

Community Advisory Committee Meeting April 2023

On Tuesday, April 4, 2023, the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) Federal Monitor, Bart M. Schwartz, and the monitoring team's Resident Engagement Team Leader, Asha Muldro, hosted a hybrid meeting of the Community Advisory Committee (CAC). The meeting was live streamed on the NYCHA Monitor **YouTube channel**. (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M5v5w4JYW8k&t=1s>)

In his opening remarks, Mr. Schwartz brought up the critical issues related to the Emergency Rent Assistance Program (ERAP) and the state of operational funds. As a result, he issued a public statement about his concerns on March 28, 2023, urging elected officials to allocate money in the budget for public housing.

NYCHA Deputy Monitor, Dan Brownell, provided highlights of a New York City Department of Investigation report recently issued on fires caused by electric bicycles. He also gave an update on the monitoring team's efforts reviewing Maximo for broken garbage chute doors, which attribute to fires when garbage and debris get stuck in the chutes.

Ms. Muldro opened the meeting to CAC members for their updates and solutions related to systemic issues at NYCHA.

- New York Police Department Captain Ronald Cheng talked about potential initiatives to try to enhance safety and security. He also announced the NYPD's recruiting initiative for NYCHA youth residents to participate in NYPD training. He also requested help from NYCHA to set-up a better communication method for residents to receive timely and important announcements and warnings from NYPD.

- NYCHA representatives participating in the meeting were happy to share these important updates and will continue the conversation with the NYPD.
- Director, Contract Oversight and Evaluation for the New York City Department for the Aging, Steven Wilkinson, also offered to help with disseminating information.
- Citywide Council of Presidents Inc., Treasurer, Lilithe Lozano, brought up the issue residents are experiencing with stolen packages since carriers do not have access to entrance doors and will leave packages outside buildings. Suggestions from CAC members to rectify this situation included using an app to better notify residents of delivered packages; placing package lockers outside buildings; and urging residents to leave specific package drop-off instructions for the carriers when placing orders.
- Council Member, District 38 and New York City Committee on Public Housing Chair, Alexa Avilés, provided an update on a recent hearing related to the numerous apartment vacancies at NYCHA. She also announced that there will be an air quality hearing as well as an upcoming hearing related to Section 3.
- NYCHA's Vice President for Public Safety and Security, Chief James Secreto, provided the following updates.
 - NYCHA is having difficulty vacating squatters out of apartments after tenants' pass away. His team is working closely with the NYPD to rectify this situation. Councilwomen Avilés offered her team's help with exploring solutions and digging deeper to better understand the issues. Mr. Schwartz also offered the monitoring team's assistance. Queens Resident Association President Representative, Manny Martinez, suggested involving the district attorneys across the boroughs to help enforce the rules and regulations related to trespassing.
 - To help combat NYCHA's homeless issue, each week Chief Secreto and his team spend time walking specific buildings checking for the homeless and offering them services for mental illness or other treatments. If they decline the services, they must leave the premises.
 - Chief Secreto reviewed a report related to the number of damaged doors NYCHA has had to replace and concluded that in some incidents the door damage was not complicated and NYCHA's maintenance workers were qualified to fix the damage as opposed to waiting for a vendor to manage. He brought his idea to NYCHA management.
- Fire Department of the City of New York Battalion Chief, Michael Thomson, announced that the training video for accessing NYCHA's doors is completed. He also credited Williams Plaza Resident Association President, Joel Gross, for showing him an inexpensive mechanism the Williams Plaza development installed that allows the NYFD easy access. Chief Thomson encouraged NYCHA to consider installing the mechanism in more developments.

- Wilkinson provided further updates about the Older Adult Centers Cabinet, which was created to work on several different projects, including an idea spun from a NYCHA Roundtable in which five youth residents will be paired with five older adults within the community to get to know each other. He is also working with the New York City Department of Transportation to review data depicting areas where seniors have accidents.
- Deputy General Counsel from the New York City Office of Housing Recovery Operations, Mehrnoosh Torbatnejad, requested CAC members to test the new and enhanced version of the Capital Tracker which is scheduled to launch in May.
- NYCHA Community Coordinator, Samantha Rogers mentioned that NYCHA is working with the mayor's office to install electric bike stations in more developments by the end of the year.

Mr. Schwartz and Ms. Muldro concluded the meeting by thanking everyone for their ideas and reminded attendees of the upcoming Community Meeting for Brooklyn residents on Tuesday, May 9, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom, as well as the next CAC Meeting scheduled for Tuesday, June 13, 2023, at 6:00 p.m.