: So, how-- y'all in
18 charge of all of them. How many people have told you
19 that they have been harassed? Are y'all keeping a
20 database on them?

21 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: Any ref--

22 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing]
23 [inaudible]

24 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: Any referral to
25 NYCHA or our office is going to be followed up on.

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2 Again, we really benefit from specific cases so that
3 we can get to the root of whatever is going on.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Cases, we just had
5 Stuyvesant just testified and said enough is enough.
6 They going to start going through the federal, state,
7 media, that they're being harassed. You heard from
8 your own ears. You were here. So, that's not on
9 your radar. They never told y'all that they were
10 being harassed.

11 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: So, we're
12 certainly aware of the--

13 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing] so,
14 what is the plan for that? You said you was aware
15 now. What is the plan?

16 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: Right, so if
17 there are specific instances where you referenced
18 harassment in the context of--

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing] I
20 didn't reference--

21 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: signing a lease
22 or something like that.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: I referenced it
24 because it was just stated here, but y'all swearing
25

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [inaudible]
3 examples, sir.

4 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: With Stuyvesant
5 Gardens one, we have been working with that community
6 for several years now to plan for these investments
7 though the PACT program. Doctor Crawford and other
8 members of the board participated in the selection of
9 the PACT partner, and we have been working with her
10 board and my team to really try and form a
11 partnership where we can work collaboratively
12 together not to--

13 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing]
14 [inaudible] to go back and forth. You could try to
15 talk-- over talk me, and I could try to over talk
16 you, but I don't want to go there. We already just
17 had a statement that it's a problem. What are your
18 plans to do anything about it? I have another one at
19 Park Rock and Reid. I have community meetings where
20 they come and tell me that they are still putting
21 their stove on. They have heaters. And I keep-- I
22 met with Fairstead the other day, but HPD came to my
23 office in one of my advisory board meetings, and
24 employ [sic] resident tenants to come to my advisory
25 board meeting that we could make a plan that we could

1 all come together and come and stating with one song,
2 one voice. Y'all are doing something, and it's not
3 being done correctly. So, with that, HPD now say
4 that you-- if tenants call them and they are not
5 getting heat, you can be charged just like if I'm a
6 landlord if I'm not giving my tenants heat. So the
7 HPD, HUD, will come and give y'all tickets. Y'all
8 know that, right? So, now from her coming-- tenants
9 coming to my meeting, they have tickets now. Now HPD
10 is coming and investigate to see how the heat is.
11 They still got their heaters on. So who is lying?
12 Are the tenants that-- when they do a pop-up--

14 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: [interposing]

15 So--

16 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: A pop-up-- they
17 didn't know they was coming, but the tenants when
18 they did come they had their heater on. They had
19 their stove on. Something is wrong with these
20 developers.

21 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: Okay.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: the heat is not
23 being distributed properly to all these developments,
24 and to get back one last time, you still never
25 answered my question. If that's one development, how

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2 many other developments are not satisfied with RAD
3 and PACT? Do you have a plan in which you going to
4 address that? Can they fire that developer?

5 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: So, thank you
6 for bringing that specific example to our attention.
7 I think that's a really good example of the kind of
8 feedback that we need to be able to take action. I
9 want to-- and we're always happy to coordinate with
10 your office, to be present at any meeting like that
11 where you're fielding complaints from residents,
12 because again, our mission is the same. It's to make
13 sure that residents have safe, decent housing.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Sir, but you just
15 heard it here.

16 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: When-- I also
17 want to clarify--

18 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing] Just
19 that one.

20 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: If I could just
21 also--

22 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing] I
23 don't need to hear everything else.

24 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: answer some of
25 the other questions that you had.

1 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: We got something
2
3 on the table right now.

4 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: The other thing
5 that I want to just point out is that--

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing]
7 that's a [inaudible] issue.

8 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: when these
9 properties transition--

10 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] I think
11 she want a specific answer.

12 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: to the new
13 property manager--

14 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And it seems like
15 you're going around in circles--

16 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: [interposing]
17 Well, I'm trying-- I'm trying--

18 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: not to answer a
19 question.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Not very good--

21 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] So I
22 would appreciate it if you respect the Council Member
23 and you answer her question. It's very pointed. She
24 wants to know-- you heard testimony from Doctor
25 Crawford as to the harassment that's being done, the

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2 breaking into the TA office or the stealing of
3 petitions, and then she's saying-- she said clearly
4 that this is because of their opposition to the
5 RAD/PACT conversion. Can you answer that
6 specifically? Because you said you've been in talks
7 and you know Doctor Crawford.

8 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: So, can you
9 just clarify what your question is specifically?

10 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: The question is what
11 is your plan to handle situations like that when one
12 of those controversies arise. NYCHA-- NYCHA's
13 supposed to do the oversight, right? Am I correct?
14 You're part of this community engagement. You said
15 you've been in talks with her, this particular TA,
16 for the last three or four years. You have to be
17 aware of what's going on as far as the harassment.
18 What are you doing to stop the harassment and listen
19 to the residents as they've clearly said in this
20 particular situation they do not want to go RAD?

21 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: so, we are in
22 constant communication or we try to be with Doctor
23 Crawford about some of the concerns that you raised.
24 I don't have an answer specifically for what we're
25 going to do regarding the allegation that somebody

1 broke into the office and stole the petition.

2 Obviously, we're in touch and try to get to the

3 bottom of whatever situation was happening there.

4 But any time a resident-- any resident reaches out to

5 us with a complaint or a concern, we try and be as

6 responsive as possible and try and resolve the issue.

7 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Well, in a situation

8 like that, have you been in talks with management or

9 with the, I guess, potential management company that

10 is providing the-- I guess the daily management--

11 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: [interposing]

12 Absolutely, continuous--

13 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: or the [inaudible].

14 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: and constant

15 contact.

16 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: You're in constant

17 contact.

18 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: Absolutely.

19 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Have you addressed

20 this concern?

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Hi, going to do this

22 one more time. If you could raise your right hand,

23 please? Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole

24

25

1 truth and nothing but the truth before this committee
2 and to respond honestly to Council Member questions?

3 DIRECTOR PARKINSON: Yes.

4 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: And if you could state
5 your name and title for the record, please.

6 DIRECTOR PARKINSON: Sure, Michael
7 Parkinson. I'm the Director of Community Planning at
8 NYCHA's Real Estate Development Department. So,
9 thank you, Council Member, for the question-- Council
10 Members. In that specific instance what I would say
11 is that, you know, it takes a partnership to get to
12 the bottom of allegations like that. We would love
13 to extend and we have extended literally dozens upon
14 dozens of offers to form a better working
15 relationship and meet more consistently with Doctor
16 Crawford and the board. I will say, Doctor Crawford
17 had raised, you know, a sort of issue around
18 allegations, lack of respect in customer service,
19 issues like that, that as my colleague Simon was
20 describing. We do take very seriously. We did have
21 the opportunity to discuss with the principles of the
22 management and the development companies that we're
23 working at Stuyvesant One to quash that, to look into
24 it and make sure that their team, if there was any
25

1 truth to the allegations that were being raised, they
2 would deal with it directly. And we had agreed that
3 we would take a meeting to discuss those things and
4 to-date we have not had the opportunity to sit down.
5 So we would welcome that opportunity to do that.

6 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So, you would agree
7 that this adds to the frustration, this-- the
8 frustration of the tenants. I mean, here you have a
9 new developer coming in and its taking over the
10 property or potentially supposed to come in and we
11 have the property, and they're doing these type of
12 tactics just because the residents are saying we want
13 to stay Section 9, we don't want to go RAD/PACT.

14 DIRECTOR PARKINSON: I have no reason to
15 disbelieve any of Doctor Crawford's allegations, and
16 I want to work with her and the team to make sure
17 that we're addressing those, but I do not believe
18 that the team has any sort of tactic against, you
19 know, folks that oppose the program. It's our
20 mission, as Simon was describing-- we want to sit
21 down with residents who are in support of or in
22 opposition of the program to really understand what
23 their issues and challenges are and work together to
24 solve those problems.
25

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2 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: But you going to sit
3 down with them after the fact, not after--

4 DIRECTOR PARKINSON: [interposing] Before,
5 during and after.

6 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Right, you're not--
7 and I think we've said this and over side bar
8 conversations or meetings we've had, that it seems
9 like you're telling the tenants how they should live,
10 and it's after the fact. It's not well, you're
11 coming to the tenants from the beginning and saying
12 is this something you want to do.

13 DIRECTOR PARKINSON: Yeah. With respect--

14 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] And
15 you're trying to convince them--

16 DIRECTOR PARKINSON: [interposing] With
17 respect, Council Member--

18 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: after you--

19 DIRECTOR PARKINSON: we heard testimony
20 from Doctor Crawford today talking about the very
21 real, very serious issues she's dealing with and her
22 community is dealing with on a daily basis,--

23 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Yeah,
24 but, no, no--

1 DIRECTOR PARKINSON: [interposing]
2
3 [inaudible] that haven't been cleaned, boilers that--

4 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] But you
5 can't-- you can't--

6 DIRECTOR PARKINSON: are not functional.

7 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Sir, sir, sir, I'm
8 the Chair.

9 DIRECTOR PARKINSON: Security--

10 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] I'm the
11 Chair. I have the right to interrupt.

12 DIRECTOR PARKINSON: Understood.

13 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: You cannot scare the
14 residents with saying because they have repair issues
15 and things of that nature just to use that as a scare
16 tactic then force this program down their throats.

17 DIRECTOR PARKINSON: We work with the
18 residents in advance of any decisions being made
19 about who we were working with to understand--

20 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] If that
21 was the case--

22 DIRECTOR PARKINSON: to understand--

23 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Sir, if
24 that was the case, then we wouldn't be in these
25 situations where you have like Chelsea-Elliott where

1 residents have said that they don't want this
2 particular program and you had close to 950 residents
3 who signed a petition-- you're still going ahead with
4 a project. Stuyvesant Gardens is the same thing.

5 There was a petition that has been circulated.

6 Residents have been weighed in and said they don't
7 want it. But you're still going ahead. You're
8 trying to convince them of how they should live.

9
10 DIRECTOR PARKINSON: We've never seen
11 such a petition at Stuyvesant One. I'd welcome it if
12 that petition exists.

13 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Sir--

14 [audience disruption]

15 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Order, order. Sir,
16 you testimony today that a petition has never been
17 presented to you.

18 DIRECTOR PARKINSON: As far as I
19 understand.

20 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: But you are aware
21 there's a petition?

22 DIRECTOR PARKINSON: I've heard Doctor
23 Crawford reference the petition multiple times.

24 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And Doctor Crawford
25 is the elected Tenant Association president?

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COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING

DIRECTOR PARKINSON: Correct.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And there's an Executive Board?

DIRECTOR PARKINSON: Correct.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Correct, okay. Let me ask you this question.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Chair?

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Yes, Darlene?

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: They give us what they going to plan to do in regards to if people have issues. They got to put something in place now.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: I'll give-- it seem-- I'll give them one more opportunity to answer the question. I don't think we got a straight answer--

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing] Right.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: from them. So if you want to take the time to answer the question, you have the opportunity to do so. If you can't answer the question, we'll move forward to another question. Just let us know.

DIRECTOR PARKINSON: Can you repeat the question?

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2 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: To-- this was dealing
3 with a plan to deal with the harassment that's being
4 levied, or allegedly that's being levied by the
5 management companies against the tenants association,
6 for those residents who are not interested with going
7 to RAD/PACT. What's is your plan-- how do you-- how
8 you-- what oversight are you providing? What are you
9 doing to deal with that controversy or to mediate it.

10 DIRECTOR PARKINSON: Sure.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: First, we need a
12 date. We need to know how many are-- want to be in
13 RAD/PACT, y'all already signed them up, and how many
14 do not that-- we as elected officials could give them
15 the support they need that if they do not want to go
16 that route, they shouldn't have to be. They
17 shouldn't have to be threatened to go that route.
18 Some people don't want to go into RAD and PACT. That
19 would change their life. To me-- you know, I'm not
20 even in this. If they don't want to go in RAD and
21 PACT, they should have that option. We need to know
22 how many. I'm just asking, how many do not want to
23 go in RAD/PACT right now, and how many you then did
24 signed up for it and you're working with them? How
25 many no? How many yes? Can anyone tell me that?

1
2 DIRECTOR PARKINSON: We wouldn't have
3 that information.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Why?

5 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Hold on. So, the--
6 you are aware that there are developments that have
7 petitioned and said that they are not interested with
8 going RAD. So you're not aware of that? You're not
9 aware of Stuy Gardens. You just said that. You just
10 said that you spoke to--

11 DIRECTOR PARKINSON: [interposing] I've
12 never seen those--

13 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Doctor Craw--

14 DIRECTOR PARKINSON: [interposing] I've
15 never seen a petition at Stuy Gardens.

16 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: You've never seen a
17 petition, but you are aware that there's opposition?

18 DIRECTOR PARKINSON: Again, I've heard
19 references to the petition, yes.

20 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Right, okay. Also,
21 when it comes to Chelsea-Elliott, are you aware that
22 there's been a petition that was collected for 950
23 residents?

24 DIRECTOR PARKINSON: Yes, we are aware.
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COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. Yeah, guys, please. You'll have your opportunity to give testimony. Let's just get through these questions. Council Member Mealy, were you satisfied?

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [inaudible]

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. So you weren't satisfied.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [inaudible]

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Neither was I, but let's see if they can answer this question straight.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: What percentage of consensus do you look for from residents before moving forward with a PACT? What's the percentage of the consensus that's needed? How many residents are needed to be on the affirmative in supporting--

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA:

[interposing] We do not have a specific target. We work with the resident leadership, and if they signal to us that there is [inaudible] interest with them and their community to move forward, we move forward.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. Have there been cases where NYCHA has met a potential PACT candidate and decided not to go through what the PACT

1 conversion after residents expressed their desire not
2 to go forward?

3 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Yes.

4 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: There has been. Can
5 you name the development?

6 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: There
7 were-- we could look back into this and get you a
8 more robust answer--

9 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Yeah, we
10 would love to have--

11 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: but off
12 the top of my head, there were a few sites in
13 Rockaway, that after that earlier introduction stage
14 they said they were not interested and we did not
15 proceed.

16 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. And they're not
17 even being considered to be selected for the
18 RAD/PACT, for the RAD program even after.

19 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: No.

20 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. NYCHA recently
21 announced that Jacob Riis Houses would vote-- sorry--
22 would vote between remaining Section 9 or moving to
23 PACT. Why is the third option-- why isn't there a
24 third option of joining the Trust not on the ballot?
25

1 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: The
2 entire process has been-- is emblematic of what we've
3 been talking about here today. We worked with
4 resident leadership and the wider resident body over
5 the course of a year and a half at this point to
6 shape the engagement process that took place through
7 2024, and then the design of vote that is going to be
8 happening in a couple weeks was informed by work that
9 we did with resident leadership. So what they wanted
10 to do in this vote was strictly PACT or stay Section
11 9. They did not want to have a vote that
12 contemplated the Trust.

13 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. Will the
14 voting procedure be the same as the previous votes
15 that included the Trust option?

16 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Do you
17 mean for Riis?

18 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Yeah.

19 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Well,
20 no, because the residents at Riis just wanted-- the
21 vote that is coming up is specifically on PACT or no
22 PACT.

23 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Council
24 Member, can I just say, for the most part, yes, the
25

1 voting will be the same. There'll be only two
2 options instead of three, but residents will be able
3 to vote online. They'll be able to vote by mail.
4 There'll be an independent vote administrator who
5 will handle the-- all the ballots and the counting.
6 And then one slight difference is for in-person
7 voting for the Trust elections, it has been 10 days,
8 but we made it five days. the reason being is that
9 on the Trust voting, we find that most people come in
10 on the first day and the last day, and then we have
11 those, like, nine days in between where we don't see
12 a lot of traffic. So this is just more of an
13 efficiency.

14
15 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Alright.

16 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: But
17 residents still have 30 days in order to vote.

18 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: They have 30 days,
19 okay. Given the-- given that the federal RAD program
20 does not have a resident voter requirement, NYCHA has
21 previously stated that it may transition developments
22 to PACT or its own initiative. I think I asked that
23 question already. Am I correct? Again, just want to
24 make sure that the focus is on the desires and the
25 wishes of the residents, and would NYCHA consider a

1
2 voting, a formal voting process for the RAD or
3 selective RAD development?

4 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: At
5 this time, as Simon mentioned earlier, we are moving
6 forward with the engagement process that he outlined,
7 and if we get resident support, we--

8 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] I'm not
9 talking about an engagement process. The engagement
10 process--

11 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA:
12 [interposing] But the engagement process informs how
13 we--

14 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] is
15 starting the program--

16 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: work
17 with the residents, and so at this time, no, we're
18 not contemplating specific votes, because--

19 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] So, no,
20 you're not going to let the residents be able to vote
21 and determine--

22 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA:
23 [interposing] Well, in the case of Riis--

24 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: how their community--
25

1 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: the
2 residents asked for a vote, and that is what we're
3 doing there. It's going to be dependent on the
4 developments and the work that we do with the
5 residents.
6

7 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: I'm talking about
8 also future developments that are--

9 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA:
10 [interposing] That applies to the future.

11 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: future developments
12 that are slated to go-- that you're selecting to go
13 RAD. Will you consider allowing those residents to
14 vote on their future?

15 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: As I
16 said, we will work with residents. As in the case of
17 Riis, we are-- they wanted to do a vote, and we're
18 doing a vote there. So if something like that
19 happens in the future, we will do it again and we
20 will entertain a vote.

21 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So you're saying that
22 if a NYCHA development that you selected to go into
23 the RAD program, you will engage them and allow them
24 to have a vote for-- formal voting process.
25

1 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: If
2 that is what they want to do, as in the case of Riis,
3 we would do it again.

4 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So, Stuyvesant
5 Gardens has requested to a vote as to the future of
6 their development and going RAD. Will you today
7 commit to bringing about allowing a voting process
8 for that particular development?

9 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: As
10 Michael mentioned, we would like to work in
11 partnership with Doctor Crawford and her residents.
12 That project has been in the works for several years
13 now. The residents were at one time in support of--

14 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] It
15 doesn't matter. It's clear that the residents have
16 stated that they are not interested to go in RAD--
17 going RAD.

18 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: I
19 think the first step is to have--

20 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] And you
21 have a voting process that clearly will--

22 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA:
23 [interposing] First step would be have a conversation
24 with Doctor Crawford and work through these issues.
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CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So--

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA:

[interposing] We've already invested--

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] is there a commitment--

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: at that development-- we've already invested a lot of time with the residents at that development in planning for the future. We can't keep revisiting these plans.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Listen sir, you don't live there. These folks-- these residents that live there, if it takes 10 years to come to a decision, they should have that right to do so.

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: So, Council Member, I-- you know, so voting came to be in 2022 with the state legislation for Trust properties.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Correct.

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Even at that time before this committee we had said that any properties that were engaged and in the pipeline at that-- before that date were not going to be considered for a vote. In Stuy One and Two, the engagement started in 2021. I think what's clear

1 here is that NYCHA has two obligations. We have an
2 obligation to inform and to work with the residents
3 to make sure that all of their questions are
4 answered, all of their, you know, questions are
5 addressed and they're engaged. We hold meetings. We
6 knock on people's doors. We do phone banking. We
7 meet with people one-on-one because we have office
8 hours at the development. I believe we checked all
9 the boxes there. We also have an obligation--

11 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Yeah,
12 but you-- but you didn't check the box of getting
13 permission from the residents.

14 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: I don't--
15 so, I don't think that-- so I think--

16 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] And I
17 think that's where the issue is.

18 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Correct,
19 okay.

20 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And the issue lies
21 where it seems as though you're moving forward with
22 this program. You're doing everything. You're
23 checking the boxes for the program, but you're not
24 checking--

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EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN:

[interposing] The federal-- the federal--

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: boxes with the

tenants.

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN:

[inaudible] mentioned nothing about permission from the residents. But what is important--

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] And

that's the issue, Brian. I think--

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN:

[interposing] But well--

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] that's

what the--

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN:

[interposing] You know, you-- the federal government could change that, and you know, we would abide by that. But what our obligation is--

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Oh, no,

but we're asking NYCHA to be proactive and since you've consistently said that you want to be a partner, you want to partner with the residents, why not also advocate for them to have a formal voting process?

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COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: The
second--

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Or
NYCHA--

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN:
[interposing] The second part of our obligation is to
make sure that these buildings are there for the next
generation and for the generation afterwards. Right
now, we are not funded to make that guarantee. I
cannot guarantee that Stuy Gardens will be there for
the next generation or the generation under-- after
that, under current funding conditions. I will say
by bringing investment into that development, we can
address their chronic heating problems, their
chronic--

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Okay.
We-- are you saying NYCHA--

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN:
[interposing] the elevator issues--

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: did a terrible job
with--

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN:
[interposing] the chronic mold issues--

1
2 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: managing these
3 properties, we get that.

4 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: and all
5 the other issues there.

6 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: We understand that.

7 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: We need
8 investment in order to--

9 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Brian,
10 we understand that.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [inaudible]
12 together, but we can't talk over each other.

13 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: We understand that.
14 We understand that, Brian. NYCHA has done-- has not
15 done a good job with maintaining these properties,
16 and thus, we understand-- we understand the need to
17 bring in this-- bring in some of the investment.
18 What we're saying is if that if you want to build a
19 true partnership, it needs to be along working with
20 the tenants. The tenants need to have a say, and
21 then, yes, do the investment, but give the tenants a
22 say if they want to do it through RAD or if they want
23 to do it where they want to stay traditional Section
24 9. That's all we're saying. Give them an
25 opportunity--

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN:

[interposing] So, Council Member, I think we agree that tenants--

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [inaudible]

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: should have a say, and I think in New York City tenants have more of a say than in any other housing authority in the country when it comes to these conversions. I will challenge any--

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Not true.

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Council Member or any, you know, resident to show me a city that does this different in a more robust way, and if they do, we will follow that model.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: I don't need to show you a city--

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: [interposing] But in New York City, residents are engaged in these process and in many cases for more than a year, in Stuy Gardens for four years, and residents were able to--

1
2 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Where's
3 the disconnect? What's the disconnect? What's the
4 disconnect at Stuy Gardens?

5 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: I don't
6 know. I don't-- you know, I-- you know, and I'd be
7 happy to sit with them and to talk to them, you know,
8 along with my colleagues, and I know that they're
9 doing that. However--

10 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] The
11 disconnect is that you're speaking at them. You're
12 telling them how they should live. You're not asking
13 them. That's the disconnect.

14 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Don't--
15 I don't think that's the case, but we can agree to
16 disagree.

17 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Well, we can
18 definitely agree to disagree on that, but we have
19 anecdotes. We have members, tenants who live in
20 those developments, that have clearly stated that
21 they don't want RAD and that the level of engagement
22 is not there, because they're being told how they
23 should live, they're not being asked.

24 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Council
25 Member, again, I think our obligation is to engage.

1 Our obligation is not to make sure that we have 100
2 percent agreement. Our second--

3 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] We're
4 not saying 100 percent. We're talking about--

5 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN:
6 obligation is to make sure--

7 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] a
8 majority of the tenants.

9 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Council
10 Member, our second obligation is to make sure that
11 these buildings are around for the next generation
12 and the generation after that. We are not set up to
13 do that currently.

14 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: You cannot make a
15 major investment like this and leave the wishes and
16 the desires of the tenants on the corner. They have
17 to be at the table.

18 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Are we
19 prepared to just give up on those developments?

20 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: No, we're not
21 prepared, but we're prepared to have you respect
22 those tenants in those developments.

23 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: But
24 Council Member--
25

1 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] That's
2
3 what it's about.

4 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: So, if
5 we just say okay, we're not going to invest, what is
6 the plan?

7 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: You're mixing apples
8 and oranges. From the beginning we've clearly stated
9 that there needs to be an investment in NYCHA. What
10 we're saying is that the tenants should make that
11 determination on what program they should go in.

12 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Okay,
13 and--

14 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Are you
15 saying that if they decide not to go-- if they decide
16 to stay in traditional Section 9, that they're going
17 to continue to be in misery?

18 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: I'm not
19 saying that. I'm saying that's--

20 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Are you
21 saying that?

22 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: I'm
23 saying that's the way the federal funding is right
24 now set up. It is not set up for success. It is set
25 up to make sure that crumbs are spread around and

1 tenants are not getting the services that they
2 deserve.

3
4 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. We're going to
5 move. Let me ask some other questions. When it
6 comes to the general conversation impacts on
7 residents. How many developments have been converted
8 or are in the process of being converted to PACT as
9 of today?

10 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: We
11 have converted 24,584 apartments, and there are
12 14,574 that are in pre-development. So that is on a
13 development basis, 92 developments have been
14 converted and 53 are within the pre-development
15 stage.

16 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So, those are the ones
17 that are in the process of being converted.

18 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Yes,
19 those are ones where we have PACT partners identified
20 and they are on-site doing their investigations,
21 engaging with residents, and we're moving towards the
22 conversion.

23 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And how many
24 residents-- how many residents are affected by those
25 conversions?

2 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: You
3 know, it's typically two to three residents per unit.
4 So, call it 28-30,000 or so.

5 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Does NYCHA fully
6 inform residents of the potential impacts that
7 conversion to PACT may have on their rights and
8 services available to them?

9 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Yes,
10 we do.

11 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Well, can you confirm
12 that as required by federal law residents maintain
13 the same rights they had under the conventional
14 public housing when their developments are converted
15 to PACT?

16 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Yes,
17 they do.

18 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So, the rights are
19 the same--

20 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Yes.

21 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: under Section 9,
22 transferred to Section 8?

23 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Yes.
24 They are in some places codified in different places,
25

1
2 but the same ultimate result is the same for the
3 residents.

4 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. Is NYCHA aware
5 of any negative impacts that residents have
6 experienced before, during or after their
7 developments have been converted to PACT?

8 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: I
9 mean, we know every day that residents are living
10 through tenants in-place rehabs and that is
11 disruptive. Most of the-- by far the vast majority
12 of the complaints we get deal with the frustration of
13 living through an in-place renovation, and so we're
14 always looking for ways to minimize that disruption
15 to residents so that this program can actually be
16 successful not just at the end when they're in their
17 renovated units, but during the renovation process.

18 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So, when a
19 development is converted and they're going through
20 the rehab, they're going through the rehab process,
21 what is done? What is NYCHA doing to monitor that?
22 especially when you have residents who have
23 complained and there's been multiple complaints of
24 the shabby-- shabby equipment-- not equipment, shabby
25 materials that are being used to be put in these

1
2 apartments, what is NYCHA doing and how is NYCHA
3 monitoring that when those controversies come up and
4 the tenant saying that my apartment is falling apart
5 of this three-week rehab?

6 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: So, as
7 it relates to the construction oversight, within real
8 estate there's a design and construction team, and we
9 have folks who go out and their whole purpose is to
10 go out an spot check and make sure that the
11 renovations are happening pursuant to the agreements
12 that we struck prior to the conversion, and if there
13 are issues, we make sure that the development teams
14 correct those issues.

15 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Those reports that
16 are done, is that done like through a report?

17 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Pardon
18 me?

19 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Is it done through a
20 report? Is that something we can see for one
21 particular development where there has been
22 complaints particularly after rehab has been done,
23 and is there some type of report created or put out?

24 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: We
25 don't generate a specific report on that-- of that

1 nature, but we do respond to any of the complaints
2 that we might get. And again, when our teams are out
3 there doing this proactive work, we will then have
4 the conversations with the development teams to
5 correct in real-time.

6
7 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So, the materials,
8 per say, how are those materials selected? Are the
9 tenants involved in that process when-- as far as the
10 type of materials or the quality of materials that
11 are being--

12 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA:
13 [interposing] In our most recent projects, yes. One
14 of the things that we've been doing-- we did not
15 again, we did not do it in our very first PACT
16 conversions, but over the years we've done a few
17 things. Number one, in every PACT development there
18 is a model unit that is built where residents can see
19 what a renovated apartment could look like. They are
20 often given samples of flooring materials, kitchen
21 cabinets, backsplashes, kitchen tiles, you know,
22 bathroom tiles, the whole range, and residents can au
23 pine on what finishes, what products they would like
24 to see in the apartments. And again, I want to be
25 clear, I admit we did not do that in the very

1 beginning, but it is reflective of the way that the
2 program has evolved.

3
4 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Let me just point out
5 a material that's being-- well, material that's being
6 used, flat paint. Do you know the difference between
7 flat paint--

8 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA:
9 [interposing] Yes.

10 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: and oil-based paint?

11 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Yes.

12 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. Would you put
13 flat paint on an apartment? Would you use flat paint
14 on an apartment and say it's a finished apartment?

15 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: I
16 mean, my apartment does have flat paint, so yes.

17 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: But we know flat
18 paint is not normally used if you're talking about,
19 you know, duration or something that will last over
20 time, am I correct?

21 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: I
22 mean, yes, obviously a flat paint would need to be
23 refreshed more often than other types of finishes,
24 but that is the responsibility of the PACT partner to
25 continue to refresh and maintain the properties.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: The-- now, let me go
3 on to-- how many-- let me just do--

4 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing]
5 Chair, could I ask a question on that?

6 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Oh, yeah, Darlene, go
7 ahead. You could ask a question.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: You talk about the
9 flat paint, that's the one that you could touch and
10 it get dirty so quick. That's not good. And how
11 much subcontracting did y'all do with minorities?

12 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Can
13 you speak to that? Yeah, we have-- this is on our
14 dashboard.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Because y'all
16 making a lot of money and you say you remodeling
17 these apartments, and I just drove through Howard
18 Avenue and I saw all refitted tubs. So why couldn't
19 you just-- if you really going to give people quality
20 of living, why not just put a brand new tub? Y'all
21 have the money. Y'all just doing all re-fitting
22 tubs. True or not?

23 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: That's
24 not true.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Sir, you can go on
3 Howard--

4 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA:
5 [interposing] It's not true. There are some--

6 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Avenue and St.
7 John. It's about five trucks-- refitted tubs. It has--
8 -

9 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA:
10 [interposing] There are some developments-- you're
11 correct. There are some developments where they've
12 used the bath-fitter and there are other developments
13 where they're replaced the tubs.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: So why did you
15 choose to replace some and keep just the re-fitting
16 tubs? Shouldn't everyone have a remodeled brand new
17 apartment?

18 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: It
19 depends on the needs of the development. It's part
20 of a complex decision-making around what each
21 development needs.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: A tub to be
23 refitted, you might as well just put in a tub. So
24 that's why it came to my realization. Tell me about
25 how many contracts did minorities get in this whole

1
2 RAD and PACT? Since you want to use an outside entity
3 just to refit tubs-- so you had to put maybe the
4 remodeling of the floors. What local contract was
5 done? We have a lot of them right on Bedford Avenue.
6 How many did y'all use with all this millions of
7 dollars--

8 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA:

9 [interposing] So--

10 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing] that
11 y'all gave back to the community since we are
12 partners.

13 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Yes.

14 So, we do have MWBEs are part of our program.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: How many?

16 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: We
17 require that every project have a partner who is a
18 MWBE.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Have a list?

20 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: I'm
21 getting to that. So, yes, we have that on our
22 website, and we can provide you with a detailed list,
23 but it is a requirement of the program that MWBEs
24 play a significant role in the rehabilitation of
25 these properties.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: So, nobody local
3 in Brooklyn or in those boroughs are qualified to do
4 MWBE?

5 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: I
6 didn't say that.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: So, you say we can
8 look on the website, but y'all should know. Y'all
9 should be proud to be talking about that y'all gave
10 local developments or local organizations or
11 businesses some city contracts. You can't name one
12 for me?

13 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: We can
14 give you a list.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: That's locally?

16 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Well,
17 first of all, NYCHA does not directly enter into the
18 contracts with the trades that do the PACT rehabs.
19 We select the joint venture between the developer,
20 the general contractor and the property manager, and
21 they in turn hire the various trades which is why I
22 can't name--

23 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing] But
24 who is watching them hire these people? Is it a
25 database?

1
2 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: We get
3 reporting from our PACT partners on this, so this is
4 why I can't name because we did not specifically hire
5 and MWBE trade, but we can provide you with list of
6 all the-- and it's actually part of the transparency
7 report. It has all of our contractors who are part of
8 the projects.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Who's in charge of
10 that? I could speak to Brian Honan about it?
11 Because I must say that's the only one I could ever
12 reach. I thank you. I talk about you when you bad.
13 I talk about you when you're good, too. But out of
14 the whole NYCHA, that's the only one I could talk to.
15 So, I could speak to him and see where locally
16 contractors was involved in this. And I have one
17 more question, because now it makes no sense to even
18 be here because I'm not hearing anything real and
19 concrete. Are the young men just-- oh, Mr. Brian
20 Honan said that if Stuyvesant do not go RAD and PACT,
21 it may not be there for the future. Did--

22 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA:
23 [interposing] Brian, do you want to respond to that?

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Sorry, Brian. I'm
25 coming for you.

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COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Sure.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Because you made a face like that--

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN:
[interposing] Yeah, no, yeah. No, I get it.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: I got to check--

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN:
[interposing] I think it-- yeah, and I don't mean that as fear. I really do.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: That's almost a fear tactic.

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: I didn't--

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing] And that's almost bullying.

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Council Member, it's not bullying, and I don't mean it as fear. I do have a fear for the public housing program in general. It has not been funded the way it is-- was supposed to be funded for generations, for as long as I've been doing this which is quite some time now.

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: I know.

1 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: So, we
2 are seeing issues that have never seen before. We
3 had to tell all the residents that live in Bronx
4 River addition that they couldn't live there anymore
5 because we couldn't provide heat. In Council Member
6 Banks' former district at Farinto [sp?] Plaza,
7 before--

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing] I
9 know--

10 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN:
11 [interposing] before we converted when it was--

12 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] It's the
13 42nd. It's still the 42nd.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Alright.

15 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Oh,
16 okay. But there are more and more conditions I'm
17 seeing that are so serious that I do fear for the
18 long-term health of those developments.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Okay, then. So,
20 if they don't go RAD and PACT, because like all the
21 other--

22 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN:
23 [interposing] If it doesn't have to be RAD and PACT,
24 we have to find investment. If we can find
25

1 investment another way, you know, that's fine. But
2 right now, the only thing that the federal government
3 is offering for public housing developments is RAD.
4 They're not offering--

5 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing] Okay,
6 we can-- because things could change.

7 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: It could

8 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: So, and that gets
9 me to the next question I want to ask. You just said
10 that-- someone talked about foreclosure. So, if no
11 one do anything with RAD and PACT or if any TA
12 President as a collective fire development, and it go
13 in disrepair--

14 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN:

15 [interposing] Right.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: and since I just
17 heard today that they taking loans out already, if it
18 do go in foreclosure, would it not come back to
19 NYCHA, because they only lease the land?

20 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Correct.

21 So and I'll let Jonathan speak more to that.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Please.

23 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN:

24 Especially when it comes to the--
25

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing]
3 Because it still go back to NYCHA. You still go to
4 fix it no matter what.

5 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: We do.
6 And in those cases--

7 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing] So,
8 that tactic was not nice--

9 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN:
10 [interposing] So, Jonathan-- I don't think it's a
11 question of nice. I think what's happened to public
12 housing residents for more than a generation has not
13 been nice.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Hold that, because
15 we in this predicament because NYCHA didn't live up
16 to what they should have been doing all along.

17 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: I don't--
18 -

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing] So,
20 going forward, I just feel that we shouldn't be kind
21 of--

22 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN:
23 [interposing] Yep.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: scare tactics
25 where some NYCHA developments want to stay

1 independent, and you never know, next year somebody
2 could come up with some money. We have a new
3 president.
4

5 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: I'm
6 using--

7 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing] I
8 ain't saying he's going to do it, but--

9 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN:
10 [interposing] Council Member, you're--

11 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: you never know.
12 We can't just close the door.

13 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Okay.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: So, if those
15 developments do not want to go to RAD and PACT
16 because it's a different thing with RAD-- Section 9
17 and 8.

18 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: That's
19 correct.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: I feel people are
21 getting evicted quicker now, and not having a
22 recourse to go to NYCHA and have a fair hearing case.
23 So that's why some people do not want to go and lose
24 Section 9.

25 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Right.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: so, you said
3 someone else was going to speak, and I'll be done. I
4 should have been-- please.

5 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: So, I
6 think the question that Brian referred to me is
7 about, you know, the debt and going into default.
8 So, a few things. There's almost a year-long
9 process, sometimes even longer.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Are you going
11 foreclosure, if--

12 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA:
13 [interposing] No, no, no, no, no, no. Before we even
14 convert. From the time we have selected a
15 development and we are working and doing the
16 engagement, the developers are going into the sites
17 and doing invasive investigations to really inform
18 the scope of work and making sure that they have
19 fully thought through the scope of work that needs to
20 happen, and we are overseeing that process to make
21 sure that the scope of work is going to address
22 today's needs, and it was mentioned in one of the
23 pre-panels, making sure that the 20-year needs are
24 addressed.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: If it's not--

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EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA:

[interposing] And it-- well, hang on. As-- once that scope of work--

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing]
[inaudible]

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Well, I need to give you a full answer. So, once the scope of work has been developed, then it gets costed out and we know what the budget is. So, we NYCHA review that budget and approve that budget, and we go back and forth to make sure we get to a place where we're okay--

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing] We passed that.

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Then there is the City's Housing Finance Agency, HDC, that also reviews and approves, and then of course, there's the federal government. We have to submit financing plans to the federal government to show that we have a viable project, and they approve the subsidy that's going into the projects. They--

COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing]
That's how we got here.

1 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: They
2 approve the costs, and they move forward with the
3 project. All of that is to say the risk of a default
4 by the time we get to a conversion is extremely low,
5 because it's been vetted, and the project has been
6 developed and vetted by these three entities.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: So, have any
8 development stated they did not want to be in RAD and
9 PACT, and development company that is doing their
10 project, they do not want them? Have anyone said
11 that as of yet?

12 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: I
13 mean, that's a different than financial default.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Yeah, but it goes
15 hand in hand. If the-- that TA president or that
16 development do not want it, and they don't-- do not
17 want that developer-- so now, they made up their
18 mind.

19 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Okay,
20 well, alright. So changing gears then to--

21 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing] But
22 it could go in default because if we don't hurry up
23 and get a new CBO or a new organization to take over
24 where the TA's fired that contractor-- if that's a
25

1 long process, it could go in disrepair and it could
2 go into financial ruin. True or not?

3 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: No,
4 because if we--

5 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing] If we
6 don't find someone to take over if we dismiss a
7 development.

8 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: If we
9 are in a situation where residents, you know, are
10 second-guessing their original thought and maybe they
11 don't want to be in PACT anymore--

12 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: [interposing] They
13 said no.

14 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: We
15 have not-- at that point, we have not closed. We
16 have not converted. Therefore, there's no risk of a
17 default, because there hasn't been a conversion yet.
18 It's still Section 9.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MEALY: Okay, alright. It
20 makes-- thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: You've been
22 satisfied. So, I know the-- we spoke about the
23 RAD/PACT when it comes to the engagement, and I just
24 want to-- I have just a couple of questions about,
25

1
2 you know, when a development is converted and once
3 we're done with the rehab and now we're onto the
4 management, you know, phase or the day to day phase
5 per say, if the residents are not content with that
6 particular management company or those particular
7 owners, is there a process put in place or any type
8 of trigger where NYCHA can revisit the contract
9 agreement?

10 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Yes.

11 So, again, we have our ongoing oversight which
12 happens through our asset management team. NYCHA
13 also has a compliance team. There's also leased
14 housing that administers the subsidy. So there's a
15 lot of different ways in which NYCHA looks at these
16 properties, and if there are issues including
17 resident complaints, we will take immediate action.
18 And there are two cases where we have removed a
19 property manager, one at Hope Gardens and one in the
20 Manhattan bundle. At Hope Gardens is what Pinnacle,
21 and that's Manhattan bundle. It was Cornell Pace
22 [sic], and we have replaced both of those property
23 managers with Wave Crest.

24 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And that process also
25 involved the tenants getting their input.

1
2 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: I
3 mean, yes, a lot of it was driven by feedback we were
4 getting from residents about what they felt was the
5 poor level of service under the original property
6 managers so we responded.

7 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Is there a formal
8 process for that, or is that just through protest or
9 the residents coming together after? Was there a
10 formal process or a period that set up where that
11 review can take place?

12 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: It's
13 not responding just to protest. As I said, there was
14 these three bodies within NYCHA that are constantly
15 overseeing these properties. So we have a real-time
16 sense of whether customer service is being delivered
17 in the way that we expect. And so-- and so, you know,
18 it is based on both what we are seeing on the
19 properties, but also in feedback from the residents.
20 But there's not a formal mechanism at this point.

21 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. We talked about
22 evictions. Has NYCHA heard concerns from residents
23 that eviction-- that the eviction rates at PACT
24 developments are higher than the conventional public
25 housing?

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Yes.

And I'll ask Gillian to respond specifically to some of these questions.

DIRECTOR CONNELL: Sure. We have heard that concern and the difference between the eviction rate at NYCHA properties, traditional Section 9 and the PACT-converted properties is actually very minimal. It's less than one quarter of one percent.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Has NYCHA heard concerns about the eviction rates at any particular developments or by particular property managers?

DIRECTOR CONNELL: So, the eviction rates across the various PACT properties are also relatively consistent.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. Is heightened vulnerability to eviction a risk that NYCHA has communicated at resident information sessions or outreach events when discussing the potential impacts of RAD/PACT conversion?

DIRECTOR CONNELL: Definitely residents rights are discussed when a conversion is contemplated. In particularly many of those rights related directly to eviction prevention. Specifically that includes ongoing rights for

1 residents to recertify should there be a change to
2 their household income or to their household
3 composition. They have right to grievance hearing.
4 So they have all the equivalent rights. We make sure
5 that those are communicated to them prior to
6 conversion.
7

8 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Is there any
9 displacement-- anti-displacement language in the
10 RAD/PACT program?

11 DIRECTOR CONNELL: Yeah, the Housing
12 Stability and Retention Guidelines are including in
13 our deal documents, and those set clear expectations
14 for protocols around eviction prevention and outreach
15 that PACT partners must follow.

16 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. The New York
17 City Comptroller released an audit in December 2024
18 finding that the eviction rate at PACT developments
19 is significantly higher than the eviction rate in
20 conventional public housing and is now comparable to
21 the citywide eviction rate. The audit also found
22 that PACT eviction rates have more than doubled in
23 the last year. Is there anything you would like to
24 comment about-- around the finding of this particular
25 findings in this audit?

1
2 DIRECTOR CONNELL: Yeah, so we disagree
3 with that characterization that there has been a
4 significant increase from pre-conversion to post-
5 conversion, and in fact the data that's presented in
6 the audit report supports that, and it actually shows
7 that the change between the pre-conversion rate,
8 Section 9 rate, and the PACT rate is again less than
9 one quarter of a percent. So we do not feel that
10 that's significant.

11 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. The December
12 2024 audit found that the eviction data reported to
13 NYCHA by the PACT property managers was incomplete
14 and inaccurate. What steps does NYCHA currently take
15 to verify the information reported by PACT property
16 manager?

17 DIRECTOR CONNELL: Sure. So, we review
18 the information from our PACT property managers that
19 they submit to us per the Housing Stability and
20 Retention Guidelines on a monthly basis, and we look
21 at those in detail. And we, again, disagree with the
22 characterization that some of that information is
23 inaccurate and not reported correctly.

24 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: The-- well, I guess
25 let's talk about-- we can go into transfers. Let's

1 stay in evictions. The-- we've gotten complaints
2 again of residents being dragged into court, and the
3 fear of their apartments or having housing has-- is
4 basically-- it has existed. It's something that
5 currently is a frustration of the residents here in
6 NYCHA, particularly in the RAD/PACTs. When there is
7 a process or eviction that is being executed or that
8 particular process is starting, what role does NYCHA
9 play in that process?
10

11 DIRECTOR CONNELL: So, the property
12 manager is the lead in terms of conducting any pre-
13 eviction outreach, connecting residents to resources
14 and working with the social services provider to do
15 that. They're also responsible for initiating the
16 legal proceeding process. NYCHA is responsible for
17 reviewing the monthly reports that the partners
18 submit carefully, questioning them about them on a
19 monthly basis, ensuring that they're complete and
20 accurate, and that's the oversight role that we have
21 as it relates to the eviction proceedings.

22 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So, the social
23 service provider that's a partner with the particular
24 developer or management company, is there talks-- are
25

1
2 there communication between NYCHA and that particular
3 social service provider?

4 DIRECTOR CONNELL: So, there's nothing
5 preventing that from happening, and there can and has
6 been. When it comes to specific discussions
7 regarding evictions, that's obviously a very one-on-
8 one discussion that would need to be had between
9 either the property manager and the social services
10 provider directly should something like a re-
11 certification or needs to be pursued. So that's more
12 of a one-on-one conversation that a resident would
13 have with a social services provider.

14 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: We'll come back to
15 evictions. We're going to have a conversation about
16 transfers. Has NYCHA heard concerns from residents
17 about the transfer process at PACT developments? Has
18 NYCHA heard of concerns from residents about the
19 transfer process?

20 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Do you
21 mean going from one-- from a PACT development to
22 another PACT development or to a Section 9?

23 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Yeah.

24 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Yes,
25 we have, and we are trying to find a way to

1
2 facilitate such moves, but it's not currently
3 permissible.

4 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Have you heard of
5 reports of residents being removed from transfer wait
6 lists when their buildings are being converted to
7 PACT?

8 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: No.
9 Again, if you have some specifics, we will look into
10 it, but I've not heard of that.

11 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. Is potential
12 change in transfer policy or removal from a transfer
13 wait list a risk that NYCHA communicates to residents
14 when discussing the impact of a PACT conversion?

15 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Yes.
16 Transfer policy?

17 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: Oh, apologies,
18 Council Member. Yes, any questions that come up at
19 our meetings about transfer policy are addressed. We
20 also have a meeting that's specific to different
21 things that you need to be aware of prior to the
22 conversion, and as my colleague Brian mentioned,
23 where we walk through, you know, how to apply for a
24 reasonable accommodation, how you would pay your
25 rent, where you would go to file income certification

1 under project-based Section 8 or Section 9, those are
2 all explained at a very specific PACT welcome meeting
3 prior to the conversion taking place.

4
5 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So, it's your
6 testimony you explain to the residents about the--

7 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: [interposing]
8 The transfer policy, correct.

9 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: transfer policy,
10 okay. And this is done through the engagement
11 process.

12 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: Correct. this
13 is done at a-- there is a specific resident meeting
14 that goes through that and other topics related to
15 how the new property manager and NYCHA would interact
16 with residents after the conversion takes place, but
17 we field questions like this all the time through our
18 office hours, our phone banking, our hotline, and
19 just our regular communication outreach.

20 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: How many community
21 engagement meetings are held in the beginning process
22 of a RAD/PACT converted development?

23 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: It would depend
24 on the specific development and the kind of feedback
25 we get in working with resident leaders about how to

1
2 best reach residents. We use a variety of different
3 outreach tactics. So we host typically at least two
4 or three town hall style meetings before we release a
5 request to identify developers. We also are running
6 weekly office hours. We're sending out text messages
7 and emails. We're making phone calls. We're doing
8 workshops. So, there's a whole range of different
9 activities, and it really depends on things like the
10 size of the development and the kind of guidance that
11 we get from resident leaders.

12 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: When a development
13 converts to PACT, all existing transfer request
14 close? SO, during that transition--

15 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: [interposing]
16 Yes, yes, yes. The answer is yes. Residents receive
17 a notice that their open transfer request is closed
18 prior to the conversion taking place.

19 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So my question then,
20 why is that-- why is that the outcome or why is the
21 transfer closed? Shouldn't that just be transferred
22 over to the new management company?

23 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: So, if they
24 have a transfer request--

25

1
2 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing]
3 Documents?

4 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: Yeah, so I can
5 clarify.

6 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Requests?

7 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: Yeah, so
8 there's different kinds of requests. Under the
9 project-based Section 8 program residents can now
10 currently request a transfer between a Section 8
11 development and a public housing development or
12 between different Section 8 developments, but if they
13 have a request to move to say a larger apartment to
14 accommodate their family size within that
15 development--

16 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Right.

17 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: that is still
18 relayed to the PACT partners, and then they would
19 work through a process to facilitate transfers as
20 apartments are available.

21 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: That's transferred
22 over to the PACT partner.

23 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: Those requests
24 are transferred over and made aware of-- the PACT
25 partners are made aware, correct.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Is it true even when
3 residents are seeking reasonable accommodations of
4 emergency transfers? Has that-- has that been
5 something you've heard about? Has that been a
6 constant with residents who are seeking reasonable
7 accommodations? Or emergency transfers?

8 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: So, apologize.
9 Just getting some information from my colleagues. So
10 if a reasonable accommodation request has been made
11 and can be accommodated on site, efforts are made by
12 the PACT partner to accommodate those needs. If
13 there's an emergency transfer request to move to a
14 different location, again, because of the
15 restrictions on how transfers can take place between
16 different developments, we would-- the option that we
17 would offer to the resident is housing choice
18 voucher--

19 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Right.

20 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: which would
21 allow them to move offsite to a different property.

22 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Does NYCHA currently
23 permit transfers within and between PACT portfolios?

24 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: No, as I
25 mentioned, current regulations prohibit us from

1
2 facilitating those transfers between PACTs
3 developments.

4 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Will NYCHA eventually
5 permit transfers between PACT developments and
6 Section 9 developments?

7 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: It's something
8 that we're looking at and working to facilitate.

9 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Which regulations
10 prohibit that, or what regulation prohibits a
11 resident transferring to a PACT, a different PACT
12 portfolio or to a Section 9 development or
13 traditional NYCHA development?

14 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: We can get you
15 more details, but it sounds like it's in the Section
16 8 admin plan, but again, we can get you more
17 specifics on where that's-- where that's codified.

18 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. When a PACT
19 resident needs to transfer that cannot be
20 accommodated at their development, what are their
21 options?

22 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: So, as I
23 mentioned previously, the main option we have in that
24 circumstance is to offer the resident a housing
25 choice voucher which would allow them to move,

1
2 basically port over their subsidy to rent an
3 apartment in the private market.

4 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: There's been reports
5 that source of income discrimination combined with
6 skyrocketing rents across the city make it incredibly
7 difficult for voucher recipients to find housing, so
8 if they do choose transfer or port that voucher, take
9 that voucher and leave NYCHA. A 2020-23 report by
10 NYU Furman Center found that nearly half of NYCHA's
11 Section 8 voucher recipients lose their vouchers
12 because they were unable to find housing. It is
13 NYCHA's position that the receipt of a Section 8
14 voucher is equivalent to the right of a tenant to
15 have conventional public housing or to transfer to
16 conventional public housing or to developments across
17 the NYCHA portfolio.

18 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: So,
19 unfortunately, we're not the Department that
20 typically manages helping residents navigate the
21 identification of homes with a housing choice
22 voucher, but we can get you more information about
23 the different initiatives that NYCHA has to support
24 our residents making those moves.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: When it comes to
3 transaction transparency, at a hearing in April of
4 2024 before this committee NYCHA testified that it
5 does not publish the documents that govern its
6 transactions with PACT partners. Is this still the
7 case, and-- is this still the case?

8 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Yes,
9 that is still the case.

10 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And are there any
11 plans to begin by making these documents public?

12 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: We
13 actually have transact-- template transaction
14 documents on our website so people can see how the
15 deals are generally structured, but we have not
16 really--

17 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Or the
18 actual deal itself.

19 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: We
20 have not really specific deal documents. Ultimately,
21 we want to be able to preserve our ability to
22 negotiate the best possible deal whenever we're
23 doing--

24

25

1
2 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Well,
3 we're talking about after the deal is negotiated and
4 agreed to.

5 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: But
6 that could impact negotiations on future deals.

7 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So, that particular
8 document is not released or it is not made public
9 you're saying. That particular deal for that
10 particular development is not public.

11 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Not
12 closed, not converted projects, no.

13 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: At the same hearing
14 also NYCHA testified that the reason it does not make
15 those documents public is to preserve the ability to
16 negotiate competitive agreements with each PACT
17 partner. Can you explain why withholding prior
18 transactional documents is necessary to ensure that
19 the contracts with PACT partners meet the needs of
20 NYCHA residents?

21 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: I
22 mean, obviously, to get-- you know, we want to get
23 the best deal to make sure we're getting the best
24 pricing and that we've got best scope of works that
25 we can serve residents. That's the whole point.

1
2 That's why we want to make sure we're getting the
3 best-- structuring the best deals and that we are
4 doing this to favor NYCHA as an organizations and our
5 residents, not necessarily the other side.

6 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: But do you think it's
7 in the best interest of the residents to keep that--
8 keep those deals or keep those negotiations private
9 or keep the deal, the final deal that comes out of
10 those negotiations to keep it private. You don't
11 think that should be given to the tenant so they can
12 see and examine--

13 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA:
14 [interposing] And we do a lot with residents so that
15 they-- as we've discussed through our engagement
16 process--

17 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing]
18 [inaudible]

19 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: We do
20 a lot as it relates to helping them shape--

21 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] I'm
22 talking about the documents.

23 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: scope
24 of work and all the oversight that we provide. And
25 again, we've made-- we've looked at these issues that

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2 you're raising and, you know, looked at the pros and
3 cons and have decided that for now we want to keep
4 those documents. You know, we're not putting, you
5 know, specific deal documents on our website so that
6 we can negotiate better deals in the future.

7 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: so, this is not-- this
8 is-- okay. This is the frustration. This is not--
9 what happened to the engagement, the community
10 engagement, the resident engagement? This is
11 information that the residents should be privy to.
12 Let me ask you this, then. Can you point to an
13 example where making a prior transactional document
14 public have jeopardize the contract with a PACT
15 partner?

16 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: I mean
17 it's just standard practice, not just with NYCHA. I
18 think many agencies and entities would not release
19 their information so that they could do-- again,
20 preserve their ability to do better negotiations in
21 the future.

22 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So you're saying by
23 releasing this document it would jeopardize future
24 agreements?

1 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Yes,
2 and we want to again, preserve--

3 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] You're
4 saying--

5 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: our
6 ability to negotiate the best deals.

7 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So you're saying
8 being-- not being transparent to the residents who
9 ultimately will-- whatever this agreement that is
10 done now in secret, that the residents are basically
11 left in the dark, and NYCHA--

12 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA:
13 [interposing] I didn't say we did anything in secret.

14 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: then NYCHA--

15 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA:
16 [interposing] Or that we weren't transparent. Again,
17 we do a lot to be transparent. We share the scope--

18 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Well,
19 you just said that you--

20 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA:
21 [interposing] We share the scope. We develop the
22 scopes of work with the residents. They are very
23 much aware of the scopes of work. They know the
24 overall value of the projects, right? And as was
25

1
2 mentioned earlier, we also produce these community
3 plans so that they can-- so for folks who may not
4 have been in part of the engagement process, they
5 will see exactly the kind of renovations they're
6 getting. So they have ample insight into what the
7 renovations are going to be.

8 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Well, do you believe
9 that allowing residents to access those transition
10 documents would allow them to make a more fully
11 informed decision about whether to vote for PACT
12 conversion or any-- at their development?

13 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Again,
14 the template documents are online. Basic framework
15 of these deals is online, and anyone can look at them
16 at any time.

17 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: We're not talking
18 about a template. Template doesn't show the details
19 as to what is being negotiated. We're talking about
20 after NYCHA negotiates, why isn't this information
21 made public to the residents?

22 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: As I've
23 explained, we want to preserve our ability to
24 negotiate in the future.

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2 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. These
3 transactional documents also contain provision
4 protecting residents' rights and obligating
5 developers to make certain repairs that go beyond
6 what is contained in the PACT leases. However, in
7 2022 Human Rights Watch Report reported that
8 residents faced difficulty enforcing these rights
9 because only NYCHA and HUD can enforce the
10 underlining contract. Can you walk us through how
11 NYCHA enforces its PACT contracts to ensure that
12 residents rights are being protected?

13 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: So--

14 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] I'm
15 going to repeat this again, please guys, everyone
16 will have an opportunity to give testimony. If you
17 call out or make-- interrupt the proceedings, you
18 will be removed. Remove him. Remove him. Thank you.
19 You may proceed.

20 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: Chair, I can
21 take a-- I can't take a crack at answering that. So,
22 the different rights and protections related to the
23 PACT transaction are contained in different
24 documents. That includes the lease which is probably
25 the most significant source in terms of regulating

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2 rent and other specifics. There's also regulatory
3 agreements. There's a ground lease. There's a
4 control agreement. Those are just a few of the
5 different legal documents that we have to hold our
6 partners accountable. And you know, again, as we've
7 mentioned, if there are specific instances of
8 violations related to those different obligations
9 that our partners have, we can always step in per the
10 terms of those documents and correct. But again,
11 without specific information, it's difficult for us
12 to respond in a general way.

13 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Well, how will the
14 residents what's a specific violations if you refuse
15 to release the document to the public?

16 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: Sure, so-

17 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Because NYCHA, I know
18 NYCHA provides oversight.

19 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: Yeah.

20 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: But when there is a
21 breach--

22 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: [interposing]
23 Sure.

24 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Where's the resident
25 engagement? Where's the resident empowered then to

1
2 be a part of this process or to give input? That's
3 what's missing, because--

4 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: [interposing]
5 Yeah, so are you referring to after the conversion
6 has taken place or during the whole process overall?

7 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: During the negotiation
8 process.

9 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: Oh, okay,
10 during the negotiation process. so, you know, as I
11 mentioned, we do a whole lot of work to just make
12 sure that residents are informed about the program,
13 how it works, what their rights and protections are.
14 once the partner team comes on board and they start
15 conducting inspections across the community to really
16 determine what are the conditions that need to be
17 addressed as part of this project, they start-- they
18 reflect that information back, and we want to hear
19 from residents about, you know, their experience.
20 So, that involves, you know, walking apartments with
21 residents, understanding, you know, in a really
22 detailed way where does it leak in your home when
23 there's a rainstorm. What are some of the really
24 challenging issues that you struggle with in your
25 apartment? Matching that up with the information

1
2 that's gleaned from the tenant co-inspections, using
3 that information to come up with a draft plan. That
4 plan is communicated with residents at public
5 meetings. It's put on the website. There are a
6 whole host of different activities that take place
7 where we want to hear from residents about is this
8 the plan that's going to ensure success for your
9 community? And residents have opportunities to tell
10 us yes, these needs to be prioritized or I don't see
11 you talking about how to handle cleaning of our
12 property in a positive way. So that needs to be
13 something that's put forward. And those are the kinds
14 of conversations that we have. Ultimately, that
15 information, that plan is codified in a community
16 plan document which is shared with every resident at
17 the development, and that describes in a lot of
18 detail what kind of infrastructure upgrades are going
19 to be made, what the apartments are going to look
20 like. And again, that is based on the model units
21 that are designed with residents, and also the types
22 of security, public safety, social service, property
23 management strategies that are going to be
24 implemented. So that is really in terms of what
25 residents can use to make sure that the things they

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2 were promised are being provided. We did that for
3 that specific reason. So, people know what they're
4 going to get, and if they're not getting it they
5 should let us know often. Complaints, concerns
6 filter up through the resident leadership and that's
7 an important outlet, but you know, residents can
8 communicate with us in a whole range of different
9 ways. We have a hotline. We have office hours and
10 those kinds of needs.

11 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So, again, back to my
12 point, after the negotiations are done, then the
13 residents weigh in. So this plan is negotiated and
14 then it's presented to the tenants?

15 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: Oh, no, it's
16 very iterative. So, you know, when I mentioned that
17 the PACT partner team would come to the table with a
18 draft plan. That's already been developed with input
19 from residents, because they've had meetings. We
20 consult regularly with the tenant leaders. They're
21 talking with us about what we think is-- should be
22 prioritized or what's needed. So, that draft is
23 based on months or in some cases years of engagement
24 and conversations. And then during that process when
25 residents are saying more needs to be done here, we

1 don't care as much about that, we're constantly
2 behind the scenes with the partner team trying to
3 negotiate what can the project afford, what is going
4 to be too costly, and where can we compromise to make
5 sure that this project is financially sustainable but
6 also addresses residents' needs.

8 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: It sounds like it's
9 set [inaudible] and it's done.

10 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: Very
11 challenging.

12 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And I know it's
13 challenging. In the late 2023 property-- I'm sorry.
14 In late 2023, the property manager from Hope Gardens
15 was replaced by the PACT developer. Was NYCHA
16 involved in that decision, and do PACT developers
17 need NYCHA's approval to replace a property manager?

18 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: Yes to both.

19 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Did NYCHA have
20 advanced notice of this decision?

21 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: Yes.

22 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And did it share this
23 information with the residents?

24 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: Yes, there was
25 an engagement process, and again, I mentioned this

1
2 earlier, we were all collectively responding to a
3 number of things including resident input in the
4 couple of years leading up to the change. And so we
5 agreed with resident leadership and with the
6 development team to make a change in terms of the
7 property management.

8 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. Could NYCHA
9 initiate a replacement of a PACT property manager on
10 its own without approval from the PACT developer?

11 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Yes.

12 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Could residents
13 initiate a replacement on their own?

14 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Again,
15 yes. We respond to feedback from our residents.

16 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: You respond. So if
17 the residents came and said this particular
18 management company, this owner has to go and they
19 can-- if they did it through petition, they did it
20 through a vote, or some type of resolution that
21 reflected the will of the majority of the residents,
22 would that be enough to remove a owner of management
23 company?

24 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: I
25 mean, we don't wait for those types of issues to crop

1 up. We are monitoring these properties on a day-to-
2 day basis. Again, within the real estate team, the
3 asset management part of the real estate team, within
4 the compliance group, within leased housing, there's
5 a lot of eyes on these projects. So we already have
6 a sense of what's going on and whether things are
7 working as optimally as we would like. So there's
8 not a surprise. There's not a surprise with Hope
9 Gardens. There wasn't a surprise with the Manhattan
10 bundle. And we try to work with resolution with the
11 existing teams, because replacing a partner is
12 disruptive, so we hope that there can be some
13 corrective action. If all parties eventually decide
14 that there's no path forward, then we will work to
15 remove. So, again, I don't see a world where we
16 don't know anything about it and then the residents
17 come with petition. We are actively hearing things
18 from residents on a day-to-day basis.

19
20 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: During the resident--
21 during resident engagement prior to PACT conversion
22 or voting, does NYCHA inform the residents about the
23 process of replacing PACT developers?
24
25

1 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Yes, I
2 mean, we talk all the time about how we have the
3 ability to replace PACT partners.

4 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So, you explain,
5 okay.

6 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: And I
7 would let Simon chime in with more detail of where in
8 the engagement process that happens, but yes, we
9 absolutely do.

10 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So, the residents are
11 aware that a PACT developer and management company
12 can be removed?

13 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: It's part of
14 our standard talking points when we give a
15 introductory presentation about the PACT program.

16 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. We've heard
17 reports that tenants at some developments have been
18 asked to sign leases with the PACT partners prior to
19 HUD approval. Have you heard of this happening?

20 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Well,
21 I'm not sure what's meant by HUD approval, because
22 there's actually a couple layers of approval. I
23 think what is meant by that, and I don't mean you
24 and folks that have relayed this to you, is that the
25

1 leases need to be signed before the conversion can
2 happen. So that is absolutely true. HUD is very
3 much aware of our projects well before we even do a
4 conversion. We have to submit initial plans. We
5 have to go through a number of steps with them and
6 demonstrate that we've done engagement. We have to
7 submit the financing plan. We have to submit the
8 scopes of work. so HUD gives us various approvals
9 along the way, and so again, it is true, though, that
10 these leases need to be signed before the actual
11 conversion takes place, because that is what allows
12 legally, you know, the subsidy to flow and all of the
13 rights and protections that we've been talking about
14 in this conversation to actually be in effect.

16 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So, is your testimony
17 that the-- once the conversion is-- the early process
18 has started, the transferring over from Section 9 to
19 Section-- there's no approval, direct approval that's
20 needed from HUD, or the early-- because it seems as
21 though residents are saying that there's a move, a
22 early move to try to rush folks to sign onto the
23 Section 8 lease.

24 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: They
25 sign the lease, but it's not in effect the day they

1
2 sign it. The lease becomes effective of the date of
3 the conversion.

4 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. How do PACT
5 partners have authority to send out leases and if
6 they don't yet have HUD approval to take over the
7 management of a development? How do they begin that
8 process if there's no approval to take over a
9 particular development?

10 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Well,
11 again, the leases are not in effect unless and until
12 the conversion actually happens. So, that's thing
13 number one, right? The fact that they-- if you have
14 a conversion happening in March and a resident signed
15 it in December, it doesn't matter because it takes
16 effect in March. So, there's no risk. There's no
17 downside to the resident signing it prior to the
18 closing. The benefit is that we need to get these
19 things in order so that it is an orderly transition
20 at the closing, so that everyone is on the rent roll,
21 we know what's going on at the conversion.

22 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. So, if a
23 resident decides not to sign a Section 8 lease, will
24 you drag them into court or will the management
25

1
2 company drag them into court to evict them, thus
3 making them homeless?

4 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: I
5 mean, eventually, they have to sign a lease. I mean,
6 you have to have an effective lease, and at the
7 conversion, the prior Section 9 lease falls away. So
8 they would need to have an active lease for the
9 project-based Section 8 conversion, yes.

10 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So if-- and then that
11 goes back to the early point I was making with the
12 need for community engagement and having the
13 residents give permission before we even get to this
14 process. if a tenant opts out of signing the lease
15 and is not in support of the conversion, or you have
16 a situation where you have a development that is not
17 in support of the conversion, and NYCHA goes ahead
18 and they put this particular development in-- and it
19 selects them to be a part of the program, how do you
20 get residents to sign onto a lease where they're not
21 in support of the program? How do you force them to
22 do that, and then dangle over their head their right
23 to have an apartment, a roof over their head? How do
24 you do that over a piece of paper?

1
2 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: We
3 have not had that situation yet. I know we've been
4 speaking about the situation with Doctor Crawford,
5 and again, we keep saying we will have-- we want to
6 have meaningful conversation with her about how to
7 move forward, but leaving that specific project
8 aside, we have managed with all of our other projects
9 to work through issues with the residents and get
10 them on board over time to sign their leases, but
11 it's in their interest to sign the lease.

12 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Is NYCHA aware-- we
13 know NYCHA is supposed to provide oversight, and when
14 these types of controversies come into play, NYCHA's
15 supposed to mediate. Is NYCHA aware of any
16 developments that have been converted over to
17 RAD/PACT-- we're talking about past developments,
18 obviously-- where there are tenants who have not
19 signed over to the Section 8 lease? Do you know the
20 count? Is there a specific number where you--

21 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA:
22 [interposing] I don't know if we have a specific
23 number. Yes, we--

24 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] But is
25 legal action being taken against those tenants?

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COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: We are aware that some people have not signed leases and converted sites, and Gillian, I don't know if you have specific numbers there. But--

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Yeah, if we could get specific numbers.

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: what we want to do, as we've said--

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] With the amount of tenants and where they're at, and what development they're in.

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Do you have that breakdown?

DIRECTOR CONNELL: No, we don't have that breakdown here, but immediately after conversion it is definitely a top priority to identify any residents that have not signed the PACT lease, and then continue to work with them to educate them about the rights that the PACT lease affords them, and work with them to sign it. That--

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Let me ask you this question. If a tenant doesn't sign a PACT lease, is their apartment still rehabbed?

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2 DIRECTOR CONNELL: Yes, the apartment
3 would still be rehabbed in the long-run. It is
4 extremely important that the residents sign the lease
5 in order for all of their rights to be codified.

6 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So, it's your
7 testimony that even if they don't sign a Section 8
8 lease, they still entitled to have their apartment
9 rehabbed?

10 DIRECTOR CONNELL: Partners will continue
11 to work with the resident, yes. I just want to add--

12 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] In the
13 same time while they're trying to evict them?

14 DIRECTOR CONNELL: parallel they do
15 continue to work with the residents. Additionally, I
16 just want to add that conversations with residents
17 after conversion who have not signed leases, we may
18 even refer them to a third party such as Legal Aid to
19 have an additional conversation further clarify the
20 terms of the PACT lease in case there are any
21 lingering concerns that they might have tone courage
22 them to sign.

23 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Well, do you have any
24 numbers showing the amount of folks you've added to
25 the homeless roll?

1 DIRECTOR CONNELL: Excuse me?

2 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: I said do you have
3 any numbers showing how many residents that chose to
4 opt out of signing a Section 8 lease? Those folks
5 who have been evicted that you've added to the
6 homeless role? Do you have those numbers?

7 DIRECTOR CONNELL: So, we continue to
8 work with residents who have not signed lease with
9 the ultimate goal of having them sign a lease and
10 have all of their rights retained.

11 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Are there at least
12 situations where residents have been evicted for not
13 signing over to a Section 8 lease?

14 DIRECTOR CONNELL: I don't have any
15 information about that in front of me today.

16 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So there's no
17 reporting done? I mean, that to me is a serious move
18 when any time a tenant is evicted from an apartment,
19 especially because they don't want to sign over to a
20 Section 8 lease. So you're saying you have no
21 information on tenants being evicted, those tenants
22 who have been evicted because they refuse to a sign a
23 Section 8 lease.
24
25

1 DIRECTOR CONNELL: We would have to
2
3 follow up.

4 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: It would be good to
5 get that information. It would make sense. You
6 should have that information readily available when
7 there's been allegations or complaints--

8 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA:
9 [interposing] Just to be clear, we know how many--

10 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: and contention about
11 the aggressive tactics being used by management
12 companies, and the high rates of evictions in some of
13 the RAD/PACT portfolio.

14 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: so, we
15 absolutely know the total number of evictions. What
16 Gillian is saying we do not know in front of us today
17 when we'll get you the information, the number of
18 people that have been evicted because they did not
19 sign a Section 8 lease? We know the total--

20 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] No, no,
21 no, no. I know you know the total, but I'm saying
22 specifically for that, because that's important. Am u
23 correct? Okay. Because you constantly talk about
24 the need to have a partnership, and obviously if a
25 resident's not pleased-- would have to sign over to

1 this program, because they think that it's-- you
2 know, it's not in their best interest-- making them
3 homeless because of that is unacceptable. We've also
4 heard that resident leaders at some of the
5 developments have been asked to sign a non-disclosure
6 agreements for their participation in their
7 development's PACT conversion process. Are you aware
8 of any such non-disclosure agreements? And why
9 would a tenant leader be asked to sign a non-
10 disclosure agreement?
11

12 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: So,
13 this is part of the RFEI process. So when we are
14 reviewing with the residents submissions for PACT
15 projects and selecting the developer, and Simon's
16 team oversees that specific process, so he can give
17 you a little bit more detail, but yes, they do sign
18 these agreements.

19 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: So, as I
20 previously described the resident review committee
21 that the tenant association forms to evaluate
22 proposals, that committee is required to sign a
23 confidentiality and conflict of interest agreement,
24 and what that does is it protects the procurement
25 process that we're going through to make sure that if

1
2 it were challenged, we can ensure integrity in the
3 process. It also ensures that there's no conflict of
4 interest of any review committee member in connection
5 with the candidates that they're interviewing. So,
6 say somebody maybe works for a property management
7 company that they're interviewing, the agreement just
8 requires them to disclose that conflict to us so that
9 we can take appropriate action. There's also no
10 recourse if any information that's confidential is
11 shared. It would just result in that member not being
12 permitted to remain on the committee. But again,
13 there's a lot of sensitive information contained in
14 those proposals, as you can imagine, and if any of
15 that information were disclosed publicly or leaked,
16 it could lead to one of the applicants having a
17 disadvantage, and that could jeopardize the entire
18 process and require us to start over again. So,
19 that-- those are the reasons why we require the
20 members to sign those agreements. And lastly, again,
21 they do have that technical assistance, the
22 independent advisors that work with them, along with
23 NYCHA to explain all of the reasoning and also to vet
24 that agreement to make sure that everything is
25 proper.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. When it comes
3 particularly dealing with Fulton Elliott-Chelsea,
4 NYCHA has proposed the demolition and a redevelopment
5 of the Fulton Elliott-Chelsea campuses. Has NYCHA
6 received approval from HUD to bring the FEC campuses
7 under the RAD program?

8 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: As I
9 mentioned, it's any of these projects that we do.
10 There are multiple steps that we go through with HUD
11 and other agencies. HUD is very much aware of the
12 proposal. They have not granted final approval of
13 the project. We are going through the environmental
14 review process.

15 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Let me just make--
16 just make it clear, there's been no approval given by
17 HUD to move forward with this particular project?

18 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: There
19 hasn't been final approval to move forward, but we
20 have-- they are very much aware--

21 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] There
22 have been no final approval.

23 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Yes.

24 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: By HUD to move
25 forward with this particular project.

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COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA:

Correct.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Has HUD approved a Section 18 application for the demolition or a disposition of the FEC campuses?

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: No, not yet.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. Were these applications submitted as single applications for both developments or was it submitted for multiple applications?

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: I think it'll be done as-- yeah, I think it's one.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So, they submitted separate applications for each?

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: We have not submitted yet, but-- go ahead.

VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: We can follow up. I don't want to misspeak, but we can get you that information.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: You can get that information, appreciate it. We heard reports that tenants are seeing Section 8 recertification showing up in their self-service portal? How is this

1 possible if the project has not yet been-- yet
2 received HUD approval?
3

4 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: Yeah. There is
5 a development that's part of the Fulton Elliott-
6 Chelsea project that currently has Section 8 tenants,
7 so that might be reason, but we can follow up and get
8 you more information on that.

9 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Please. Has any--
10 has there been any reports produced for the project
11 as required for Section 18 applications. And if so,
12 can you share a copy of the report?

13 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: What kind of
14 report? What do you mean?

15 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: The-- I think this
16 the Obsolescence report-- Obsolescence, sorry about
17 that-- Obsolescence report.

18 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: That
19 hasn't been completed yet. That would be part of the
20 whole package that gets submitted.

21 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Has an independent
22 audit been conducted as required by HUD for RAD
23 applications and if so, can you share a copy of that
24 audit?
25

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2 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Well,
3 there's two things that you might be referring to.
4 One is the physical needs assessments, and I think it
5 was made reference to in one of the pre-panels. So
6 that's done every five years. The most recent one
7 was done in 2023, and that's online and it's actually
8 part of that capital projects tracker that you asked
9 about earlier so residents can go and look at all the
10 campuses of Fulton Elliott-Chelsea and see exactly,
11 you know, what that reveals. There's another piece
12 called and CAN that we have to when we get into an
13 actual project, and that is underway.

14 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. Before
15 development partner was selected for FEC, what was
16 NYCHA's estimated cost for renovation of the FEC
17 campuses? And can you provide us with documentation
18 supporting whatever estimate that was reported?

19 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: Sure, we can
20 provide documentation. When we started this project
21 or the engagement process associated with this
22 project, NYCHA had estimated the physical needs
23 assessment at about \$344 million, but after NYCHA
24 conducted its required five-year-- its physical needs
25 assessment that is required for NYCHA to do every

1
2 five years, that was released and had shown that
3 costs has ballooned to closer to about a billion
4 dollars. So those are the costs that, you know, we
5 have. Those are also consistent with what the
6 selected development partner had presented to us as
7 part of their investigations as well.

8 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So, you'll be able to
9 provide that documentation?

10 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: We can provide
11 the physical needs assessment.

12 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Physical needs
13 assessment, okay. After Related and Essence were
14 designated as PACT development partners for FEC, what
15 was the estimated cost of the renovation of the FE
16 campus? And can you provide us with documentation
17 supporting that estimate?

18 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: Chair, it's the
19 same response. That when we first solicited
20 proposals for that project, NYCHA based on our
21 physical needs assessment assumed the cost would be
22 about \$344 million. After the team had been selected
23 and as they were conducting their own due diligence,
24 NYCHA updated its physical needs assessment, and that
25 showed costs ballooning to about a billion dollars.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. What is the
3 current estimate cost for the proposed FEC demolition
4 and redevelopment, and can you provide us with the
5 documentation supporting that particular estimate?

6 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: I
7 mean, so that's still being developed, but for the
8 replacement to build new buildings, and this would be
9 inclusive of the demolition cost and the
10 reconstruction of the NYCHA buildings. It's about
11 \$1.7 billion.

12 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Is there any part to
13 the proposal that includes doing infill on the
14 property?

15 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Well,
16 yes, because the entire-- both Fulton, Elliott-
17 Chelsea, and Chelsea addition will all be completely
18 rebuilt.

19 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Will there be a
20 infill or-- on the existing property once the-- you
21 know, if the proposal goes forth on the existing
22 property. Will there be any fair market units added
23 to the property?

24 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: The
25 current proposal calls for the replacement of all

1
2 2,056 apartments. The addition of 1,000 new
3 affordable units on top of the replacement units, as
4 well as about 2,400 market-rate units.

5 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. I just want to
6 go back to the community engagement piece when it
7 comes to Chelsea-Elliott. Can you describe the
8 informal survey that was conducted at FEC to justify
9 the demolition?

10 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: So, we
11 did the survey in the first half of 2023. It was part
12 of a whole engagement process that we had designed
13 with the tenant association presidents at the time
14 from Fulton and Elliott-Chelsea, as well as the
15 elected officials who represent the area. And we
16 decided jointly that we would put together this
17 survey that would be accompanied with pretty in-depth
18 engagement on a weekly bids. So we were holding
19 three or four town hall style meetings every week.
20 We were taking residents on tours of new affordable
21 construction that they could see in Long Island City
22 as well as Roosevelt Island, and we talked about the
23 benefits and the trade-offs associated with rehab
24 versus new construction, and then residents had the
25 ability to use this survey to register their

1
2 preference for either sticking with the rehab plan or
3 the new construction plan.

4 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So, were residents
5 clearly told how the survey would impact their
6 development?

7 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: We
8 believe so.

9 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. NYCHA's metrics
10 on the dashboard shows that as of January 2025 there
11 are no vacant apartments in the FEC developments.
12 However, NYCHA has previously stated that residents
13 who would need to relocate would be moved into a
14 vacant NYCHA-- into vacant NYCHA units within FEC
15 developments or other nearby affordable units. How
16 many vacant units are there currently at the FEC
17 developments? And if there are no or fewer vacant
18 units, where will residents be relocated to?

19 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA:
20 Currently, there are enough vacant units to relocate,
21 temporary relocate everyone from Fulton 11 and
22 Chelsea addition. So, that-- those residents can be
23 accommodated at their host community if they so
24 choose.

25 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Repeat that again.

1
2 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: We
3 have enough vacant units at Fulton Houses which could
4 then accommodate residents who have to be temporarily
5 relocated from Fulton 11 which would be the first
6 building at Fulton to be rebuilt. Similarly, we have
7 enough vacant units at Elliot-Chelsea to accommodate
8 residents from Chelsea addition who would be
9 temporarily relocated from that building so it can
10 get be built.

11 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: How does NYCHA intend
12 to-- intend to fill vacant units at the FEC
13 developments if for relocation? How does NYCHA plan
14 to move relocated tenants to the top of the wait
15 list?

16 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: So, NYCHA's
17 been reserving vacant apartments as tenants have been
18 leaving at the Fulton, Elliott-Chelsea campuses for
19 this explicit purpose of accommodating temporary
20 moves. For under 120 households are going to have to
21 temporarily relocate while the new building-- denser
22 new buildings are going up. That represents just
23 about six percent, or actually I think it's about
24 four percent of the total number of households that
25 will have to temporarily relocate. Everybody else

1 will move directly into their new home once the new
2 buildings are constructed. As part of the whole
3 process for facilitating the relocations, we're
4 working to develop a HUD-required relocation plan
5 with a relocation specialists who would be
6 responsible for working directly with households to
7 assess their needs, support them during that move
8 process, and ensure that they're accommodated with an
9 appropriately sized apartment.
10

11 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. And how does
12 NYCHA plan to keep track of these relocated tenants?

13 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: So, that's part
14 of the relocation plan that's under development right
15 now. This is something that many other housing
16 authorities have done in other jurisdictions, and so
17 the process of tracking households is done by the
18 liaison as well as with NYCHA, but again, part of the
19 reason that we are facilitating vacant move--
20 temporarily relocations within the home campuses is
21 so that we don't lose anybody. We don't want people
22 to move off-site into private developments not
23 managed by NYCHA where there could be a risk of
24 losing track of folks. So, having everybody within
25 our communities will allow us to keep better track of

1
2 everybody and ensure that they're guaranteed the
3 right to return to their newly-constructed home at
4 the appropriate time.

5 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Since January 2021,
6 how many FEC tenants have been offered a Section 8
7 voucher to move out of the development?

8 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: I'm not aware
9 that anybody has been offered a Section 8 voucher in
10 connection with this project, but I can look into
11 that and get back to you.

12 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Can you repeat that
13 again?

14 VICE PRESIDENT KAWITZKY: I'm not aware
15 of anybody being offered a Section 8 voucher in
16 connection with the Fulton, Elliott-Chelsea
17 redevelopment project. There may be certain
18 circumstances where, you know, to facilitate an
19 accommodation request or an emergency transfer, but
20 as part of the project related to the redevelopment
21 plan, there have not been offers made as far as I'm
22 aware. But again, I will get back to you to make
23 sure that I'm giving you the accurate information.

24 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. When it comes
25 to reporting requirements under Local Law 65-- in

1
2 2024, the Council passed Local Law 65 requiring and
3 reporting on the impacts of the PACT program to
4 increase transparency around the impacts of PACT
5 conversions on residents. NYCHA submitted its first
6 report on November 2024. The law requires that the
7 report be made publicly available online where they
8 can report-- where can the report currently be
9 accessed? Is there any--

10 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: It's
11 on our website, on the PACT section of the NYCHA
12 website.

13 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: You said it's on the
14 website?

15 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Yes.

16 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: And as of February
17 20th, the committee staff, we were unable to locate
18 the report on NYCHA's website. Can you be more
19 specific about where to find the report on the
20 website?

21 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Sorry,
22 I misspoke. It's actually-- so it's on the NYC DoITT
23 website. So we can provide a link for you.

24 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Can you repeat that?
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COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: It is on the main New York City website. So we can send you that link.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So, it's not on NYCHA's website?

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Yes, I misspoke. It's actually on the DoITT website. So we can send you that link.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: By what date do you commit to having this report made publicly available online and accessible to the public?

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: I mean it is online now, right? So--

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Accessible. It seems like we--

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: [interposing] Today, it is online, and--

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] We've been unable to find it.

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Well, we'll send you the link and we'll make sure that people know about it.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. the report-- hold on, let me-- I want to walk through some of the

1 requirements of Local Law 65 and where they might be
2 met or not be met. In the first PACT report, the
3 report must include the date each PACT development
4 was selected for inclusion in PACT. Where in the
5 report it states this information: those columns
6 refer to PACT project name, NYCHA consolidation name,
7 NYCHA development name. Where in those columns can I
8 find the date that each PACT development was selected
9 for inclusion in the PACT?
10

11 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: I
12 believe we do, and again, we will send you the link
13 so that you have it and you can see all the
14 information, but I think we've complied with all the
15 requirements.

16 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. The report
17 must also includes languages that outreach materials
18 were available in each PACT development. Where in
19 the report is that information?

20 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Same
21 answer. I mean, the full-- there's a report and then
22 there's a couple of appendixes that has, you know,
23 what we think is responsive to the request.

24 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: So, the letters that
25 is reported in the particular report doesn't provide

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2 for that in the columns. So can you walk us through
3 that?

4 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: I
5 mean, we can follow up with you. I--

6 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] The
7 report is not in front of you?

8 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: I have
9 a report here, but they're not columns named, so I
10 can't really walk it through with you.

11 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Well, this is the
12 report we have right here, and it clearly states that
13 the date such development was selected for inclusion.
14 It goes through the requirements, am I correct?

15 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Yes.

16 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [inaudible] the
17 columns on the report, it's basically blank. There's
18 no names as to what's in these particular columns.

19 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT HONAN: Council
20 Member-- so, Council Member, we provided the
21 committee the report before it was even-- on the same
22 day that it was published online, so just want to
23 make it clear that there is no-- you know, we were
24 not hiding anything here. If you want to go over the
25 details of the report, we'd be happy to set up a

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2 meeting with you in committee, you know, to go over
3 that and walk it through, and if there's things that
4 you think in the next report would be helpful in
5 order to, you know, make it better, we'd like to hear
6 you out.

7 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: I think we got to
8 point this out that the report stated in the law that
9 the report must include languages of outreach
10 materials in each PACT development. That's not
11 available? The report also says that there must
12 include outreach that NYCHA conducted before and
13 during the conversions of the PACT development. It's
14 not listed. The report must include NYCHA's
15 oversight of the development partner or property
16 manager for the PACT development. That's not there.
17 The report must also include outreach for the NYCHA
18 conducted before and during the conversions of each
19 PACT development. Where on the report is that
20 information?

21 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Again,
22 I'm not sure what you're looking at. We have the
23 report. We can have a meeting and go through the
24 report with you. We think we've been responsive.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: You know, this report
3 is public and folks can read and assess as they read,
4 but it doesn't seem like the report is in full
5 compliance with the law.

6 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: I think
7 we disagree.

8 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Well, we would love
9 to hear your position and those holes that we
10 actually pointed out so we can get an accurate
11 report.

12 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Okay.

13 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: The report-- there's
14 another one. The report also says it must include
15 the breakdown of the cost and time it took to
16 complete the repairs and upgrades following the
17 conversions at each PACT development including, but
18 not limited to, work to address environmental
19 hazards. Where in the report is that information as
20 well?

21 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: The
22 same answer again. I have a report here, and I don't
23 know if you're looking at the same thing, but
24 appendix A to your specific question right now has
25 that information.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. We'll move on
3 to the Comptroller's office and their report audit.
4 Okay. I believe we've asked every question. I don't
5 know if we got every question answered. We're hoping
6 to get information or get some clarity on the report
7 that you're required to release, and that's if we
8 find the report wherever you-- you said you released
9 it, or you claim that it's that. Hopefully get some
10 clarification on where the report is at. Again,
11 thank you so much for your time and your patience,
12 and hopefully we can get those follow-up responses.
13 Have a good day.

14 EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT GOUVEIA: Thank
15 you.

16 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: We will now bring up
17 the Deputy Comptroller, Maura Hayes-Chaffe. She still
18 here? Come on up. And we do welcome NYCHA to please
19 stay behind to hear from the residents that you work
20 for.

21 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Good afternoon. As
22 we get resituated, can I ask you to raise your right
23 hand, please? Do you affirm to tell the truth, the
24 whole truth and nothing but the truth before this
25

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2 committee and to respond honestly to Council Member
3 questions?

4 DEPUTY CHANCELLOR HAYES-CHAFFE: Yes, I
5 do.

6 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. You may
7 proceed when you're ready.

8 DEPUTY CHANCELLOR HAYES-CHAFFE: Good
9 afternoon Chair Banks and members of the Committee on
10 Public Housing. My name is Maura Hayes-Chaffe. I'm
11 the Deputy Comptroller for Audit within the New York
12 City Comptroller's Office. Thank you for convening
13 this hearing and for the opportunity to give
14 testimony today on behalf of the Comptroller's
15 Office. Since the beginning of his term in January
16 2022, Comptroller Lander has prioritized the
17 collection of input from NYCHA residents to inform
18 which areas of NYCHA's performance to audit. While
19 many previous Comptrollers have conducted many audit
20 of NYCHA, this was the first time NYCHA resident
21 input was sought and collected on a large scale. In
22 2022, the Comptroller's Office launched a multi-
23 lingual public engagement process through surveys and
24 town halls to ask residents about the issues they
25 face and seek suggestions for audits. We then formed

1 the first-ever NYCHA Resident Audit Committee who
2 were presented with several ideas to choose from
3 before voting and selecting the two audits that were
4 subsequently conducted, one on NYCHA's oversight of a
5 repair contractors and another assessing eviction
6 rates at PACT housing. The results of both audits
7 have been published and are a matter of record, so
8 I'll focus my comments today on findings related
9 specifically to transparency and engagement issues
10 that were identified. The contractor audit found,
11 for example, that NYCHA does not seek feedback from
12 NYCHA residents concerning contractors or the quality
13 of the work they performed, even when the work was
14 conducted in their apartments. The auditors
15 conducted 1,005 survey responses from residents
16 living in 44 developments. Thirty percent of the
17 residents indicated work performed was poor, and only
18 46 percent rated the work performed as good or
19 better. Had NYCHA communicated with residents
20 concerning their experiences with contractors, they
21 would have this information. Shockingly, 93 percent
22 of respondents who answered this question indicated
23 they were never asked by NYCHA to rate their
24 satisfaction with the work performed, and only 35
25

1 percent rated NYCHA's responsiveness in responding to
2 issues with repairs as good or better. That means 65
3 percent of residents, of surveyed residents, rated
4 NYCHA's responsiveness below this level. NYCHA does
5 not currently evaluate contractors hired to perform
6 jobs valued at or below \$50,000. Various
7 developments do not share information concerning
8 issues that have been encountered with NYCHA's
9 central office or with other developments and has
10 indicated above they make no concerted effort to
11 collect data from residents concerning contractor
12 performance. This is a missed opportunity. As laid
13 out in a recent report, our office recommends
14 creating a Yelp-like tool for NYCHA residents to give
15 direct feedback on vendors. Those reviews would
16 generate vendor score cards that staff can use to
17 assess performance when selecting a contractor. This
18 would help hold contractors accountable, increase
19 transparency and ensure that repairs actually get
20 done while rebuilding resident trust and improving
21 living conditions for the one in 17 New Yorkers who
22 call NYCHA home. The NYCHA Resident Audit Committee
23 also voted on an audit to examine eviction rates for
24 PACT properties, compared to traditional Section 9
25

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2 NYCHA developments. The audit found that eviction
3 rates at PACT developments are higher than Section 9
4 NYCHA units and are now closer to eviction rates of
5 the citywide private rental housing market. The
6 eviction rates vary dramatically among PACT property
7 managers, and these range from zero to 1.11 percent,
8 which is nearly twice the citywide rate.

9 Additionally, NYCHA did not ensure that PACT property
10 managers follow standard operating procedures for
11 pre-eviction outreach and tenant protections. This
12 means residents living in a PACT development may
13 have receive less counseling and fewer opportunities
14 to cure nonpayment or holdover issues before eviction
15 proceedings were begun. NYCHA also failed to ensure
16 that PACT property managers reported all eviction and
17 pre-eviction activity as required. As a result,
18 residents relying on data published by NYCHA to make
19 decisions concerning their homes only have access to
20 incomplete and inaccurate eviction data. Residents
21 facing eviction for reasons other than nonpayment are
22 not entitled to a separate administrative proceeding
23 before court proceedings are begun. This is
24 information that NYCHA should ensure is clearly
25 shared with residents. As the capital needs for

1
2 NYCHA developments across the city continue to grow,
3 residents are being faced with incredibly difficult
4 choices. As some developments already have, many
5 residents will be deciding whether they want to stay
6 in Section 9, join the Preservation Trust, or convert
7 to PACT in the coming years. It is key that
8 residents have all of the information available about
9 the rights as a tenant and potential outcomes as they
10 make these consequential decisions. The
11 Comptroller's Office will continue to prioritize
12 responses to suggestions of residents on the issues
13 they see in public housing. Whether about conversions
14 or repairs, NYCHA must strengthen its oversight
15 capacity to provide transparency for the over 500,000
16 NYCHA residents in New York City. Our office looks
17 forward to working with the City Council to ensure
18 NYCHA provides the transparency NYCHA residents
19 deserve. Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you, Deputy
21 Comptroller. Just want to ask you a few questions.
22 Based on what you've observed and learned through
23 your audits of NYCHA, what are your biggest concerns
24 about transparency or lack of transparency at NYCHA?
25

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2 DEPUTY CHANCELLOR HAYES-CHAFFE: I think
3 within the context of the report, of the two reports
4 that we're here to talk about, our biggest concern
5 with PACT reporting is that it's not accurate and
6 it's not complete. When the auditors approached this
7 question, they looked at the reporting that NYCHA had
8 gathered and published. We also went to PACT
9 housing, to the developments themselves and collected
10 paperwork to review and see where there were
11 inconsistencies. We finally looked at court filings
12 and actual evictions from the New York City Housing
13 Court and found that the numbers were not consistent,
14 and that's a serious concern. You know, NYCHA
15 residents needs to know when they're making
16 decisions. The other thing that's very striking when
17 you look at the PACT evictions is that there's a very
18 big difference between-- among developers. If you--
19 rather than developers, managers. If you get one
20 property manager, you know, there were several that
21 had zero eviction rates. There were others that have
22 markedly higher. And the ones that had the highest
23 eviction rates differed between fiscal year 23 and
24 fiscal year 24.

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2 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: What single change in
3 NYCHA's operations would you make the biggest-- would
4 make the biggest difference in increasing
5 transparency for residents?

6 DEPUTY CHANCELLOR HAYES-CHAFFE: I think
7 for the PACT housing they need to do better job of
8 validating the information that they're collecting
9 from the developers, or rather the property managers.
10 Our impression, having looked at this, was that the
11 reports come in and the reports while possibly
12 reviewed are not validated. So the results should be
13 validated before they're made public. That would
14 ensure accuracy.

15 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: A big focus of this
16 hearing is the challenges faced by residents and
17 other members of the public in accessing information
18 about NYCHA's decision-making operations. In your
19 work, have you faced challenges in assessing or
20 receiving information from NYCHA?

21 DEPUTY CHANCELLOR HAYES-CHAFFE: That's
22 an interesting question. I mean, we ultimately
23 received everything we requested, but it was a very
24 lengthy process and involved a lot of repeated
25

1 requests. But as I said, ultimately what we needed
2 to complete the two audits was provided.

3
4 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Do these challenges
5 relate to like NYCHA's record-keeping practices?

6 DEPUTY CHANCELLOR HAYES-CHAFFE: I think
7 in some cases they do. If you look at the contractor
8 audit, there is a particular reference to records
9 being in disarray. At one point we were going to
10 developments and asking for records and looking for
11 records, and found that NYCHA needed hours to go and
12 identify the records that we were seeking.

13 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Have you observed or
14 faced resistance from NYCHA officials with regard to
15 implementing transparency measures recommended by
16 your office?

17 DEPUTY CHANCELLOR HAYES-CHAFFE: I don't
18 know if I would call it resistance. I think as NYCHA
19 stated themselves, they do not believe that the
20 results of our evictions evaluations are correct.
21 They do not-- they have not committed so far to
22 validating the results that they received from
23 property managers. And if you looked at the
24 recommendation section of the report, you'll see that
25 NYCHA committed to implementing four or five and

1
2 disagreed with a series of others. In the contractor
3 audit they agreed overwhelmingly to implement. They
4 agreed to implement I think 12 of 14 or 10 of 14-- 10
5 of 12. So it's a much higher rate of agreement.

6 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: To your knowledge,
7 has NYCHA implemented any of the 14 recommendations
8 from your December 24 audit report on evictions? And
9 if NYCHA does not implement all 14 recommendations,
10 are you concerned that problems revealed by the audit
11 such as the inaccurate reporting from the PACT
12 managers will persist?

13 DEPUTY CHANCELLOR HAYES-CHAFFE: We don't
14 know the current status or practices to follow up
15 roughly three to four months after the audit is
16 issued. So our first follow-up should be coming up
17 now.

18 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay.

19 DEPUTY CHANCELLOR HAYES-CHAFFE: But yes,
20 we share concerns. When we write recommendations,
21 there are things that we are asking the auditee to
22 consider, and we hope that they will implement.

23 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you. Based on
24 your work around NYCHA, how would you assess NYCHA's
25 communication and outreach as they compare with-- do

1
2 they compare between residents in Section 9 housing
3 versus residents in the PACT developments?

4 DEPUTY CHANCELLOR HAYES-CHAFFE: Yeah,
5 the audit didn't cover a comparison in terms of
6 communication. We assume that there is better
7 outreach at NYCHA, traditional NYCHA, because the
8 eviction rates are lower. You know, those outreach
9 efforts are designed to give residents as much
10 opportunity to cure the defects that are underpinning
11 the evictions before they go forward. We think, and
12 it's speculation, but we think that there's less
13 outreach. In fact, there was less outreach
14 documented, and there are much higher eviction rates.
15 I know that the eviction rates overall are still very
16 low. For example, in all three in the city as well
17 they're under 100 percent-- sorry, under one percent,
18 but if you look at the comparison between traditional
19 NYCHA and PACT, it's a very big difference.

20 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you so much for
21 your testimony.

22 DEPUTY CHANCELLOR HAYES-CHAFFE: Oh,
23 you're very welcome.

24 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you. Okay, we
25 are now going to go into public testimony. I'll now

1 open up the hearing for public testimony. I remind
2 members of the public that this is a government
3 proceeding and that decorum shall be observed at all
4 times. As such, members of the public shall remain
5 silent at all times. The witness table is reserved
6 for people who wish to testify. No video recording
7 or photography is allowed for the witness table.
8 Further, members of the public may not present audio
9 or video recordings as testimony, but may submit
10 transcripts of such recordings to the Sergeant of
11 Arms for inclusion into the hearing record. If you
12 wish to speak at today's hearing, please fill out an
13 appearance card with the Sergeant of Arms and wait to
14 be recognized. When recognized, you will have two
15 minutes to speak on today's hearing topic of
16 transparency at NYCHA. If you have a written
17 statement or additional written testimony and you
18 wish to submit for the record, please provide a copy
19 of that testimony to the Sergeant of Arms. You may
20 also email written testimony to
21 testimony@council.nyc.gov within 72 hours of the
22 hearing. Audio and video recordings will not be
23 accepted. So, we're going to begin with Zulay
24 Velasquez, Verurdy [sic] Gonzalez, Jason Murillo, and
25

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2 April Summars-- April Summars. Ms. Sandra Bumpers
3 [sp?]? She left. Carole Barnes [sp?]. She left.
4 Layla Gisiko? Okay. Those are the four. Okay, we
5 can begin to our right. You have two minutes.

6 LAYLA GISIKO: Good afternoon. Is it on?
7 Oh, yes, it is. Thank you so much. Thank you for
8 really a very, very substantial hearing. We really
9 appreciate all the pointed questions that you have
10 already asked. My name is Layla Law-Gisiko. I am the
11 President of the City Club of New York. I am also
12 the Democratic District Leader representing Chelsea.
13 Today, I will be testifying on my own behalf.
14 Chelsea has two very large NYCHA developments, Fulton
15 and Elliott-Chelsea. Both are undergoing federal
16 environmental review, and both are slated for full
17 demolition according to NYCHA. In the course of
18 engaging with this project, it has been incredibly
19 difficult to get information from NYCHA. As you've
20 heard today, a number of documents related to this
21 very controversial proposal are still not available
22 to the public. Among those, the Obsolescence Report
23 which is a document that is necessary to establish
24 that the development must be demolished has yet to be
25 provided by NYCHA. I have submitted already three

1
2 separate FOIA requests, requesting a total of 10
3 separate documents. I have only received one, and I
4 received it yesterday. It is heavily redacted and
5 does not provide the financing information that we
6 should be entitled to.

7 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Can you make sure
8 that red-- the red button is on?

9 LAYLA GISIKO: Is It on?

10 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay, now it's on.

11 LAYLA GISIKO: Much better. Okay. I
12 will just go very quickly to add we also have
13 submitted a request to IBO, the Independent Budget
14 Office, asking them to do an investigation and an
15 audit of this particular proposal. We urge the City
16 Council to help get access to the documents requested
17 through FOIL and also to support this request to IBO
18 to get us information. Transparency is lacking.
19 There is no trust without transparency. The project
20 for Chelsea is billed at \$1.9 billion. We need to
21 know how these monies are going to be spent. Thank
22 you.

23 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your
24 testimony. Thank you. You may begin.

1
2 VERONICA GONZALEZ: Yes, hi, good
3 afternoon. Thank you for having us again. My name
4 is Veronica Gonzalez. I represent myself, but not
5 only myself, my fellow tenants and also others that
6 are suffering through the hands of NYCHA and also
7 RAD/PACT. I'm here to be a voice for everyone, and
8 basically we're going to summarize what I'm here for.
9 I've seen my families who suffered through the hands
10 of NYCHA for many years. I'm also a child-- a
11 product, child of the lower east side for over 40
12 years, and I firsthand seen my family being affected
13 by this, of NYCHA with their negligence and the way
14 they're handling things and the fact that they don't
15 care about their own tenants. They are a profit.
16 They are not what they care about at the end of the
17 day. Ad for me particularly, the reason why I'm here
18 to voice other people and help them, and also to be
19 part of the community and let their voices be heard
20 and be seen. And when RAD came here, PACT really, and
21 they came here to tell the lie and deceit to us the
22 public about what they're doing for us, they're not.
23 They're here to look out for themselves. End of the
24 day, I hope and pray that everything you hear-- when
25 I spoke about them, and you make a final decision and

1
2 make sure that RAD/PACT does not affect us of the
3 Jacob Riis Houses or any houses that are being
4 affected of this matter, and this reason-- well, me,
5 that's the reason why I'm here to fight for everyone
6 in this room to know that they're not being-- they're
7 being heard, and they're not going to be despaired
8 and basically being like rejected. And we need to
9 all fight, unite together. This is the reason why
10 I'm here, and I thank you for your time and thank you
11 so much for hearing all our voices to be heard. And
12 knowing RAD/PACT are not here for us. They're here
13 to make a profit. That's it.

14 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your
15 advocacy.

16 VERONICA GONZALEZ: Thank you so much.

17 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Jason? You may
18 begin.

19 JASON MURILLO: Good afternoon. My name
20 is Jason Murillo. I am a member of the New York
21 State Conservative Party. I'm also a long-time
22 advocate and resident of NYCHA, of Jacob Riis Houses
23 for over 30 years, and I am also running for City
24 Council as well in District Two, and I hope to be
25 with you as a colleague fighting the good fight

1
2 regarding this issue very soon. But here's my
3 official statement. So, I am Jason Murillo, and I am
4 here today because NYCHA residents, our neighbors,
5 our families are being left to suffer. For years we
6 watched public housing fall into deeper despair.
7 We're seeing broken elevators, toxic mold, crumbling
8 ceilings, no heat in the winter, no gas in the
9 summer. We seen lives put at risk, seniors trapped
10 in their apartments, children breathing in hazardous
11 conditions, and have our so-called leaders done?
12 They have handed our homes over to PACT/RAD, a
13 privatization scheme designed as a solution stood by-
14 - I'm sorry. They promised us better conditions, but
15 what have we gotten instead? More evictions, more
16 neglect, more mismanagement. They're taking public
17 housing out of public hands, stripping residents of
18 their rights and silencing the very people who built
19 these communities. And Council Member Carlina Rivera,
20 Assembly Member Harvey Eptstein, and Governor Hochul
21 stood by as they-- this all has happened, and they
22 told us they will fight for public housing, but when
23 the time came, they failed us, and they let NYCHA
24 deteriorate. They let private developers take over
25 and let the people, our people, be pushed out.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your
3 testimony.

4 JASON MURILLO: Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Next.

6 ZULAY VELASQUEZ: Hi, my name is Zulay
7 Velasquez from Riis, and I just want to talk about a
8 few things. So, one thing I want to say is that me
9 and a few other people started petitioning against
10 the privatization, and we gathered here. We have
11 over 600 petitions that state that we the residents
12 basically have not given the tenants association any
13 verbal or written permission to make decisions on our
14 behalf regarding RAD, especially one so sensitive
15 that could displace us, right? The tenant
16 association process even the CCOP or the DCOP, that
17 whole structure is compromised, right? But not only
18 is it compromised, from the top-- like, they have--
19 NYCHA's controlling that. How is NYCHA controlling
20 this, right? So, they're controlling this, and at
21 this point, even though they say that they are the
22 elected people, right, the process in which they do
23 it is not good. But here it says, "Has the tenant
24 association asked you your opinion about RAD/PACT?"
25 Now, the residents-- we are all the members. They're

1 all operating with bylaws that are over 30 years old.
2 Not good. So in there it says collect fees. In
3 there it says the membership is-- they're committees,
4 but you know what, we are all members. So they
5 didn't come to us and say, hey, do you want this
6 before they came in. They just said we're going to
7 do it, but we are members, all of us, and all these
8 600+ people which I'm going to submit as evidence is
9 basically saying no. No to RAD already. We've
10 already said no to that, okay? Now, in regards to
11 the voting process, we had a tenant association
12 election and they stopped it. They stopped it because
13 they tampered with our process. They changed order
14 around, put people in different places, and then
15 wanted us to go through with election. It was a
16 recording that stopped it, but they could have also
17 done the right thing, but instead of doing the right
18 thing, they just cancelled it so they can pause just
19 in enough time to the RAD/PACT election.
20

21 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thirty seconds to
22 wrap it up.

23 ZULAY VELASQUEZ: Okay. RAD/PACT
24 election-- and so now they're knocking on people's
25 doors, and they even violated the ADA rules for the

1 people who are disabled. Blind lady doesn't know
2 what's going on at Riis, okay? You have people who
3 are being told at the door-- basically they called me
4 yesterday to sign. So they're getting signatures
5 from people. The ballot is really unclear. They'll
6 say in the package, I think, that you're going to get
7 a physical ballot. So this is going to be a mail--
8 like a virtual kind of ballot. They can falsify
9 that. They say we only got five apartments. We got
10 over 100 empty apartments. So how-- yeah, exactly.
11 So I mean, we need to make sure that those empty
12 apartments don't get votes. That's number one.
13 Number two, told them to start an election over
14 again, not the nomination process for the TA, but
15 what they're doing at Riis is that since I ran on a
16 platform against the privatization, they stopped
17 that, because if it goes through the other current TA
18 and they say yes, then I can't stop it when I get in.

19 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Right, right.

20 ZULAY VELASQUEZ: And that's what's going
21 on here, because they could have paused and not done
22 anything, we just continue elections, and they didn't
23 do that.
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COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your testimony. We'll now have Renee Keitt, David Holowach [sp?], Lydia Andre [sp?], and Alixa Cruz. Thank you guys. Alixa Cruz? You're here? Thank you, Ms. Cruz. Lydia Andre? She left. David Holowach? David? And Alixa Cruz?

ALIXA CRUZ: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Sorry about that. And Renee? Renee Keitt, okay. Sorry about that, Ms. Cruz.

ALIXA CRUZ: That's okay.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Karen Blondel? Ms. Blondel? Caesar Godwell [sp?]?

ALIXA CRUZ: He's gone.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Christina Chaise? And Carla Hollingsworth? We will get to you, sir. Order. Okay, we're going to-- oh.

[audience disruption]

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay, we're going to begin to our right. Thank you, ma'am. You may begin. Well, my right. Sorry. So, since it's-- unless you want to-- okay. You want to start, Ms. Cruz? Ms. Cruz, go ahead, Ms. Cruz, and then we'll--

UNIDENTIFIED: Hi. Sorry

1 ALIXA CRUZ: Hi.

2 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Ms. Cruz is going to
3 then we'll go this way.

4 UNIDENTIFIED: [inaudible] first, yeah.

5 ALIXA CRUZ: No, problem. You can go--

6 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] You may
7 begin, Ms. Cruz.

8 ALIXA CRUZ: The elderly, right? Thank
9 you. Good afternoon. I'm a residents of NYCHA for a
10 long time. I've been a resident since 1969, and I
11 feel that NYCHA is giving us a slap in the face. You
12 can see the empty room, that they don't even want to
13 listen to our testimony, you know. They don't care.
14 I believe that-- I believe in Section 9. I want no
15 demolition in Chelsea, Elliott and Fulton, and I
16 believe that these people are land grab, money grab
17 people that don't care about the low income people,
18 and I believe we are all going-- within time, we're
19 going to go homeless. There's going to be a lot of
20 homelessness. We have homelessness as it is from
21 other buildings, and what they're doing is trying to
22 get rid of us from the City and where are we going?
23 Where are we going? Nowhere. We don't have no money
24 to buy a house. We have no money. There's no need.

1 conditions for decades, and I have lived in three
2 different buildings of the development. The non-
3 existent insulation compounded with the radiators
4 that shoot steam at times causes mold to grow in our
5 closets, and the bathroom vents have never worked--
6 caused the mold to grow in our bathrooms. Then there
7 are the leaks from above that are covered up and
8 never found. By covered up I mean they will open up
9 the ceiling or the wall and eventually close it back
10 up without finding the leak. The dampness attracts
11 the roaches which live in the walls, co-existing with
12 the mice that you can often hear scurrying in the
13 walls. After attending meetings where I've asked
14 what the permanent plans are for our development
15 which was originally built as temporary housing, I've
16 never received an answer. I was asked by one of the
17 people who descended on the development, knocking on
18 doors and spreading misinformation about PACT, what I
19 wanted, and when I answered accountability, I was
20 told that I should be happy with a nice apartment. I
21 keep being told that I have no choice, because NYCHA
22 doesn't have the money to do the necessary repairs.
23 This is not the fault of the tenants. I keep being
24 told that NYCHA has been underfunded for decades, but
25

1 they don't mention the misappropriated funds
2 throughout the decades. And in light of all that we
3 have been through over the years, we are now being
4 told that we have to trust the entity that has not
5 done the right thing by us to be the oversight of the
6 entities that they have chosen to do what they
7 couldn't. Unfair. But so they tell me we don't have
8 a choice. Why? Other developments got the
9 opportunity to choose.
10

11 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thirty seconds to
12 wrap up.

13 CARLA HOLLINGSWORTH: Other developments
14 got the opportunity to choose the route they wanted
15 to take moving forward. Why not us? Thank you for
16 listening.

17 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your
18 testimony. Ms. Renee?

19 RENEE KEITT: So, in 2019, the discussion
20 was the possible demolition of two Fulton Houses
21 buildings. Now, we're on the verge of trying to
22 demolish 22 buildings in Fulton and Elliott-Chelsea.
23 What I'd like to discuss the subject of the survey
24 brought up by Public Advocate Williams. The problem
25 is not how the votes took place. There wasn't a

1
2 vote. It was a survey, a temperature check as Simon
3 Kawitzky, VP of Portfolio Planning has said. May
4 20th, the survey closed. May 26th, draft PHA annual
5 agency plan for fiscal year 2024, you see marked
6 demolition and disposition, six days later.
7 Impossible. Manufacture's consent. The survey
8 wasn't for PACT, but for new construction and
9 rezoning, or in reality, demolition or
10 rehabilitation. The NYCHA RFP to implement a
11 community-driven preservation and investment strategy
12 for Fulton and Elliott-Chelsea key updates in the
13 third round of questions and answers. NYCHA wants to
14 remind applicants that this RFP includes the option
15 to submit an additional alternative scenario that
16 deviates from the recommendations of the Chelsea
17 Working Group, but still achieves the goal of
18 providing comprehensive repairs to the four
19 properties and creating an enhanced built environment
20 with additional amenities for NYCHA residents. The
21 important part, applicants are encouraged to think
22 creatively about design interventions. They may not
23 have been considered a part of the working group
24 process and should clearly explain the benefit that
25 provides to NYCHA residents. The Resident Review

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2 Committee must select a project that is financially
3 sound, and that may mean a proposal that is different
4 from the proposed development scenario recommended by
5 the working group. First thing the working group
6 said: no demolition. This tells us there was a lack
7 of transparency. Only through back-tracking were we
8 able to find these. It tells us from the beginning
9 this was a convoluted plan. Yes, a plan to unhome
10 us.

11 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thirty seconds to
12 wrap it up.

13 CARLA HOLLINGSWORTH: Okay. And also,
14 residents who participate in the resident review
15 committee will also sign a confidentiality and
16 conflict of interest agreement. This was never in
17 the thought of the residents. We are real estate to
18 them. They are leveraging us, our lives, our homes.
19 This needs to be understood. We are not here for
20 anyone's profit or gain.

21 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your
22 testimony. Ms. Chaise, you may begin.

23 CHRISTINA CHAISE: Good morning. My
24 name's Christina Chaise. I am an Advocacy
25 coordinator at Take Root Justice, but above all I'm a

1 long-term NYCHA resident and have been for almost 30
2 years. I have a lot to say, but I will start the
3 fact that there's no transparency on how a NYCHA
4 property is selected to convert to the RAD/PACT
5 program despite what we've heard. Conversions that
6 have taken place are in neighborhoods experiencing
7 rapid gentrification and pose a real estate
8 investment rather than a commitment to meaningfully
9 serve the longstanding residents who built that
10 community. We are seen as joint ventures, not
11 families living in homes. There's no transparency
12 for residents who do not want RAD/PACT. Those are
13 the residents who are often intimidated and silenced,
14 but we the tenants who are here today will no longer
15 live in fear and refuse to be quiet. We do not want
16 RAD/PACT for our homes and for the City of New York
17 at-large. We understand the consequences of this
18 conversion as lease holders and as citizens, and the
19 erosion of Section 9 public housing that results from
20 these conversions. The erosion of the right to
21 housing as a public good. Residents have lost the
22 right to transfer despite their right to reasonable
23 accommodations. Even if they've been waiting for
24 several years, their accommodation request are
25

1 canceled. We do not even know the implications for
2 domestic violence survivors and if their rights to
3 transfer are being honored or if their emergency
4 situations necessitating relocation are being
5 ignored. I have residents calling me scared that the
6 RAD/PACT team is at their development and being
7 harassed and intimidated to sign leases for a
8 conversion that HUD has not even approved, as in the
9 case of Boston Secor who actually testified here not
10 too long ago. This is unlawful. There are residents
11 who have converted to RAD/PACT who are pleading to go
12 back to Section 9, but there's no reversal to such a
13 permanent decision that reduces our public housing
14 stock and endangers our rights as public housing
15 residents. To NYCHA this is a real estate
16 transaction. To us this is our lives, this is our
17 homes. Stop playing with our lives. I would be
18 remiss not to mention our brothers, sisters and
19 siblings over at Fulton, Elliot and Chelsea Houses.
20 BFEC [sic] plan is an example of the most egregious
21 and extractive plan for a public housing conversion
22 that is blatantly about green and profit than it is
23 about providing dignified home for NYCHA residents.
24 We need our Council Members to step up and say no to
25

1
2 demolition, not to privatization, and no to giving
3 our city-owned land away to private developers. We
4 need an investigation both into RAD/PACT as well as
5 infill. We also want to know where all the money
6 from infill and transfer of development rights is
7 going, especially the monies that are supposed to go
8 back into the development. Until there is proper
9 investigation and resolution, we need the City
10 Council to put a moratorium on all RAD/PACT
11 conversions as well as infill. Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay, panel, thank
13 you for your testimony. We're going to move on to
14 Reginald Bowman [sp?]. Amelia Walden [sp?], Ms.
15 Walden? Mr. Martinez, Manuel? And Ted Burrows. And
16 can we have Metin Sarci? We may begin. We can start
17 with Mr. Martinez.

18 MANUEL MARTINEZ: Okay, red is-- okay.
19 Red means go, right? I'm sorry. Thank you for
20 having this hearing. I just want to commend the Chair
21 for conducting a well-presented questioning of NYCHA.
22 My name is Manny Martinez. I'm the Resident Council
23 President for South Jamaica Houses, also once the
24 Queens CCOP Chair. I mean, once the Queens South
25 District Chair. I would like to start off the

1 statement with a regulation to answer NYCHA's comment
2 of only having two obligations. They forgot this
3 one. This is 964135C which says while the Housing
4 Authority has the responsibility for management
5 operations, it shall ensure strong resident
6 participation in all issues and facets of its
7 operations through the duly elected resident councils
8 at public housing developments, something that's not
9 happening. Many resident councils exercise their
10 autonomy with signed resolutions publicly presented
11 denouncing and dissolving CCOP, the NYCHA created
12 permanent citywide resident organization. Today, I
13 stand with the voices of resident councils across
14 this city that have denounced CCOP and declared
15 NYCHA's recognition of CCOP a lie. For 34 years CCOP
16 has been NYCHA's greatest fraud. A 218 resident
17 council wide wall built to block real resident power.
18 It stops us from influencing NYCHA's workplace rules,
19 rules that control our economic rights, our safety
20 and our dignity in the very buildings we call home.
21 Matters of Section 3 compliance are made up by
22 NYCHA's executives and staff inconsistent with the
23 law and changing with every meeting. NYCHA itself
24 recently admitted to the Chair of this committee that
25

1
2 it created CCOP. NYCHA decided the structure, picked
3 its procedures and without shame declared its belief
4 that it can speak and decide for us as if we are
5 assets owned, not people served. May I have 30
6 seconds?

7 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Yes, 30 seconds to
8 wrap up.

9 MANUEL MARTINEZ: Resident Councils are
10 elected by public housing residents on the authority
11 of federal legislation to represent our communities
12 with strong participation of all matters concerning
13 NYCHA. We see NYCHA's deception in real dollars. A
14 million dollar city allocation secured by this
15 council's first Black Speaker was quietly slashed by
16 60 percent without telling residents, without telling
17 the Speaker, only revealing it months before
18 construction was set to begin. And where's CCOP? In
19 secret weekly Zoom meetings with NYCHA every
20 Thursday, not to hold them accountable, but to serve
21 as NYCHA's cover, a box checked off while NYCHA cuts
22 out the voice of resident populations-- while NYCHA
23 cuts out the voices of a resident population the size
24 of the 50th largest city in the US. CCOP is a wall
25 that keeps us away from NYCHA's top executives while

1
2 they cut deals collectively totaling billions of
3 dollars with contractors, developers, and nonprofits
4 at our expense. Resident councils and residents
5 continue to express deep confusion about RAD/PACT
6 changes and their rights while NYCHA claims that
7 everything is working great. This is because CCOP
8 blocks resident councils from changing NYCHA's
9 policies on its approach to RAD. They haven't--
10 they've stated that they haven't heard complaints
11 from residents on RAD. That's because the eight CCOP
12 members are the only residents they listen to. It's
13 time to tear this NYCHA-created CCOP wall down. We
14 demand the rights of our representation restored. We
15 denounce and demand this dissolution of CCOP. NYCHA
16 does not speak for us. Our rights are not
17 discretionary. Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your
19 testimony. Ms. Walden?

20 AMELIA WALDEN: Hi, I'm from Penn-Wortman
21 Houses and--

22 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Ms.
23 Walden, pull that mic down to you. Pull the mic
24 down.

25

1
2 AMELIA WALDEN: Can we rescind our
3 conversion with PACT/RAD? Can we?

4 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: That's a discussion
5 that needs to be held.

6 AMELIA WALDEN: Okay. Penn-Wortman was
7 not given the opportunity to accept or deny PACT/RAD.
8 Management, some of the management is disrespectful.
9 We always tell them respect us as we respect you.
10 They give you short appointments when they have
11 construction going on. You may only be notified a
12 week before and they expect you to be in, and I was
13 told by one manager that they don't give
14 appointments. I was the one that got management at
15 914, the main office, to give us confirmation ticket
16 numbers. When they have appointments, they are not
17 respecting appointment dates. Sometimes they don't
18 even show up. I still have work orders from 2023. All
19 of these are my work orders. So when they say that
20 they come out, they don't do what they need to do.
21 Okay, can we request like [inaudible] meetings from
22 them from December of 2021? Because a lot of
23 discrepancies is in a Zoom meeting that they had.
24 And I'm understanding--
25

1
2 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] You mean
3 from the--

4 AMELIA WALDEN: [interposing] From when
5 they started.

6 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: You mean, the--

7 AMELIA WALDEN: [interposing] because
8 COVID came into play.

9 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: the developers, the
10 owners, or the builders or the management team?

11 AMELIA WALDEN: The managers.

12 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay.

13 AMELIA WALDEN: Okay. I understand RAD is
14 a program and not law, and we received letters from
15 NYCHA at one point stating that tenants cannot opt
16 out. If you did not sign, you will be evicted if you
17 do not sign the lease.

18 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thirty seconds, Ms.
19 Walden, to wrap up.

20 AMELIA WALDEN: No voting-- as far as no
21 voting, they only needed 20 percent, they're saying,
22 of the tenants to agree. Under the RAD program, you
23 understand there's about 57 percent of tenants being
24 evicted. And we had a power outage. Management
25 swore that they notified us which they did not. So

1 we hope that doesn't happen again. The pipes and the
2 plumbing was never changed. We're still having leaks
3 in the apartments, in the walls, and in the lobby.
4 Elevators are constantly out of order. And NYCHA has
5 one tenant in court in Housing Court. Other tenants
6 have been to Housing Court, but NYCHA only showed up
7 at one tenant's court appearance, and we would like
8 to know why was that. When you call in for the
9 repairs at night, there's no numbers given. And I
10 would also like--

12 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] You mean
13 there's no confirmation or order numbers?

14 AMELIA WALDEN: I have it [inaudible] was
15 the first manager, I went and told her NYCHA gave
16 confirmation numbers, and she did give it. So they
17 put it at the top of the paper.

18 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: But it wasn't
19 automatic confirmation number given to you.

20 AMELIA WALDEN: I have so many here.

21 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay.

22 AMELIA WALDEN: But when you go back--
23 because I still have orders from previous, same
24 complaint. When you go back, what they do is give
25 you that same repeat paper because they say the

1 ticket is not closed out, but they have the date, the
2 new date that you did come in at the very, very
3 bottom.
4

5 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. Thank you for
6 your--

7 AMELIA WALDEN: [interposing] And I would
8 also like to note I have an apartment door and its
9 defected. It has about almost not quite a half a inch
10 gap at the door side and the bottom, because HUD had--
11 - HPD had to come in when the management refused to
12 correct the door correctly, but now they want to put
13 weather stripping on my door rather than the new door
14 they put-- they want to put weather stripping, and I
15 refuse to have weather stripping, because that can
16 also catch fire. The way the gap is now, if there's
17 a fire, smoke will come into the apartment. Slam
18 locks, I'd like to know if you could look into that.
19 Is that mandatory? Because that put everyone at
20 risk, even the disabled people or people that's not
21 able to get around, like if they go to empty their
22 garbage and-- or the home attendant, you know, they
23 get locked out, then your patient is at jeopardy for
24 not being able to get to that patient at a timely
25 manner.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your
3 testimony and those concerns. We'll reach out. You
4 are a constituent in my districts. I'm well aware of
5 the slam lock issue that's been going at Linden--

6 AMELIA WALDEN: [interposing] Oh, and they
7 do come into your apartment without your permission.

8 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you.

9 AMELIA WALDEN: They came in on me while
10 my family was there because we had agreement to
11 relocate me for the renovation, and I wasn't
12 refusing, but I told him I'm not going to let them
13 come in and dig up my wall and my closet and put me
14 at jeopardy. So, when they come in for your
15 renovations, you got to make sure they have the right
16 equipment. If you don't speak up and speak out, you
17 will be a lost cause.

18 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your
19 testimony, Ms. Walden.

20 TED BURROWS: Hi, Council. My name is
21 Ted, Ted Burrows. I represent a nonprofit
22 organization that I founded called A Vision for
23 Change, and my take here is to essentially have been--
24 - to be a consultant and to help a lot of the tenant
25 presidents who are going through this forced

1 conversion. But I wanted-- before I got into the
2 forced conversion, I just wanted to say really
3 quickly this is so much more than just about a forced
4 conversion or just about the NYCHA problem. This is
5 a Black and Brown problem that is being amplified
6 through gradual gentrification, okay. They are
7 trying to kick out the low-income residents of these
8 developments, and they're doing it in a hurry, and
9 they need to bypass resident presidents. They need
10 to bypass residents' desires in order to make this
11 happen. They have to have a steamroll model, and
12 that's what they're using. One of the things I'd
13 like to specifically address is that for instance
14 I've been helping out Stuyvesant Gardens, and I
15 witnessed firsthand that for instance the president
16 would put up advertisements for the tenant
17 association meeting, and then the next day or within
18 hours there would be advertisements right next to
19 hers from RAD/PACT. We hear the residents calling
20 her specifically stating that RAD/PACT is threatening
21 them, telling them that their locks will be drilled
22 and they will be-- the unit will be forcibly entered
23 if they do not comply. These are all against the
24 law. What I wanted to really wrap this up, though,
25

1
2 and say is that every last one of these developments
3 still have recourse and they are not actively using
4 that. Where NYCHA presents that there's three
5 options, the Trust, RAD/PACT, or Section 9, I would
6 actually argue that there are four choices. The
7 fourth choice is a resident management corporation
8 which can be specifically established--

9 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Thirty
10 seconds to wrap it up.

11 TED BURROWS: Thank you, sir. Which can
12 be-- resident management corporation could be
13 specifically established to push back against NYCHA.
14 Residents can actually come together, form this type
15 of corporation and request funds from HUD directly
16 and do not need to go through NYCHA, but they do not
17 tell us that this option exists. I will be helping
18 several developments to convert and to understand
19 their rights under 24964.18.430 under 42USC under the
20 numerous state laws that also protect tenants and
21 then as well under the New York City laws. There are
22 several options and I think that going forward we
23 need to let the tenants know that they have an option
24 to self-manage.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your
3 testimony. Mr. Metin?

4 METIN SARCI: Thank you, Chair Banks. My
5 name is Metin Sarci. The opinions shared in this
6 testimony are based upon my own experience and do not
7 necessarily represent the views of the Housing
8 Authority as an employee. If you have time to go
9 through thousands of pages related to practices,
10 policies, and procedures, then you already know how
11 NYCHA works on paper. To NYCHA's credit, these
12 sources are publicly available. I use them regularly
13 to avoid retaliation, because outspoken employees are
14 targets. However, my issue isn't what's on paper.
15 My issue with transparency at NYCHA stems from the
16 fact that they are forced to comply with the system
17 that regularly pits city interest of those of our
18 residents. The Office of the Mayor has direct
19 control over the performance of this authority
20 through their ability to appoint leadership. NYCHA's
21 board is too small. They do not meet for every
22 committee under the federal agreement, and this
23 guarantees that the authority is only as effective as
24 its Mayor will allow. This year's Mayor's Management
25 Report, for example, uses broken repair metrics to

1
2 mayoral control, and deviate from private
3 partnerships in favor of social enterprise. Thank
4 you.

5 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you, panel, for
6 your testimony. We're going to take a five-minute
7 recess, and then we'll be back.

8 [break]

9 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [gavel] This meeting
10 is-- committee hearing is called back to order. I'm
11 going to proceed with our panel for testimony. We
12 have John Mudd [sp?]. He left? Thank you. Monica
13 Arroyo Horne, Ken Bravo, Galligno Francis or
14 Francois, Christopher Leon Johnson, and Sharon Brown.
15 Sharon Brown? Okay.

16 CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: Can I go
17 first, or?

18 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: You may begin, Mr.
19 Johnson. Thank you.

20 CHRISTOPHER LEON JOHNSON: Yeah, hello,
21 Chair Banks. My name is Christopher Leon Johnson.
22 I'm here to show my support for anybody and everybody
23 that want to make sure that NYCHA stays public and
24 NYCHA gets the real transparency it needs. Now, the
25 issue here is that there's a lot of divide in this

1
2 NYCHA movement. The people trying to save their
3 housing while at the same time there's people that
4 are upset at organizations that are trying their best
5 to prevent NYCHA being privatized. Those are the
6 same people that want NYCHA to be privatized. We do
7 know is it a reason because they're getting-- they're
8 looking for arts [sic] credit, they're looking for
9 arts and residency [sic] credits. You know, I tell
10 people this right now that NYCHA got to be public.
11 They cannot be privatized. People got to save
12 Section 9, it cannot go to Section 8. Don't let the
13 tenant leaders, tenant association presidents that
14 are getting paid off under the table to guide you and
15 say that RAD/PACT is good for you guys, because of
16 repairs and upgrades. Because with those upgrades
17 and repairs, you're-- you going to be-- it's going
18 look like Stuy Town [sic] at the expense of you guys
19 being misplaced. This is all about displacement of
20 the current tenants of these developments, especially
21 at Fulton Chelsea, and what they want to do is
22 replace them with the yimbys [sic], the Open New York
23 for All, Trans ALT, Open Plans folks, and want to get
24 rid of the people that's paying about a \$100 a month
25 in rent. So I'll tell people this right now, you

1
2 people got to unite. Unite no matter what. Shout to
3 the PSL [sic] for coming out here today and
4 supporting. Shout out to Jason Murillo who's running
5 for City Council the Second District as a Republican
6 Conservative for supporting. And be careful with all
7 the people that are backed by Theo Chino [sp?], who's
8 running for Public Advocate that is pushing for the
9 privatization of NYCHA. Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your
11 testimony. We're going to now move to-- we'll move
12 to Ken. You may proceed.

13 KEN BRAVO: I'm just here to tell you a
14 quick story. My next-- first of all, I want-- I
15 appreciate you asking all those questions, and I
16 appreciate how I notice you notice they couldn't have
17 any answers that you were looking for. I appreciate
18 that. I'd like to say that I have a next door
19 neighbor who is 84 years old. She's an older,
20 intelligent Latin woman. She only speaks English-- I
21 mean, Spanish, and when I told her about one of these
22 resident engagement meetings she said she couldn't go
23 because, you know, she's fragile and she couldn't go.
24 I told her, well, send your son. This way he can
25 represent you and be there for you. When he went

1 over to go into this meeting, they didn't let him in
2 because his name was not on the list. They didn't
3 let anyone in unless your name was not on the list.
4 I showed them my press badge. That didn't get me in.
5 The only way I got in was because I am a resident of
6 Jacob Riis Housing. It's obvious that RAD/PACT and
7 NYCHA are together. They-- if you're against them,
8 they will bully you into either deciding yes, fine,
9 I'll go, leave me alone, or you know, let's continue
10 talking about this because I don't think you see the
11 whole thing. In my opinion, what they're doing is
12 they're sending us dreams. Yeah, they can fix our
13 apartments, whatever it is. Yeah, it takes a year
14 and a half to get tiles on my floor that I'm still
15 waiting for, but you know, I am-- you know, and then
16 takes an hour and a half to wait on the phone during
17 the week to get a ticket in. But on a Monday, you
18 can't even get a ticket. They don't answer the
19 phones on Mondays. The reason I'm bringing all this
20 up is because I didn't know RAD/PACT was coming into
21 our Riis until November, and I've been living there
22 for 30 years, okay? The tenant association and
23 RAD/PACT shouldn't be signing NDAs. There's no
24 reason for them to be signing NDAs. What I take from
25

1
2 that is they're being paid under the table to make a
3 decision for us, and they don't have the right to
4 make that decision for me, because I-- they don't
5 even post anything. I just wanted to bring that up to
6 you guys.

7 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your
8 testimony, sir.

9 KEN BRAVO: Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Take care. You can be
11 seated until the panel gets up together [inaudible].
12 You may begin your testimony, sir.

13 GALLIGNO FRANCOIS: Hi. My name is
14 Galligno Francois. I live in the 41st District in
15 Tilden Houses development, and I'm just here to bring
16 attention how the Tilden management there has been
17 asking my family to redo the annual every time. We
18 did our annual back in November. The-- we spoke to
19 the housing assistant. She give out-- we give her
20 all the documents, and everything was approved. We
21 got a new lease, but recently before this year
22 started in December, they asked again to redo the
23 annual. We went down to the office saying, why we
24 need to redo the annual? Something wrong with the
25 documents we submitted? Her statement was well, I

1 don't know. The head NYCHA office was asking our
2 family to redo the annual again and everybody in the
3 building. So I didn't see some-- I just come here
4 because I don't know what else to do with NYCHA,
5 because it's not the first time they've been asking
6 us to redo the annual. It's been a constant-- like,
7 almost every year, they're doing the same thing with
8 us. We do the annual. The documents is accepted
9 according to the housing assistant, and before the
10 year ends or go into the next cycle, they ask us to
11 redo the annual again. So I'm just coming out here
12 to bring out attention for my family and also the
13 residents of the Tilden development there. What's
14 going on? Because it's a common occurrence. Thank
15 you.

17 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: That concludes your
18 testimony?

19 GALLIGNO FRANCOIS: Yes.

20 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Alright, thank you so
21 much, sir, for your advocacy. She's got-- when she's
22 done, she can-- yeah. It's alright.

23 SHARON BROWN: Hello. My name is Sharon
24 Brown. Before I begin, remember Israel. Defend
25 Israel. Release the hostages. Let Yahweh's people

1
2 go. Okay. For NYCHA, this is one of the other
3 situations for a City Council hearing that I keep
4 hearing the same thing over and over about NYCHA.
5 I've seen them on the news, and the thing that they
6 keep complaining about is that they haven't had
7 repairs. I see them during Christmas season. They
8 don't have heat. They don't have hot water. They
9 don't have this. They don't have that. They don't
10 have repairs. Now, they're trying to make them sign
11 certain things. If I was in those situations I
12 probably wouldn't want to sign with them again,
13 because they haven't seemed to meet their end of the
14 bargain for just the simple repairs. So why would I
15 trust them once again to go into a contract with them
16 for something else. So I feel for the people who
17 live in NYCHA, because for many, many years and
18 probably decades I've heard things about NYCHA. Now,
19 I know as America we are wonderful and we do treat
20 our people good. Probably most of NYCHA doesn't deal
21 with this kind of situation, but for some reason this
22 is happening in NYCHA to certain people and they keep
23 coming back. Two years-- like I saw maybe two or
24 three years ago someone on TV saying this has been
25 happening for two years. That was two or three years

1
2 ago and it was happening for two years or longer. So
3 there needs to be something down now to get this
4 situation under wraps. There was a tenant, the first
5 panel that came on, she said she doesn't know where
6 she's going to go, where she going to live. Can we
7 find out who she is and get her some help right away
8 to avoid her being homeless? So people can't be
9 evicted until they have comparable accommodations.
10 And in this situation, I don't know if they should be
11 evicted at all. NYCHA is going to wind up owing
12 these tenants money for all the repairs they had to
13 suffer not having. So a lot of the tenants are not--
14 sorry. They're not in arrears. They're probably owed
15 money by NYCHA, the city or whoever because they had
16 to live in those kind of conditions.

17 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your
18 testimony. Thank you to this panel. Is Monica
19 Arroyo Horne available? Oh, Monica. Ms. Monica,
20 you're going to press that red button and you can
21 bring the mic closer if you need to.

22 MONICA ARROYO HORNE: Okay, thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Alright, you may
24 begin.

25 MONICA ARROYO HORNE: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: You may begin.

MONICA ARROYO HORNE: Okay, alright.

Well, as you know-- thank you for taking the time to listen to me. I'm going to make this very quick and brief. Alright. My name is Monica Arroyo Horne, I'm a retired for New York City Police Department. I dedicated 25 years of my life serving the City of New York. I now dedicate much of my spare time serving the elderly in the community as a advocate for the elderly. While living in Linden Houses I've seen many things that most productive and law abiding residents, myself included don't approve of, and it affects the quality of our lives. There are five factors associated with the quality of life: physical health, psychological condition, independence, relationships with others, and the environment in which I live. I'm here to inform you two of those factors, my physical health and my psychological condition have been deeply altered. I recall the day my mother and I moved into Linden Houses. We had to step over blood-stained sidewalk where a crime had occurred. I remember wondering if we made a mistake moving into the development. My mother has passed on, but while she has-- while she was here, we

1 eventually grew to love the place. She was very
2 active in the community and loved her garden in front
3 of the building at 295 Cozine Linden Houses which
4 brought her so much joy. As years passed, I noticed
5 many changes in the community that definitely
6 affected the quality of life for many residents.
7 Outsiders were coming in to the community, harassing
8 our elderly. Strange men and women who may have been
9 sexual predators or had criminal records were around
10 our children and seniors and on a daily basis.
11 Needless to say, they as well as myself were placed
12 in potentially dangerous situations.

14 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: You have a minute,
15 extra minute to wrap it up.

16 MONICA ARROYO HORNE: Yes.

17 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Alright.

18 MONICA ARROYO HORNE: So, I want to say I
19 notice this is my first time coming to this meeting.
20 I didn't appreciate most of the NYCHA individuals,
21 employees if you will, leaving so soon not hearing
22 everything, but I'm hoping that they'll see this.
23 but right now, I think the next time that we do have
24 a meeting like this, that the federal government
25 should be here as well, somebody from the federal

1
2 government, and also I want NYCHA to pay more
3 attention to the tenants that are now living in this
4 development. I remember years ago when NYCHA-- when
5 people had felony records they weren't allowed to
6 live in there. I live now next door to people that
7 have felony records. I don't know who they are. Some
8 of them are not even on the lease, and it scares me,
9 because I don't know who they are and neither does
10 NYCHA, neither does CNC Management, LM. They don't
11 know who these people are, but I see them and they're
12 in the apartment, and it's frightening to me. I have
13 to worry about my coming and going. So that needs to
14 be rectified again. If people have felony records,
15 they should not be allowed to live next door to other
16 residents, especially our seniors and our elders and
17 our children that's in the neighborhood.

18 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your
19 testimony.

20 MONICA ARROYO HORNE: You're quite
21 welcome, Chris.

22 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Appreciate you.

23 MONICA ARROYO HORNE: Okay, bye, bye.

24 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Have a good one.

25 Alright. So, now, that is the end of our in-person

1 testimonies. We will now move to our Zoom testimony,
2 and we will now turn to the remote testimony. Once
3 your name is called, a member of our staff will
4 unmute you and the Sergeant of Arms will give you the
5 go-ahead to begin. Please wait for the Sergeant of
6 Arms to announce that you may begin before delivering
7 your testimony. April Summars?

9 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

10 APRIL SUMMARS: I'm here.

11 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay, you may begin.

12 APRIL SUMMARS: Hey. Hello. Thank you.
13 Good afternoon, Chris and members of the Committee.
14 My name's April Summars. I'm the Treasurer of the
15 Tenant Association and resident. I'm here today to
16 demand action on two urgent crises affecting the
17 residents of La Guardia Houses, the ongoing neglect
18 of our living conditions and the blatant misuse of
19 the federal tenant participation activity funds. For
20 years, our common areas have been left in filth.
21 Floors are covered in layers of grime, instructional
22 stickers from the 70s are faded and peeling, and our
23 elevators and walls are stained and neglected.
24 Despite repeated complaints, management continues to
25 ignore this problem. I personally reached out to

1 Tony Herbert [sp?], NYC NYCHA liaison for the Mayor's
2 Office, for help. His response, that I should speak
3 with the president of my tenant association. That's
4 unacceptable. The Mayor's Office, NYCHA and this
5 city must take responsibility for ensuring safe,
6 clean and dignified living conditions for NYCHA
7 residents. Meanwhile, the trash situation at La
8 Guardia Houses is appalling. Garbage piles up on
9 sidewalks and between buildings instead of being
10 properly disposed of. Loose garbage blows through
11 our development daily making it look more like a
12 landfill than a home. This is not just a quality of
13 life issue, it is a public health crisis. This is an
14 ongoing failure of NYCHA and this city, and it must
15 be addressed immediately. Financial mismanagement--
16 where's the oversight? Beyond sanitation issues,
17 there's another crisis, the misuse of our federal TPA
18 funds. Our Tenant Association President Danette
19 Chavis has been allowed to misuse these funds
20 unchecked and--

22 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Your time
23 is expired. Thank you.

24 APRIL SUMMARS: nobody is stopping her.
25 Despite clear HUD regulations--

1
2 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Your
3 time has expired.

4 APRIL SUMMARS: [inaudible] Pardon me?

5 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Your time, your time
6 is up, ma'am. Would you like an additional 30
7 seconds to wrap it up?

8 APRIL SUMMARS: Yes, I would, please.

9 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay, you may
10 proceed.

11 APRIL SUMMARS: Despite the regulations,
12 no one is checking this behavior. Key officials
13 include Eukah Baswith [sp?], Curtis Williams, and
14 Daniel Shirod [sp?]. It's time to hold NYCHA
15 accountable for their failure to maintain sanitary
16 living conditions, conduct an independent audit into
17 the financial mismanagement of the La Guardia House's
18 TPA funds, demand HUD, NYCHA and responsible
19 officials enforce their own financial rules, no
20 exceptions, no excuses. Tenants are not second-class
21 citizens. We work here. We live here. We raise our
22 families here. We're not asking for special
23 treatment. We're demanding the dignity and respect
24 every New Yorker deserves. This council has the
25 power to act and I urge you to use it now. Special

1 shout out to Rodney, Detective Rodney Rosado of the
2 Fifth. Thank you for your continued support. Thank
3 you very much. I appreciate the time.

4
5 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your
6 testimony, Ms. Summars. Karen Blondel?

7 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

8 KAREN BLONDEL: [inaudible]

9 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Ms. Blondel?

10 KAREN BLONDEL: [inaudible]

11 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay, there we go.
12 You may begin your testimony.

13 KAREN BLONDEL: [inaudible] RAD
14 [inaudible] were created by the Obama administration
15 in 2008. It was the only choice at the time, and it
16 was trash [sic] in regards to the residents. I hated
17 RAD back in 2008. But when I see a problem, I
18 immediately look for a solution. My solution was to
19 learn about RAD/PACT and to elevate the residents'
20 concerns, especially in Red Hook, which at the time
21 were [inaudible] fear of being misplaced amongst
22 other concerns. I then advocated for and helped with
23 the creation of New York City Preservation Trust, and
24 this brings me to CCOP, Citywide Council of
25 Presidents. Our job as duly-elected NYCHA

1
2 representatives-- I'm the President of [inaudible]
3 West-- is to provide the residents with all the
4 information on options available, all information and
5 options available so that they can decide for
6 themselves. Instead, members of CCOP and their
7 collaborators [sic] [inaudible], CCOP decided that
8 this position is the only position NYCHA residents
9 should have. We, the duly-elected resident council
10 of Red Hook West, and the Resident [inaudible]
11 Association [inaudible] by the New York City Housing
12 Authority [inaudible] 1937 [sic] and regulated by
13 [inaudible] 964. We ask that CCOP be dissolved
14 immediately. CCOP does not [inaudible] houses. CCOP
15 has been in this business for 33 years. I think the
16 only way we could [inaudible] is when they die. That
17 is not acceptable. [inaudible]

18 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time is expired.

19 KAREN BLONDEL: [inaudible]

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Thank you.

21 KAREN BLONDEL: residents-- [inaudible]

22 I'm just finish. A lot of them--

23 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Ms.

24 Blondel, your time has expired, but I'll give you 30
25 seconds to wrap it up.

1
2 KAREN BLONDEL: One minute 10 seconds.
3 I'm timing myself, too. Let's just quit all this and
4 go to the other question, Chris. And that is, can
5 you give me the actual number of conversions since
6 you stood behind me and pretty much threatened me in
7 2000? Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Can you repeat the
9 question, or does that conclude your testimony?

10 KAREN BLONDEL: Question-- you didn't let
11 me conclude, because I had a whole minute left
12 because I'm timing myself. But anyway, that's
13 neither here nor there. My [inaudible]. my question
14 to you is, I [inaudible] you and you said there were
15 82 or 83,000 RAD conversions in New York City, and I
16 told you that it was more like [inaudible]. Did you
17 get that number today at this hearing? Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Based of the
19 question, I do remember we were talking about the
20 units that were converted under RAD, am I correct?
21 Right, and we said that there was-- I think it was
22 80-something thousand units that were converted and
23 another 62,000 slated to be converted. I stand by
24 those numbers. I believe NYCHA did-- they said they
25 were going to get back to us on new numbers today,

1
2 and I believe on the PACT side they said it was a 23
3 or 21,000 units that were converted-- or that were
4 transferred over on the PACT side. Thank you for
5 your testimony, Ms. Blondel. Okay, Simone Hall?

6 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time has begun.

7 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Ms. Hall?

8 SIMONE HALL: Yes, I'm here.

9 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay, you may
10 proceed.

11 SIMONE HALL: Thanks for having-- thanks
12 for having me. My name is Simone Hall. I live in
13 Boston Secor Houses in the Bronx. Boston Secor is
14 the federal building and Section 9 is a federal
15 program. Before RAD/PACT things were okay, but now
16 it's different with privatization. Living in NYCHA
17 allowed me to raise three engineers, and then I went
18 to college and earned an associate's degree. We were
19 happy, but not now. Repair tickets were cancelled
20 back then as they are now. Now repairs are not being
21 done at all, and there are new rules and regulations.
22 I always pay my rent on time within the first five
23 days of the month. Now, rent statements arrive here
24 very late in the mail, up to 18 days after the due
25 date. Tenants are scared about being evicted because

1 of all the threats and bullying. [inaudible] extended
2 [sic]. These threats have extended to my family
3 members who were led to believe by phone that a real
4 emergency occurred concerning me, but what was really
5 the matter was the management was trying to get me to
6 convince me to sign the PACT lease. So, [inaudible].
7 I [inaudible] in touch with the executive secretary
8 through the director of Section 8, Robert Tesarilio
9 [sp?], and I was told by the executive secretary that
10 Section 8 was closed in 2009. It wasn't open
11 legitimately until June 3rd, 2024. Several neighbors
12 said they have been signed up for Section 8 since
13 March 26th of 2024. Surprise, I've never signed
14 anything, and I want to see my signature. A tenant
15 was at a meeting and how were we signed up in March.
16 She said she was unable to get into her tenants
17 portal. The PACT partner, Samuel Levine, snatched
18 the microphone out of her hand and shouted, don't
19 listen to her, don't listen to her--
20

21 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Your time
22 is expired.

23 SIMONE HALL: Only listen to an authorized
24 person.

25 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Thank you.

1
2 SIMONE HALL: I need more time, just 30
3 seconds.

4 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: You have 30 seconds
5 to wrap it up.

6 SIMONE HALL: Okay. I'm going to hurry.
7 PACT partner Kedesha Louis [sp?] started screaming
8 repeated, she's a liar. She's a liar. The tenants
9 became upset and the meeting ended with people
10 walking out in disgust. We have no legitimate tenant
11 association and never had a chance to vote for
12 anyone, especially to make Boston Secor private.
13 [inaudible] to be in Boston Secor is a mystery.
14 [inaudible] has a very bad reputation, especially
15 with evictions. And I want to know this-- now this
16 is very important. Why has NYCHA abandoned its
17 tenants, and when did it decide to do so? And
18 there's one thing I want to tell you, Chris, these
19 panelists that appeared today have sworn an oath to
20 tell the truth, but their testimony is questionable
21 and not what residents are really experiencing. And
22 NYCHA and HUD need a forensic audit done to expose
23 the ongoing schemes and scams.

24 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your
25 testimony--

1 SIMONE HALL: [interposing] Hello?

2 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Ms. Hall. Thank you
3 for your testimony, Ms. Hall. Christine Burke?

4 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

5 CHRISTINE BURKE: Hello.

6 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Hello, Ms. Burke, you
7 may begin.

8 CHRISTINE BURKE: My name is Christine
9 Burke. I am a resident of Howard Houses, Brooklyn,
10 New York. The RAD process has unfolded in a way that
11 seems both unfair and un-democratic. Residents'
12 voices have been concealed, leaving us without
13 adequate explanation [inaudible] nor genuine
14 participation. To address this, I urge the Council
15 to impose a moratorium on the RAD/PACT program.
16 There should be a minimum threshold of at least 51
17 percent residents voting for PACT. We also need a
18 moratorium on RAD to ensure that the program is not
19 rolled out without changes, that they address the
20 misleading practice of using survey results as proof
21 of approval. Surveys were distributed during a June
22 2024 PACT meeting with fewer than 25 residents
23 present. There are 813 apartments in Howard Houses.
24 There was no transparency about how the surveys were-

1
2 - results would be used, and no follow-up
3 communication to ensure that the residents fully
4 understood the implications of their response. The
5 Tenant Association President, Ms. [inaudible]
6 Johnson, told me that the PACT representative asked
7 about the survey. She said she told them the
8 majority of the residents were--

9 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Your time
10 is expired. Thank you.

11 CHRISTINE BURKE: [inaudible] of the
12 transition. Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Ms. Burke, your time
14 has expired? Would you like 30 seconds to wrap it
15 up.

16 CHRISTINE BURKE: Yes.

17 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Okay. You may
18 proceed.

19 CHRISTINE BURKE: there were no
20 discussions or votes in the PACT meeting, nor in the
21 tenant association meeting to confirm her decision.
22 Ms. Johnson put Howard Houses in PACT using the
23 survey. Thank you very much.
24
25

1
2 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you, Ms. Burke,
3 for your testimony. We'll now proceed to Cynthia
4 Tibbs.

5 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

6 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Cynthia--

7 CYNTHIA TIBBS: [interposing] Good
8 afternoon. My name is Cynthia Tibbs. I'm the Tenant
9 Association President of WSUR Brownstone's 36
10 buildings on the upper west side. After watching
11 today I'd like to put it in a nutshell. NYCHA's
12 nothing but organized crime at its highest. The
13 names have been changed. The Godfather is now known
14 as resident engagement and the Real Estate
15 Department, point blank, period. Simon Gortowsky
16 [sp?], what he did today is just a minuscule of what
17 he does to us and people going into the RAD
18 conversions, bullying, the gas lighting. We deal
19 with that on a daily basis. Regarding what Mr.
20 Martinez said, I am in 100 percent in favor of the
21 abolishment of CCOP. The Citywide Council of
22 Presidents is nothing but another Coppa [sic] regime.
23 They are not for us. Recently, a lot of Presidents
24 were privy to a Zoom meeting that they had in January
25 where they referred to all the presidents and they

1
2 stated-- Ms. Rosado [sic] said, I can't stand any of
3 the presidents. Mr. Bowman said that all the
4 presidents are nothing but insects and bugs that
5 should be swatted, sprayed and smacked away. This is
6 a man that the only time we ever-- he ever reached
7 out to any of us presidents was when he wanted
8 donations when he was running for City Council in his
9 district. They are corrupt at the highest level,
10 which is why NYCHA meets with them on a weekly basis,
11 because those of us that try to right in our
12 developments that are transparent with our residents,
13 that do not steal, that do not muddle receipts, that
14 do not owe resident engagement over 900 receipts,
15 that are allowed to get away with things that no one
16 else is allowed to get away with need to be disband,
17 and let the chips fall as they may. All these DCOPs--
18 -

19 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Your time
20 is expired. Thank you.

21 CYNTHIA TIBBS: All these DCOPS-- 30
22 seconds and I'll wrap it up.

23 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: 30 seconds and wrap
24 up.

25

1
2 CYNTHIA TIBBS: They all need to be
3 disband. They all need to be disband. They are
4 corruption at the highest, the highest, and the more
5 that we don't go along, they push back. And yes, the
6 bullying is real and it happens to us also. When we
7 don't go along, they try to replace us with residents
8 that will go along. And I yield. My whole testimony
9 has been submitted. Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your
11 testimony, Ms. Tibbs. We will now proceed to Ramona
12 Ferreyra.

13 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

14 RAMONA FERREYRA: Hi everyone. I was--
15 you caught me off-guard. I hope everyone is doing
16 okay after such a lengthy and at times contentious
17 hearing. Instead of going over all of the different
18 ways that NYCHA fails us which I think has been
19 clearly outlined by my neighbors and by other allies,
20 I think I'm going to focus on the solution that we're
21 looking for. So, my name is Ramona Ferreyra, and I
22 am the founder of Save Section 9 and we have a set of
23 national solutions that could make NYCHA the most
24 desirable address in New York City. But we know that
25 rehabilitating and expanding public housing is not

1 only possible, it is necessary. We just need to
2 restructure NYCHA and hold them accountable. Our
3 solutions work towards that. I want to highlight
4 also that on May 7th, 2024 NYCHA testified that
5 rehabilitating and [inaudible] may cost \$45,000. And
6 I want to remind everyone that this is taxpayer
7 money, and that no corporate landlord can deliver
8 what NYCHA provides at the cost per unit. So the
9 solutions that we are actually focused on right now
10 include adopting Resolution 0731-2025 to implement a
11 more robust resident engagement and voting process at
12 each NYCHA development considering RAD/PACT
13 conversion. Number two would be to adopt Resolution
14 0730-2025 which is conduct a thorough study on the
15 RAD/PACT program to assess the effects of conversion
16 on residents and the program's impact on tenant
17 rights, security and community wellbeing. And I do
18 want to explain that currently HUD measures success
19 via the ability to complete needed repairs, but after
20 40 years of disinvestment and mismanagement there's a
21 critical need for repairs, and we understand that.
22 However, the desire for repairs should not undermine
23 the quality of life of the tenants. We have amassed
24 enough as it is to prove that RAD/PACT is harmful,
25

1 and it is now time for NYCHA to analyze the
2 experience of--

3
4 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Your
5 time's expired. Thank you.

6 RAMONA FERREYRA: Can I have 30 seconds?

7 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Yes, you may have 30
8 seconds to wrap it up, ma'am. Thank you. You may
9 proceed.

10 RAMONA FERREYRA: Okay. And the final
11 solution is place an immediate moratorium on all RAD,
12 RAD Section 18 [inaudible] in New York City until
13 that comprehensive third-party impact assessment
14 study is completed. Thank you again for this
15 hearing, and I look forward to working on these
16 solutions with you.

17 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: thank you so much for
18 your testimony. We'll now move to Jeannie Lopez.

19 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

20 JEANNIE LOPEZ: Hi, my name is Jeannie
21 Lopez, 4555 [inaudible] Street, Boston Secor in the
22 Bronx, and I advocate for Save Section 9. I've lived
23 in this building for over 19 years, and what once was
24 my home now feels like a place I'm being forced out
25 of little by little. The RAD and PACT program was

1
2 presented as a solution, but instead has become a
3 nightmare. I'm expected to sign a lease on the
4 confusing terms while being harassed for rent and
5 withheld a voucher until I do so with exaggerated
6 rent arrears and rent fees that seem to be out of
7 nowhere. HRA does not recognize any of these private
8 companies, so how would I get the rent help once I do
9 sign. Everyone feels that the new rule being thrown
10 at us, making eviction an ever-present threat. It
11 feels like they're setting up some to fail and fall
12 behind just enough to justify them about pushing us
13 out. [inaudible] my future here. NYCHA needs to
14 stop lying on oath no less. It's diabolical. No
15 wonder why the left. I agree-- I never agreed to
16 this process and I certainly never voted for it. We
17 were told that it's just a survey, only to find out
18 later it being used as a vote without full
19 understanding or consent. Meanwhile, construction is
20 being done all around us with carelessness leaving
21 behind dust, toxic fumes, debris that has taken a
22 serious toll on my health. I wake up with headache,
23 nosebleeds, covered in dust. My breathing clearly as
24 y'all hear is affected. I'm stressed out and it's
25 making my mental health spiral. The anxiety of not

1 knowing if I would be able to afford to stay in my
2 home and dealing with unanswered questions,
3 unfulfilled promises, and threats of eviction. It's
4 an ongoing battle. It's a fight for survival in a
5 place that's supposed to be my safe haven. The
6 passing of my late mother has affected me, and on top
7 of grieving now I'm being forced into uncertainty
8 about my future. I'm trying to rebuild and refine my
9 career path, but how can I do that when I don't know
10 if I have a home next month? No one should have to
11 live like this. I'm calling on the City Council to
12 conduct an in-depth survey on the RAD/PACT program
13 to assess the true impact on this conversion--

14
15 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Your time
16 has expired. Thank you.

17 JEANNIE LOPEZ: on its tenants, our
18 rights, our safety. I have 30 seconds, an extra 30
19 seconds.

20 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: 30 seconds to wrap it
21 up.

22 JEANNIE LOPEZ: This entire plan needs to
23 be re-evaluated and if not, put on hold entirely. No
24 New Yorker should be pushed towards homelessness,
25 especially not any long-term residents like myself

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who are simply trying to get back on their feet. We deserve stability, transparency and a fair chance at a future. Thank you, Council.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your testimony, Ms. Lopez. We'll now move to Brenda Temple.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Brenda Temple? Okay. We'll move it on to Rosemarie Williams.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

ROSEMARIE WILLIAMS: [inaudible] and I'm on camera. You got me doing this on camera. Give it here.

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: You may proceed with your testimony.

ROSEMARIE WILLIAMS: Hello. My name is Rosemarie Williams. I-- I was a presidential candidate in the 2024 election. I'm a public health leader. I have owned a home-based childcare business for 15 years. I've been a lobbyist since I was nine years old. I have worked for Senator Jesse Hamilton [sp?], Mayor Tony Hawk [sp?], Senator Mike Fowler [sp?]. I worked at President Barack Obama's first inauguration. I currently live at Ingersoll Houses,

1 and before this I lived in Eastchester Gardens. My
2 company and I was featured on NYCHA's Journal
3 website. So I'm here today to talk about my-- how
4 public housing has affected me and my family. So
5 life has never been easy for me. In public housing I
6 was kidnapped and raped in Eastchester projects.
7 Staff never requested or questioned why my mother's
8 name on the birth certificate was different from my
9 mother's name on the lease, neither did my public
10 school. Yet, they put me on the lease anyway for 16
11 years before I ran away. I would wake up wanting to
12 go to the park, and I couldn't go to the park because
13 of a baby being thrown in a trash can in the park, or
14 there was dead bodies lying in the middle of a
15 walkway right outside. Public housing has never been
16 safe for children, women, or men or families.
17 Residents don't respect that. Residents and visitors
18 are dangerous. I was given a substance in the
19 Eastchester apartment and I blacked out for three
20 days, and only after I woke up was I then transported
21 to a hospital where blood result test said that I was
22 pregnant. My handler [sic] was on the news for
23 finding a baby on the ground from the adjacent
24 building. When I went to the Brooklyn DA's office
25

1 they questioned my handlers that raised me in
2 Eastchester projects, and they were told you're
3 playing with fire; leave it alone. Someone in this
4 same family-- I then went to a DV shelter and got an
5 apartment with NYCHA on my won. Someone in this same
6 family stole this apartment for five years prior to
7 me moving in. I've been fighting rats and mice for
8 the last nine years in this apartment. The boiler--

9
10 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Your time
11 is expired. Thank you.

12 ROSEMARIE WILLIAMS: for the building
13 under me, as I'm on the first floor.

14 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Your time has
15 expired. If you would like 30 seconds--

16 ROSEMARIE WILLIAMS: [interposing] Okay,
17 may I have more time?

18 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: 30 seconds to wrap it
19 up, ma'am.

20 ROSEMARIE WILLIAMS: Alright, so in
21 conclusion, I have made reports to Jumaane Williams,
22 Reverend Al Sharpton, to the Whitehouse, to FBI,
23 nothing has been resolved. My housing manager has
24 put his hands on me. They have transients that are
25 paid for by NYPD with a partnership with NYCHA, and

1 they refuse to move these transients. These
2 transients have asked me to sell myself, sell drugs.
3 I have a home-based childcare business that I've had
4 for over 15 years. I'm not able to do that. So,
5 I've made all complaints and all human councils, all
6 possible authorities, and nothing has been said. I am
7 a mandated reporter, and NYCHA should be shut down
8 immediately. I'm done. Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your
11 testimony. We'll now move to Julie Sharpton.

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

13 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Julie Sharpton?
14 Danette L. Chavis?

15 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

16 DANETTE L. CHAVIS: Hello? Yeah. Hi,
17 I'm Danette Chavis. I'm the TA President of La
18 Guardia. And first off I want to say, three minutes
19 is not nearly enough time to hear all the issues or
20 concerns. It's upsetting to attend these hearings
21 and hear NYCHA give ample amount of time to say what
22 are lies and not have any TA leader have the ability
23 to refute it. Anyway, despite the cited violations
24 of NYCHA being committed in regards to RAD/PACT and
25 the outright rejection of the residents who didn't

1 even have a chance to vote, who were told from day
2 one that it was survey was given, not a vote. NYCHA
3 has been allowed to proceed nonstop with RAD/PACT and
4 has basically nearly completed half their portfolio.
5 In the midst of that, NYCHA is taking actions that I
6 believe are account [sic] to or constructive
7 dismantling of the TA boards themselves. They
8 arbitrarily make moves to withhold the funding needed
9 to govern and function these boards, and the training
10 that's given is substandard. You cannot have a
11 situation where anybody in a development can run for
12 office based on compliance and being the right age
13 only, and then entrust them with thousands of dollars
14 and give them what amounts to a 15-minute video. No
15 hands-on training. No way to ascertain if they
16 understood the training and leave them their hands.
17 And then at the same time, you cannot force TA
18 leaders to come into an agreement that they must
19 sign, and if they don't, withhold their funding which
20 they've never read or had an opportunity to even
21 understand what's being written. And that agreement
22 has more restrictions than the previous agreement
23 that they signed. So while they say they provide
24 these boards with the funding needed, they're

1
2 restricted by the limitations imposed and then to
3 turnaround and literally hold hostage such an
4 agreement that you ain't seen, that you ain't read,
5 that nobody's communicated to you--

6 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Your time
7 is expired. Thank you.

8 DANETTE L. CHAVIS: what it is, is
9 ridiculous. And it needs to be addressed.

10 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: thank you.

11 DANETTE L. CHAVIS: May I have 30 seconds
12 additional time?

13 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: You may have 30
14 seconds, proceed.

15 DANETTE L. CHAVIS: We've heard these
16 complaints over and over and over again, and I don't
17 see or understand what action if any is being taken.
18 Thank you.

19 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your
20 testimony. Carmen Quinones?

21 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

22 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Carmen Quinones?

23 CARMEN QUINONES: You hear me?

24 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: We hear you--
25

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2 CARMEN QUINONES: [interposing] Do you
3 hear me?

4 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Ms. Quinones, you may
5 begin your testimony.

6 CARMEN QUINONES: Okay. First of all,
7 let me say thank you for this hearing, Chris, and I
8 really appreciate everything and the drilling that
9 you did. It was really, really good. Now, hopefully
10 they can come back and answer most of those
11 questions. Let me start by saying that NYCHA's upper
12 [sic] Council must be dissolved. You know, after
13 admitting to racial bias in 1992, NYCHA built CCOP, a
14 citywide systematic law to stop 400,000 residents
15 from shaping NYCHA's workplace rules and to mock
16 [sic] their representation for over 30 years. You
17 as-- I don't know if you know, but I do have a
18 Resident Management Corporation that I just did a
19 501C3 to, and I hope that I can sit with you and talk
20 to you about that. But let me tell you want the
21 immediate dissolution of CCOP is. Immediate
22 dissolution of CCOP for no more fake [sic]
23 leadership. Full recognition of 200+ real resident
24 councils that truly represent residents, actual HUD
25 intervention to stop NYCHA's control over resident

1 representation, real oversight over NYCHA and HUD,
2 ensuring all residents' rights are protected. What's
3 happening is now is CCOP is-- there's eight people on
4 CCOP. Eight people make decisions with NYCHA
5 continuously every week for 400,000+ residents. This
6 is not-- this is unacceptable. Eight people that
7 don't even live in our district, and they are made--
8 those are the representation that NYCHA's staff they
9 told you about today. Those are the committees that
10 they're talking about, not tenant association
11 presidents-- eight people, eight people that are
12 representing 400,000+ residents. This is
13 unacceptable. It needs to be looked at. I would love
14 a meeting with you. We need to sit down, because
15 this is really bad. It is really bad.

17 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Your time's expired.
18 Thank you.

19 CARMEN QUINONES: Okay, give me them 30
20 seconds, honey.

21 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: We'll give you 30
22 seconds, Ms. Quinones. Wrap it up.

23 CARMEN QUINONES: Okay. And again, you
24 know, this is silencing the TA presidents, and what
25 is happening is that this-- NYCHA is trying to

1
2 dismantle all TA presidents all around, and the only
3 ones they listen to are the TA-- the CCOP chairs
4 which is Danny Barbara [sp?], and so eight people for
5 400,000 people. You make the math. You make the
6 math. Thank you very much for your time and your
7 patience.

8 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you, Ms.
9 Quinones, and we'll be reaching out to you to have
10 that-- set up that meeting. We'll now move on to
11 Jacqueline Lara [sp?].

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

13 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Jacqueline Lara?
14 Jacqueline Lara? Alright. We'll now go to Dana
15 Elden.

16 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

17 DANA ELDEN: Thank you. Good afternoon,
18 Chairman Banks. Good to see you again. Hope you
19 come back to [inaudible] to meet with us again.

20 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Good to see you.

21 DANA ELDEN: Yes. So, I'm here to
22 discuss the importance of transparency, truth and
23 respect within the relationship that NYCHA should
24 maintain in serving the residents. During a recent
25 incident my residents were kicked out of our

1 nomination election process to allow NYCHA to promote
2 their conversion project in a meeting for another
3 development that has a senior center they could have
4 used. On November 21st, two NYCHA coordinator staff
5 members and I were denied access to our reserved
6 lunch room in our center by NYCHA's RAD/PACT staff
7 holding a meeting for Moore [sic] Houses. This was
8 unacceptable as I had 17 residents in that meeting
9 who were from the ages of 60 to 87, where there was
10 no ventilation, no space for them. NYCHA left us to
11 dry out as they promote these conversion programs.
12 This is definitely a difference of what transparency
13 means to NYCHA and how it relates to the residents.
14 We have witnessed NYCHA backflip so many issues. The
15 backflip was the dismissal of the resident leaders
16 that were left out of the first conception of private
17 management with the blueprint. When we began these
18 RPPH [sic], we noted that the violating of HUD
19 regulations 964.135C where we were supposed to sit at
20 the table and have input and most certainly how it
21 was all going to be done and to whom it would be done
22 to. That is when RPPH came in. We are comprised of
23 resident leaders who defy the forced actions of NYCHA
24 upon our residents around the City. When we reminded
25

1
2 NYCHA of this terrible action against the residents,
3 they continued to go forward with these conversions.
4 I believe that NYCHA has perpetuated their lies--

5 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Your time
6 is expired. Thank you.

7 DANA ELDEN: [inaudible]

8 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: You have 30 seconds
9 to wrap it up.

10 DANA ELDEN: [inaudible] they bullied us
11 every day as residents and the pressure that NYCHA
12 gives towards these conversions has terrorized many
13 elderly residents like myself at my age, and the fear
14 as a wheelchair-bound senior that this might one day
15 come to my development is overbearing. Something
16 must be done, and NYCHA must fix this voting issue,
17 as it should be 51 percent of the population of the
18 development that votes for these conversions, and
19 what is the trust. And so under this program here, I
20 don't see any good coming from it, Chairman, and you
21 have to do something, definitely have to do something
22 in the way of independent audit, and there must be
23 some resolution to CCOP, because we're not being
24 heard. For eight people to speak for all of us, as
25

1
2 we said before, is obnoxious, and at my age, I don't
3 have time to waste. Thank you very much.

4 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your
5 testimony, Ms. Elden, and good to see you again.
6 Thank you for your advocacy. Now we'll proceed to
7 Shamika Ruiz [sp?].

8 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

9 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Shamika Ruiz, you may
10 begin. Shamika Ruiz? Okay. We'll now be moving
11 onto Beverly MacFarlane.

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

13 BEVERLY MACFARLANE: Yes, good afternoon,
14 Chairman Banks.

15 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Good afternoon.

16 BEVERLY MACFARLANE: Thank you for this
17 meeting. I'm here to discuss the section 18. I wish
18 that you can stand with us resident leaders to
19 abolish the Trust. First of all, it was done against
20 the-- violating the 964 HUD regulations that states
21 that the active consent decree were not supposed to
22 be in place in order for NYCHA to start another
23 program. So, that in itself is a violation of the 964
24 HUD regulation. Section 18 is impacting the
25 demolishing. That's the demolishing of the

1 development. If that portion of-- in the RAD/PACT
2 and the Trust is taken out in just a [inaudible]
3 aspect, that will help residents not be displaced or
4 they're not having the ability-- the development--
5 developers along with NYCHA to demolish our property.
6 So, I ask you to stand when we ask you and your
7 colleagues to demolish the-- or to get rid of the
8 Trust because it was illegally asked-- passed in the
9 legislation when not knowing you got-- the elected
10 official did not understand or did not know the law,
11 the 964 laws in place. They have an active consent
12 decree that they have not satisfied with the mold
13 mediation. So I'm asking you guys to understand what
14 negative impact these conversions are making on our
15 lives and our family, and it is changing the fabric
16 of our community and impacting our lives. I thank
17 you. I yield.

18
19 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your
20 testimony, Ms. MacFarlane. Now, Louis Bertot.

21 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

22 LOUIS BERTOT: [inaudible] can you hear--
23 can you hear me?

24 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: We can hear you, sir.
25 You may proceed with your testimony.

1 LOUIS BERTOT: Thank you for allowing me.
2
3 I live among the Chelsea Houses, Manhattan, New York,
4 raised two families over a period of 50 years.
5 Because of state divorce laws I was forced to give up
6 my apartment without getting a chance to go into any
7 other residents of empty apartments here in Elliott-
8 Chelsea Houses. I wanted to co-lease at that moment
9 with my wife, and they-- they did not present any
10 alternative to me except go out the door [inaudible]
11 the bus. At that time, the city was reporting that
12 there were at least 6,000 empty apartments across the City
13 of New York. NYCHA was not created to create
14 homelessness. They're supposed to protect tenants.
15 They're supposed to help the elderly, especially.
16 I'm pretty sure that my age which now I just turned
17 79. This just happened last year. You have to find a
18 way to find what the vacancy rate which was already
19 said was unusual and find out what happened to the
20 people that left these apartments. Among them,
21 you'll find heads of households, women mostly who
22 have had to-- who have passed on and their families
23 have been left behind. You'll find also elderly
24 people who were taking care of children and
25 grandchildren, and they passed on and their families

1
2 have been left behind. And also, you will find of
3 course some residents who became [inaudible] because
4 they're not an American citizen, and they also have
5 been put out under the bus. So you guys got to find
6 this information and find the real number of how many
7 units are empty in the City of New York, because
8 nobody gave NYCHA the mission to create homelessness.
9 I thank you very much for your time. I will send
10 these remarks in writing to you with your permission,
11 and I hope that you can solve the problem of our
12 needs here. And right now I am homeless. I spent--

13 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Your
14 time's expired.

15 LOUIS BERTOT: Almost a year and a half--
16 can I get 30 seconds more?

17 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: You may have 30
18 seconds more to wrap it up.

19 LOUIS BERTOT: Thank you. So, just to
20 wrap up this up on a very bad note, I was assaulted
21 here in Elliott-Chelsea Houses when I moved from one
22 building to take refuge in another. I ended up going
23 to a city shelter for over a year. I was assaulted
24 there as well, and suffered an eye injury that I had
25 to have operation. This is the result of what NYCHA

2 has proposed on our people here in public housing. I
3 don't think I need to say anymore. Thank you very
4 much for your time, and I pray for you and Godspeed.
5 Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your
7 advocacy and thank you for your testimony. Lenora
8 Shoemaker?

9 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

10 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Leona, sorry. Leona
11 Shoemaker?

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

13 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Minevra Diaz [sp?]?

14 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

15 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Minerva Diaz [sp?]?
16 Michael Sentron [sp?]?

17 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

18 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Michael Sentron? And
19 last one is Erere [sp?], Erere?

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin. Is
21 there anybody else on to give testimony? That
22 concludes-- hold on one minute. Okay. Please
23 unmute-- can you state your name?

24 SADIE: Hello? Oh, can you hear me now?
25 Okay. Thank you for this platform. My name is

1 Sadie. I'm from Riis, and I'd like to, you know, let
2 you know how NYCHA has constantly kept violating our
3 964 regs which is like our Bill of Rights. So, to
4 name one is-- we had a hearing with you guys on
5 October 31st, and I mentioned about the red and green
6 dots [sic] with the data how they act as though they
7 wanted to pursue everything as if that's what we
8 wanted, which it wasn't. And there was a survey
9 which they took as a vote, and both times that they
10 had this, this town hall meeting with NYCHA, this was
11 the ID-- they ID'd us inside and outside on September
12 19th as well as this past February 13th, right? And
13 when we came to the hearing to speak to you,
14 Chairman, I mentioned about the red and green and how
15 they constantly saying that they try to provide us
16 with healthy homes, which is like them rebranding
17 their lies. They don't care about our quality of
18 life. We have constant dirty air, soil's
19 contaminated. Where I'm at they're about to close
20 Beth-Israel as of March 26th. So a lot of residents
21 who are sick don't even know they're sick, because
22 they constantly digging and doing things that we
23 don't even know the other unknown harms, right? So,
24 also, on top of that when you ask them for
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2 assistance-- I had mentioned to Simon last week on
3 the-- [inaudible] on February 13th about the intro
4 meeting for PACT, he couldn't answer my questions.
5 but Jonathan said that he's uncertain as to what is
6 the correct answer when I said in regards to do you
7 think the new secretary of HUD is going to fund us,
8 because they have a deficit of 80-- I think \$80
9 billion in repair, and he said he doesn't know. But
10 then Simon said no, no, no, no, no, that's wrong.
11 But there's never no any transparency. When you ask
12 for that assistance and for help to have them guide
13 you as to what's going on-- that's why he said it's
14 going to take five more sessions. And we're like
15 five sessions? Because he realized you have to re-
16 engage to disengage. Us tenants are not for this at
17 all. That's why we don't want any part of what's
18 taking place, and when we-- like I said, when you ask
19 them about how they going to fund Section 8 and
20 Section 9--

21 SERGEANT AT ARMS: [interposing] Time
22 expired. Thank you.

23 SADIE: the first thing that comes up is
24 demolishing.

25 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Ms. Sadie?

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SADIE: Can I--

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: [interposing] Sadie,
your time has expired.

SADIE: 30 seconds?

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: You can have 30
seconds to wrap it up if you would like.

SADIE: Okay. And then also, when you
ask them for your folder, they don't know where your
folder's at. If you ask them for a ticket, the
ticket is either non-existent, because like they
said, we're going to hold up the TA President
election because we want this PACT to go through, and
that's what was said to me on the 13th when I went to
the intro meeting for PACT, when we have elections
coming out of Riis. And tenant power, that's all I
can say. We have to get this done. Please, I
implore you, investigate them, audit them for the
uncollected fines as well as any other bribery. They
probably not going to tell you bribery going on. You
need to audit them because they have no numbers.
They keep giving you vague replies. Please look into
them, because they're not here for none of us at all.
At this point in time, it's like, you know,
premeditated murder, because they're not doing an

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2 environmental impact survey on any of this, but
3 they're getting paid and they can't even tell you if
4 you're going to still have a home after everything is
5 said and done. They give you estimates on how long
6 it's going to take for them to repair your home, and
7 they don't even-- aren't even certain if you're going
8 to be able to come back once that's done. Like they
9 did in Cabrini [inaudible] and [inaudible] in Liberty
10 Square. I want people to research and empower
11 themselves and educate themselves as to what they're
12 doing to us. Okay? Thank you. I appreciate it.

13 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Thank you for your
14 testimony, Sadie. Thank you. Please unmute and
15 state your name. [inaudible]

16 SABRINA DINGLE: Sabrina Dingle.

17 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: There we go. Unmute
18 and state your name.

19 SABRINA DINGLE: Sabrina Dingle.

20 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: You may begin your
21 testimony.

22 SABRINA DINGLE: I'm calling-- we already
23 know how the lack of repairs. I'm talking about the
24 asbestos that's in the floor, the mold that's inside
25 the walls. I have two sons. One has a traumatic

1
2 brain bleed from seizures at the age of 30. The
3 other one developed seizures November 13th at the age
4 of 34. Now, who do I hold accountable for? Do I hold
5 NYCHA or do I have to go to federal? Is it city or
6 fed? Because we're on federal ground, but it is city
7 building. Can you please advise me? No lawyer is
8 trying to pick me up because city can't sue city.
9 So, please advise me.

10 CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Ms. Dingle, we will
11 be in touch with you. We'll reach out to you. We'll
12 now move on to Lisa Hall.

13 SERGEANT AT ARMS: You may begin.

14 LISA HALL: Thank you. My name is Lisa
15 Hall. I reside in the Boston Secor Houses located in
16 the Bronx, New York, and I would like to discuss the
17 operations of the RAD/PACT program and how it has
18 evolved from its stated intentions. There are plenty
19 of feel good marketing campaigns promoting the
20 RAD/PACT program, but the actual results do not meet
21 the expectations or promises made. and what I'm
22 referring to is when Wave Crest Management and the
23 PACT program came to the Boston Secor Houses during
24 the summer cut-over period, NYCHA did not complete
25 its transition from public to private management,

1 including the transfer and validation of the rent
2 roll, tenant records, and invalid rent payment
3 systems that left the tenants between being a public
4 and private hybrid status. At the same time, HUD in
5 Washington, D.C., their Special Application Center--
6 and I was talking to someone between Chicago and
7 Washington, D.C. They determined that our
8 development application was not submitted until
9 September of 2024, making October of 2024 an
10 unrealistic target date to start the conversion as
11 confirmed by NYCHA. So, they were already going
12 forward with an illegality. So the RAD/PACT program
13 is marketed as a renovation and upgrade to the
14 apartments. However, the program is really a real
15 estate arrangement. The lease is a problem also
16 because a 50-page documents with addendums and riders
17 can be overwhelming and difficult to understand,
18 especially for tenants who may not have legal or real
19 estate experience, and they're also discouraged from
20 reading the lease before they sign it. It can lead
21 to confusion and cause tenants to miss important
22 clauses, leading to unexplained arears like I have
23 and the process of eviction which already got started
24 with me. So, the tenants who sign a Section 8 lease
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COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING

CHAIRPERSON BANKS: Last call for virtual testimonies. Alright. So guys, we thank everyone for coming out today. Seeing none, any requests to give anymore testimony, we will now be closing this hearing. We obviously thank everyone again for coming out and being a part of this hearing as we continue our pursuit to hold NYCHA accountable and to bring about transparency. This meeting is adjourned.

[gavel]

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COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING

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COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING

C E R T I F I C A T E

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



Date March 12, 2025