



Public Meeting 6/9/21 NYC Racial Justice Commission

Appearances:

- Jennifer Jones Austin, Chair
- Henry Garrido, Vice Chair
- Ana Bermudez, Esq
- Lurie Daniel Favors, Esq.
- Darrick Hamilton
- Chris Kui
- Jo-Ann Yoo
- Anusha Venkataraman
- Steph Halpin
- Tashawn Morgan
- Jacqueline Kennedy
- Jimmy Pan
- Alexis Blane
- Phil Thompson
- K. Bain
- Yesenia Mata
- Kapil Longani
- Darrick Hamilton

Ana Bermudez, Esq (AB) 00:00

So that whatever synergies we can create, we can create --

Jennifer Jones Austin (JJA) 00:06

Thank you. I personally am not aware of it so, thanks for giving me this, you know, just kind of the one liner on it. I will follow up directly with Steve. And so it's a Chartered Commission?

Alexis Blane (AB) 00:22

No.

JJA 00:24

It's, who was and who pulled it into bringing, was it the State, the City?

AB 00:28

I'm sorry?

JJA 00:29

Is it a Commission under the Charter? Or well –

AB 00:32

No, I don't think it's under the Charter. It was created by local law. I can send to you the law separately but you know, and it identifies like who the members need to be and you know, there's some very specific -- some, more like appointed -- there are people appointed by the Mayor, people appointed by the City Council, by the Speaker of the Council --

JJA 01:00

Okay, we'll look into that

AB 01:01

yeah.

JJA 01:03

Thank you, so let's see -- just looking at the screen, I just want to make sure that I have on record -- I see Vice Chair Henry Garrido, I see Commission member Chris Kui, I see Commission member Lurie Daniel Favors, Commission member, Ana Bermudez -- let's see, Commission member Yoo, Commission member Hamilton, Commission member Thompson. So if I'm on point, then at this point, we do not have with us we do have a for but I don't yet see Commission members Mateo -- let's see, Mateo Davies and Kevin, but we do have forum to begin, so let's get to it because we've got a full agenda. Let me first say good afternoon, and good to see all of you. Ana, everything. Okay?

AB 02:06

Yeah, no, I'm just looking at the attendees, and K. is on, in that apparently as an attendee and not as us –

JJA 02:15

Okay, got it.

Anusha Venkataraman (AV) 02:16

We will move him over. Hi everyone, as you can see, this is our first meeting on Zoom, which is great -- easier for everyone to join and for the general public in terms of accessibility. But we do need to manually move people over to the webinar feature, so thank you for that.

JJA 02:34

Good, thanks for calling that out, and good to see you Commissioner Bain, glad everyone is with us for what is this, our third or our fourth meeting. I'm having a hard time remembering at this point. I want you all to notice our fourth, we have in addition to the public, we have more staff who are on this Zoom with us, and in just a few minutes, Executive Director, Ben Cotterman, will introduce you to the staff members that have joined us, but I want you to know that although it's been a few weeks since we last met, no grass has grown under our Executive Director's feet nor those of the staff that she has on board with the Commission now. A lot of great work has been happening, a lot of planning activities underway and we're going to spend a great part of our

conversation today talking about that--talking about the work that's underway. The overall aim of this meeting is to center on the work of the Commission for the next several months -- Mainly the active outreach and engagement with the public with experts -- be they persons with lived experience, persons who have been on the front lines fighting for justice, whether it be in social services or as advocates and community activists. We'll also be talking to persons from academia, just trying as best we can to hear as much as we can about the experiences that now need to be addressed through structural changes. We're going to talk this afternoon about structural changes, just to make sure that we're level setting and everybody's clear about what structural racism looks like when we look at the Charter and how we have to go in and unpack this work and what, you know, potential ballot proposals may look like, so we're going to spend the bulk of our time talking about structural change and how we need to be thinking about it -- Level setting, especially as we go into our meetings with the public, with stakeholders, you know, leaders, persons with lived experience, and others, to make sure that we are hearing what they say and then translating it in a way that allows us to bring about change, identify what change is needed in the Charter, and then move forward accordingly. The last few meetings we have have helped to build the foundation -- we spent some time as you all know, getting to know one another, affirming our mission and vision, adopting a framework through which to approach and focus on the work, and learning about the Charter itself. Some really good work has been underway and Executive Director and Kochman and her staff have been doing a lot of work to take us to the next level now, where we're able to engage with the public to hear their experiences. And then to, as I just said a second ago , process them by looking at the Charter and looking at the opportunities for structural change before we get started, I'm going to turn things over to Executive Director, Ben Kochman, in a minute, but I just want to highlight for you something that appears later on the agenda but I want to bring it to your attention right now, just that you keep it on your radar -- Our first public engagement meeting, public engagement, we've been having public meetings but public engagement meaning where we will be hearing from the public will be next Friday, June 18th. It is a day that across the nation is being recognized as an observing state or Juneteenth and we're seeking to do the same -- we want to begin our public engagement dialogue with persons who've been leading here in New York City and around the nation on issues of systemic racism and social justice, and we want to hear from people who have taken up residence here in New York City and have been leading the charge here in New York City, but also engaging across the country. So we've lined up five persons thus far who are scheduled to speak to the Commission. We'll have a dialogue with them -- They are Hazel Dukes, whose name is probably familiar to many people. She is the President of New York State NAACP and serves on the board of the NAACP, the national body, and has been a leader in the fight, in the struggle -- -- You'll kill me if I said how many years, so I'm not going to do that -- I'm just not going to do that. Another person from whom we'll hear is Reverend John L. Scott, who was a leader in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and specifically its Operation Bread Basket Economic Justice arm here in New York City -- He's a pastor in Harlem and he will join us. We'll hear from Una Clarke, who has been a Representative, a City Council member -- Her daughter is now a member of Congress. But Una Clarke has done a great deal here in New York City. Centering on the experience of African-Americans and Afro-Caribbean Americans, she'll be joining us. We'll also be hearing from Morris Reed, who was a community activist and organizer in the Brownsville Community for many years, and he'll be joining us. And then lastly, the fifth person who we have secured to speak to us is Reverend Herbert Daughtry, another leader for many years in the movement as national acclaim for leading on justice issues, is considered to be the people, the community's Pastor, and he'll be speaking to us as well. If there are other persons who you feel

should be added to the conversation, please let us know and we'll bring them in -- We want to have an opportunity to sit at their feet and to hear from them and learn from them and let their journeys and their, the struggles they've known and the struggles as they still see them, inform us as a Commission. And so I'm pleased to report that they all readily accepted the invitation to join us and are looking forward to being with us next Friday, June 18th, from 2:30 to 4:00 P.M. And so just be on the lookout for additional information concerning that gathering. We're just, I'm humbled to know that they recognize that this is a significant opportunity that the Racial Justice Commission, is a significant opportunity to inform systems and government functioning here in New York City and to make it more of what it should be, and that when asked, they immediately responded affirmatively, saying that they would be a part, and so just put that on your calendar and please, I know you're busy but if you can make an effort to attend, that would be great. I'm going to now just turn the meeting over to Executive Director of Venkataraman and again, I can't say enough about the hard work that they've been doing. It's been a few weeks since we've come together, but it's certainly not because there was nothing to do or nothing to talk about -- they've just been laying the sound work, doing the groundwork to put us in position to be ready to run, and we're ready to run, so turning over to you.

AV 10:28

Absolutely, thank you so much Jennifer, and thank you for sharing the exciting details on the event next Friday -- we'll be sure to share information with all of you so that you can share with your networks, your communities as well, as it is a Commission meeting as well as a public event for all to learn from. As Jennifer mentioned, we've really, I'm gonna send this file to you -- Oh you cannot see this well -- focused the past months since you last saw us in a meeting on building up this infrastructure and plans that will enable us to move as quickly as possible over the next few months. Most importantly, people to do the work behind the scenes so I wanted to announce that we have brought on a few key people that you will meet during this meeting and some folks who are there behind the scenes, taking notes and whatnot. So first, I want to introduce Jacqueline Kennedy, who will be our Director of Public Engagement. Jackie, if you want to say hi briefly.

Jacqueline Kennedy (JK) 11:28

Yeah, hello everyone. Very grateful to have this opportunity to work with you all, happy to be here.

AV 11:35

Wonderful, and we've also brought on Jimmy Pan, who's our Director of Policy -- Jimmy.

Jimmy Pan (JP) 11:41

Hey y'all, I'm really honored to be supporting you all in this extremely important work and look forward to getting to know you.

AV 11:49

Great, thank you. And there's some other folks that are not in the webinar view, but we have Sam Stanton, who's joined us as a Policy Advisor, Aaron Barry as Deputy General Counsel, and Bianca Isaias, who is our Associate General Counsel -- So exciting to now have a team of 10 people who are dedicating a good portion or all of their time towards this effort. We're also supported by partners at agencies who have started coordinating with us and I'll get into that a little bit further

down -- First, I want to highlight a few things that we had shared via email with you -- first off, you know, very exciting communications announcements -- we have a new website for the Racial Justice Commission. If you remember previously, we had been using the existing Charter Revision Commission website, we now have our own landing page at nyc.gov/racialjustice, and we're also now on social media -- We're on Instagram and Facebook at [racialjusticenyc](https://www.instagram.com/racialjusticenyc) and on Twitter at Racial Justice New York or NY, I should say. We will make sure to share those out towards the end on screen so members of the public can join and follow. We want all of you to know where to send members of the public and your community members who are interested in following our work. Social media and the website are now a great place to go and so reach out if you need any additional information, but we will be posting continuous updates in those locations. Next, I wanted to highlight some follow-up from our last meeting, which was on May 3rd -- there were questions about communications, how you as Commissioners can engage publicly both over channels such as social media what to do if folks reach out to you and want to know more about the Commission or want to engage with the Commission and went in some way, and also how you can avoid any potential conflicts of interest as our General Counsel outlined at our last meeting as well. So we have distributed that communications FAQ to you -- huge thanks to Melanie, our General Counsel, and Steph, our Communications Director, for working hard to put that together for you -- Please, do reach out if anything in there is not clear, if you have additional questions, need additional guidance -- we're here for you, Melanie is here for you, so I just want to encourage everyone to reach out if anything is not clear or if anything is missing. We also since the last meeting have sent to you some answers to some of your questions that came up at the last meeting. As you know, the last meeting really focused on the City Charter and orientations to the City Charter led by our Senior Advisor, Kapil Longani, and his staff -- There were questions around how effective some of the changes that were made as a result of the 2018 Commission were, particularly those changes regarding Community Board appointments, so there was some analysis and assessment of that effectiveness that we sent to you -- please do let us know if you have questions about any of that, but we won't be discussing it in any detail here. Lastly, I want to come back to our many forms of engagement -- City agencies have been started to be engaged and informed about the process of the Racial Justice Commission, specifically, we have formed an interagency group that we can lean on -- both to update them on the work of the Commission and how they can support spreading the word about the Commission's work and ultimately engaging the public -- but also, where we can put in requests for support, for data, for assistance with our policy research. That group has kicked off and is under way, which is very exciting to have that sort of support behind the scenes. Lastly, public engagement -- Oh sorry, one thing I missed on city agency engagement -- as part of our city agency engagement strategy, we've also been coordinating with the city's task force on racial inclusion equity -- Jennifer and I gave a presentation to that group who will be forming committees and subcommittees to develop recommendations and submit those to the Commission for consideration later this summer. And then lastly, stakeholder and public engagement -- I won't dwell on here but we've been busy at work putting plans together and you'll hear more about those later in this meeting. Before I move on to the next slide, I want to note that we did also send the minutes from the last meeting to you and they're also available publicly for folks on our website at nyc.gov/racialjustice in the past meetings tab for members of the public to review. Jennifer, could you have folks motion to approve the minutes?

JJA 17:21

I have a motion. Okay give me a second.

Phil Thompson (PT) 17:28

Second.

JJA 17:29

Thank you, Phil. All in favor?

ALL 17:32

Aye Aye.

JJA 17:34

Any opposed? We're good.

AV 17:38

Wonderful, thank you. So diving in today's meeting -- you can go to the next slide -- We wanted to be clear and transparent with you about what we would like you to get out of this meeting and what we as a group would like to accomplish through the agenda. First off, we will spend time diving into what we mean by structural change and through that, we would like everyone to walk away with a shared understanding of what we mean when we talk about structural change. I think this is particularly important as we are entering public engagement, for everyone to be on the same page clear on understanding and clear on how we can communicate outwardly with the public. Second, we want to prepare you to engage substantively with stakeholders and with experts of all backgrounds. We want you to know what our plans are and be ready to be a part of those conversations. And lastly, we would like you to walk away with a clear sense of what our overall public engagement strategy is -- I say overall because there are certainly many details that we want to be informed by the early phases of community and public engagement, and we want you to have a clear sense of what your role is in that process so at this point in time, we're ready for our first substantive agenda item which is about structural change, and I'll hand it back to our Chair to introduce this section.

JJA 19:19

Thank you, thank you so much. So we were commissioned, established as a Commission to address structural changes in the Charter -- the Charter as we've talked about before essentially, is the law of the land of New York City. It can be equated to the United States Constitution. Over the course of the first several meetings, as we've talked about our work from time to time, we've talked about specific issues that are of concern to any one of us or several of us. They may center on procurement practices, center on access to capital you know how the government works -- with respect to the doling out of contracts, power structures, whatever it may be, some of these issues are structural and some of them sometimes are policy specific, agency specific, or institution specific. What we want to do here before we begin engaging with the public is essentially level set about structural change itself and the greatest example that I can provide that always helps me to center is that the structure is like the laws that you know, birth or prop up whatever systems we then create -- institutions, government bodies -- then enact regulations, policies, some of them have laws pertaining specifically to the institutions, but they are essentially pursuant to what the structural laws allow for or do not allow for -- The best example that I always think of is if you think about the United States Constitution that did not explicitly use the word "slave," but referred to you know, persons of African descent you know, allow for them to be

considered three-fifths of a person for you know, when it came to voting and census taking, essentially by establishing that and allowing that and there are other provisions in the Constitution -- it allowed for slavery to be propped up and to persist. And then in the years since, we've seen how our society has built up systems, governments, agencies, programming, that have carried that through. What we need to do is center on as a body, how our Charter has these laws, these ways of you know, like you know -- setting values, establishing values and beliefs that we then abide by through systems, through the propping up of agencies and the promulgation of policies and regulations, so we may or may not be addressing a specific policy issue with a ballot proposal, but what we will be doing is addressing the structural law that allows that policy to be propped up -- let me pause there just to make sure have I -- Are you with me, are there any questions about that --

K. Bain (KB) 22:38

I'd rather like and -- go ahead -- I'm seeing a hand up, let me respect our system of communication.

JJA 22:43

Henry and then K.

Henry Garrido (HG) 22:46

Yeah Madam Chair, I think that I used the example of procurement as a very good implication of it -- If anybody's familiar with the procurement process under the Charter, it is pages after pages after pages and layers of things that have been you know, riddled with, you know, legal challenges and implementations and pre-qualifications and things of that nature, and I think that a lot of that leads to complication and things, so I totally agree. I think to the extent that we can keep things separated where you know the Charter revision remains the overarching goal and the reaffirmational values of the mission, and I think this is what words are really really important.

JJA 22:41

Absolutely,

HG 22:43

Where the worst child for instance, as opposed to shooter or could,

JJA 23:49

That's right.

HG 23:50

have a profound effect on the on the policy itself

JJA 23:54

That's exactly right, thank you -- I really appreciate your sharing and I think procurement is a really great example because each and every agency within city government has its own procurement rules it has to abide by, the procedure they have to abide by, the rules of the procurement policy board, but they may make they may you know, extend to the community, request for proposals that you know, that favor certain communities over other or that may make it easier for certain institutions to compete for contracts with the city over others. An example would be where maybe

an RFP for services for elderly supports or for child welfare may be written in such a way that you know if you don't look at, you don't look at it closely, it disadvantages small community-based organizations that are communities of, that are agencies of color, from competing. We want to control against that right, we've heard about procurement within the Controller's office. In the Controller's office, you know asset management may with certain criteria, keep certain organizations and individuals from competing because they don't have a certain amount of assets under management already. If we were to try to go agency by agency by agency, we would miss several agencies and to Henry's point -- look at the Charter and figure out what is the language that should be in the Charter that controls against any and all like instances of different treatment, disparate outcome, disparate impact, that may be race or race-based or racial in nature. So that's a great example. K. Bain, are you still with us? While I'm waiting for him to come back on, I see that -- Oh, he's with us --

KB 26:04

No, I'm gonna yield to my sister, I see my sister's hand raised in the interest of time, but great points are being made and I don't want to duplicate the energy. Thank you.

JJA 26:12

Okay. Thank you, Commissioner Daniel Favors.

Lurie Daniel Favors, Esq. (LDF) 26:17

Thank you for that. Both to the previous comment that was made and to Commissioner Bain. My question in response to the example that you gave Madam Chair, is an example of slavery. For example, in the Constitution, without an eye towards history or any real insight as to what the slave institution was, how it operated, how it functioned, one could read the constitution forwards, backwards, up and down, diagonal, and not necessarily understand how its wording was also used to support this egregious institution. My question is if we don't necessarily bring that same historical understanding to our interpretation and reading of the City Charter, what tools are or better said, if we are all approaching the city Charter with a different understanding or historical frame, what tools are we using to help us solidify, how we are evaluating the Charter, so that even if you did not necessarily have that previous knowledge that would be required to effectively and accurately interpret the Constitution, to ensure that we are all using a similar approach or set of tools to approach or to examine how we're looking at the City Charter.

JJA 27:38

So that is an excellent question and a critical, both a critical question and concern. It's a concern that I have shared since this Commission was even brought into consideration, not even once it was actually put into play but even before -- and so what we are doing in part is relying upon Commission members who can help us to you know, look at the issues that are raised and with a critical eye for how we need to look at how that plays out in the Charter itself. We have attorneys on board who are there to help us do that as well and that was part of the interviewing process you know, how do they look at this Charter and how do they understand historical, structural, and historical racism, and how it gets embedded in law. We have the Mayor's council who has presented to us before that has experience with both the Charter, extensive experience with the Charter, but also in addressing racism in structures and systems in South Africa. And so we're bringing people together because we know that to your point we could miss it, but we're trying to understand it as best that we can and we know that there's some of us on this Commission like

yourself that have historical knowledge as well as legal knowledge, that are able to look at you know, the language and to unpack it in a way that others may not. Same with policy, and so it's going to be this effort where we're going to toss this around. We have people on the team with policy experience who are going to help us do this as well. I don't have a real clean way of doing it, other than it's like, it's gonna be messy, and a lot of us bringing our knowledge and expertise to it -- the challenge is that we're operating with a very finite period of time and so we're gonna try to pull on the muscles and the knowledge of varied persons and have a checks and balances system going.

LDF 29:44

Thank you,

JJA 29:44

Really appreciate that question. And we're going to be leaning on you, just to keep helping us to you know, keep the perspective and that kind of long view, historical and forward thinking. On the slide that is before you, you'll see that it's been titled "Equity." Inequity made manifest and one of the things that we just wanted to put this slide up to give a very, just very basic visual for you know, how these laws, these inequity, these laws and practices, policies, and what have you, come in to be. You know, we know that first and foremost they're centered on foundational values and beliefs about you know, who should have who should not, who is entitled, who is not, who is worthy, who is not, who adds value, who doesn't, and then society allows -- it's you know, like creates these structures, laws and you know, that that essentially validate these values and beliefs and put them into play and then institutions and policies are propped up to carry them out, that being the case. One of our questions and concerns, and we're going to spend a little time on this, is whether we should have in the Charter itself, a preamble that centers on what should be shared values and beliefs about you know, our society, our New York City society and our government and what our government should provide for said differently you know, do we believe that all are entitled to basic economic rights -- Now I love that term Darrick, but is everybody entitled to basic economic rights, basic human rights, and what are they -- should they be spelled out in the Charter to then ensure that the laws of the Charter serve to you know, to enable and to make manifest those basic rights. Presently the Charter does not speak to you know, a value base other than the way it actually plays out, so we've seen in other government structures -- an example again would be South Africa, and inform, the create the new laws of that land and so one thought that we have that, we'll talk about as a Commission is whether or not you know one of the ballot proposals we put forward should set a preamble, a statement of values and beliefs that speak to how New York and New York government should support values and beliefs that attend to everybody who resides here in this city. I'm going to pause and ask Executive Director Ben Kochman -- is there anything more to be added here? Lurie, please. I'm sorry,

LDF 32:54

This may be answered by what Executive Director is going to say, so I'll defer until after she's responded and it may already be answered then.

AV 33:04

Thank you to you both. What I was going to do at this point is move us into a discussion about foundational values and what are those foundational values that would build on our vision that we want to make sure are clear in the Charter, including but not limited to the rights that New Yorkers

should be entitled to, the aspects of life the government needs to preserve and protect, and more broadly, what responsibility government has towards people -- and it's you know, not written on the slide, but what, in which way should the Charter reflect those values -- I think we've heard some examples here today where intention and words and then what ultimately happens don't always match up, so is there value in there being a clear statement of values that is a part of the City Charter as discussion for this group? Lurie, I'm not sure if I covered what you were gonna ask about --

LDF 34:12

No, although I'm really excited about the conversation we're about to have. My question would be then, is are we seeking to state whether or not and maybe this will be informed by the conversation whether or not we are providing what the preamble language would be for New Yorkers to vote upon, or are we going to pose to the voters that we should have a preamble or raise a question for the voters, should

we have a preamble and then explain what a preamble is with the understanding that if you didn't go to law school and actually pay attention to common law, you may not remember why we have preamble, what they're supposed to do, so my guess is really a question about the process -- would we be asking on a referenda question should we have a preamble or would we be posing preamble language and asking for a vote on that instead?

JJA 35:01

Very good question, my immediate reaction and response is that we should propose a preamble if we believe that that is what is value add, that we should have that and that we can begin to think about that. And then given what the public shares with us it can be you know, further developed, honed and then it would itself become a ballot proposal.

HG 35:38

Madam Chair, I think I not only agree with you, I think it's also a fundamental question about what this

Commission is about, which is about what we are about and not about what we're not about, but I mean I think if we should have as explicitly and as overtly say, this is what we mean, this is what we're saying right -- and so to the -- it can be tricky right, because which you know as I said before, can have power but in this case I think it's amazing -- it was amazing to me that as long a history as we have in in New York that we don't have a preamble that basically establishes the very principle which by which we're governed right? That to me was just amazing to hear. I also think that in our case, the subject that we're covering is so broad that we could get into the weeds and undoubtedly, I think we have to accept that this is not a perfect process and that at some point we're going to miss something right -- you know I am accepting that but I think if you articulate your you know, the preamble in a way that basically says this is what we are about even if it doesn't encapsulate everything, every procedure or even if there's a misinterpretation on the application of a principle rather than on the principle itself, I think we're better off doing that and you know I use the word "procurement" before because there's been you know, or the idea of procurement before because there have been many Charter revisions that well intention has put out information about how to get more access to minority-owned businesses, to have access to contracts, and how to improve or you know, the bureaucratic process to allow a more equitable

distribution. And for every effort that I've ever seen, every major effort that has been fought through there has been a little bit of a you know, of a counter move so to speak. As you mentioned, where an agency would say well, this is just making a little conversation right, and then so what happens is you get a little memorandum of agreement or some sort of pre-qualified concept, or some sort of here's the minimum standards that you need to do to qualify -- that invalidates all the principles of what you wanted to pursue in the first place. So I think that I'm 100% in favor of getting a principal and preamble and then everything that follows in between be not perfect that follows that principle

JJA 38:35

Thank you, thank you Commission member.

Yesenia Mata (YM) 38:42

Yeah I wanna follow up with what Henry just mentioned about the preamble, I know it was mentioned earlier how institutions are used to carry on the values right, and I think it me, like I work in a small non-profit, a CBO and I partner up with various other nonprofits and I think one of the things like that really showed like during the pandemic was how very small CBO who had limited funding still kept pushing forward or being, were out there risking their lives every day to ensure that they could continue providing to their community, and a mission that kept us going that, and I guess I'm just stepping back and analyzing why a preamble will be very important because the mission that kept us going was that we are a city of opportunities, the city that never shuts down, a city that always keeps going -- and when people would ask me well, why do you still keep that center open, why do you still cater to the Latino community, to the immigrant community, to the Black community at a time like this -- I say because the city of New York is one of those strongest diverse beautiful colorful cities, but I really didn't have something that could articulate and to show that this is what New York City is about. I would always then just go to Statue of Liberty and say look, the Statue of Liberty states the freedom, the beauty, the -- we're all welcome here, so I think just stepping back as someone who works in the CBO and it's currently on the ground, working with the community, this will help us justify the importance of small CBOs, the importance of the work that we do and that we would step in as elected officials and take on that role, so I think I could see how preamble would be very important in this aspect.

JJA 40:32

I really really appreciate that feedback. Yeah, and these are the questions that are constantly surfacing like what is the value add of the individual versus the collective, what is the value out of the small community based organizations versus the law versus the larger large umbrella and if we don't speak to these, the value of community, every community, every individual and community having worth -- we you know, questions around whether we believe in the quality, that everybody should be have quality education, quality health care, regardless of zip code -- things of that nature, we need to think about whether or not we're naming that in the Charter, in the preamble, because that's going to then guide how you know, not just any structural changes we make, but what may follow in the years to come -- is you know, is determined and so just in talking again with you know, this has been done in other places we don't have -- it's a, it would be in my opinion, my estimation, a very important place to begin and would set the tone for our work and set the tone for New York City. Are there other thoughts?

PT 41:57

Well,

YM 41:58
Go ahead.

PT 41:59

Well I strongly supported and I think in the case of the United States, having you know the language in the Constitution that talked about "justice for all," was very important in enabling you know, opponents of slavery and advocates of voting rights for people of color and women to say you know, the Constitution said "for all" and I think having something at the city level that even if we. the Commission, don't address everything but it lays the groundwork for people to say look, this policy is in contradiction to our city's Constitution, our city's Charter is itself a powerful tool and one of the things it immediately draws me to --is you know, when you say every community should be included, should every community have the right to vote -- we have a lot of people who work and pay taxes in this city but because of their immigration status, can't vote even in elections that the city controls and to me, it just like provides a framework for us to begin to engage these issues, so I think it's very powerful.

JJA 43:25

Right, I really appreciate this and the it also lets everybody know with whom we're engaging you know -- how we're thinking about these issues.

PT 43:35

Yeah

JJA 43:36

Yeah, how large is the umbrella.

PT 43:40

Yes.

JJA 43:42

Are there -- this is very very helpful. So far what I'm hearing is that we all are in favor of building out a preamble to inform and guide our work and to actually also be a potential ballot proposal that we would bring forward to the voting body on the whole. I see a Commission member Yoo and Commission member Bain with their hands up -- if you don't mind, Commission member Yoo, I'm going to go to Commission member Bain because he keeps deferring to others, and so I want to hear from him.

KB 44:20

Thank you, thank you so much. I'll try to be brief -- so when we work in some of the most challenging neighborhoods in New York City to interrupt violence, to do community mediation work, violence interruption, work conflict resolution, challenging work, one of the first things we do to level set with those interrupters or credible messenger on the ground is we establish a code quote-on-quote -- it's like the preamble but in it, there'll be ten or so points and those points protect

all of us that do the work and those of us in the community, so when someone steps outside of there's a behavior that is not reflective of the mission and vision of the unit that is in this area working in a very stressful situation, we can say up please don't look at us with your eyes turned down because that person or person stepped outside of the code, and we can present this to you. The community always knows for example, one of the first things we say is we're here to protect all human life -- elders, seniors, children -- so these 10 points in the code create and the process. Last thing I'll say, to building the code in different organizations is a beautiful process because you start with looking at what principles and values do those involved and invested hold in highest regard and from that you start to say so how do, what does that look like in practice, and those elements start to spawn out and it's just a beautiful process to create it and we've done it ourselves but also in organizations who do similar work. So when you say preamble, that's what triggers me -- it makes me think about the code that we build --

JJA 45:46

Very much aligned and just the word "code" itself really brings to life what we're talking about here. It's a guide post but it also kind of, it's a standard setter and helps us as Commission members. Thompson was talking about to identify when we are not abiding by it and stepping away from it and maybe can bring about greater accountability. Commission member Yoo.

Jo-Ann Yoo (JY) 46:20

You know, everybody has said it so eloquently but I also want to lend my voice that I think you know having a preamble is really critical because you know for sure we're not going to be able to address every you know, inequality that you know, that we need to get to you know, the clocks are ticking but I think what a preamble does is really be able to frame out how we're going to look at every situation right -- it is the lens to which we're going to be able to define us, our values as a city, and so I really do love that idea and I think it is a code of conduct but it's also recognition of the fact that you know, we need to you know, we need to understand and understand the inequalities that exist in the city and how we aim to address it by giving some very set standards and ideas and principles that we are gonna, this is how we're gonna start to measure ourselves as a city and as a government.

JJA 47:22

This is great, good deal. I think that we are of one mind, of one accord. Commissioner Mata, do you have another point that you'd like to raise?

YM 47:33

Yeah I think also what I agree with Deputy Mayor Thompson, I currently, when you know, we look at our Constitution as our guidance whenever there is discrimination against any community. we always look back at the Constitution. I think with this preamble, it sets that precedent for us if there's an issue, a policy that we want to move forward and push, we could use this preamble like we use the Constitution to pass something I think, with what Deputy Mayor Thompson mentioned right now, with a, not everyone here has the right to vote in the city of New York despite all the work that they have done right -- I think like the immigrant community was so essential during the pandemic and I was just thinking of them, how many of them don't have the right to vote here in municipal elections and despite the fact that there's a legislation that's currently being pushed to pass which is our city, our vote, our role, our city, and there's really nothing that we can look back at and say like, it says it right here, that this is the city of New York, that we should push for this

ownership pass for this, that we should pass this and I think this is begin setting the precedent for activists that we are, for us to be able to push forward policies and it's good to have something, something to look back at and say like no, this is what New York City represents.

JJA 48:59

Absolutely, I agree.

AV 49:04

At this point I know we're having such a rich conversation that I hesitate to move us on --

JJA 49:13

I think we have a really good, I think we have agreement here and we can begin the work of you know, building this out and coming back to the body with some language to which to react. If you have let me just quickly say that if you have thoughts about what should be included in the preamble, Commission Bain, Commission member Bain, I'd love to see your code just you know, to give us some, a baseline, but if you have thoughts and ideas please share them with Executive Director Ben Cotterman and we'll be on our way.

AV 49:49

Absolutely, and we can also share back with everyone else what you sent to us and also the research that our team and Kapil's team has pulled together so that you can work with us to draft what this could look like and how we want communities involved in the process too, so at this point I'm bringing to the virtual stage -- Senior Advisor to the Commission Kapil Longani, who will take us through deepening our thinking and our clarity on what we mean by structural change and what types of revisions to the Charter we're looking for.

Kapil Longani (KL) 50:26

Thanks, Anusha and and thank you Madam Chairwoman. I just want to back up, sort of support what everybody was talking about and you know, my knowledge of the South African Constitution and thinking about the preamble, it's interesting -- it's only about I would say, it's 21, 22 lines, and yet it has some of the most inspiring principles on equality and fairness that one could think of. So as you all are thinking through preambles, just know that historically speaking there are many preambles that are very long, some that are very short, and I would argue, more effective embodying the issues that many of you are thinking about -- so I'm going to switch over now and talk a little bit about structural change and I think I'd like to start by just talking about tasks that you all have been given -- you know, when you talk about structural change, I think, if you ask 11 people to define structural change, you're probably going to get at least 10 different answers, if not 11. The task that you've been given is exceptional and when I think about structure I think about values, what needs to change about New York City government to promote the values of this Commission and it obviously, you representing all of New York City, what are the values that this Charter Revision Commission represents -- When I think about the South African Constitution, there are many many examples, one of which is environment for example. Section 24 of the South African Constitution refers to environment and says that everyone has the right to an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being, and to have the environment protected for the benefit of present and future generations through reasonable legislative and other measures that prevent pollution, promote conservation, and secure ecologically sustainable development of the use of natural resources while also promoting justifiable economic social development. so I

thought I'd start there to just give you an example, a really concrete example of a structural change in the Constitution and the South African Constitution that embodied the values of the legislature that drafted this Constitution, we go to the next slide please. The stated goal of the Commission is to identify and propose structural changes and significant policy reforms that will advance racial justice equity. And as you begin considering changes to the Charter, I want to highlight the need to think about values and the structures that embody those values listed on the powerpoint are different city government institutions and processes and the structure of these institutions represents a value judgment so let's take for example the Euler process and going back to the 1989 mission which I think is perhaps the most analogous to your Commission because the 1989 Commission as you all recall was really about reimagining government right, post Board of Estimates -- Once that Board of Estimate was struck down as unconstitutional, we had to reimagine government and we had to imagine the values that that government should represent, so one of the things that the Commission addressed was Euler and amending the city's land use processes to include a new review stage in the Euler process and eventually what was decided is that the Commission wanted communities to have an actual say regarding land use within the community and so affected community board and Borough Presidents have specific roles in the process and specified windows and timelines to provide feedback to the City Planning Commission on projects in their jurisdiction. It's not a predetermined outcome and obviously there were many ways that one could have done city planning, including city-wide, there could have been ways that actually minimized those local voices, so Euler and the choices that were made in 1999, 1989, were really a choice about the inputs that we value in the land use process. And you see other examples on this slide -- Separation of powers, checks and balances, you know, the powers that you allocate to the City Council, to the different agencies, to oversight bodies, to the Mayor him or herself, those are all value judgments that you are going to make that are going to be embodied through these structural changes. Obviously, the way you spend money and the way that budgeting is done by the Executive again, a structural change that evidences the value choices that you all are going to make based on fairness and equity, racial justice equity, etc. Next slide please --

JJA 55:40

Before you go into the next slide, can I just ask you a question, just to bring this home, bring this to life -- You mentioned when speaking about the South African Commission that the preamble spoke to Environmental health if you will, one of the issues that has surfaced in earlier conversations of the Commission has been about environmental inequity and just you know, how our city, we may see the placement of certain hazardous you know, pollutant facilities in in certain communities over other, if you had in at distances as an example and bring this all home -- If the preamble spoke to you know, all New Yorkers are entitled to live in environmentally safe you know, or you know, to have their, in their well-being their environments be healthy, environmentally healthy, and you know, secure then what you would see is that when you look at like structural laws, you go into the land use, is it set up in such a way that ensures that land use decisions do not impinge upon the rights of certain communities but not others, things of that nature -- is that a good example, just to bring it home. Okay

KL 57:06

Yeah, I think it's a great example.

JJA 57:10

Okay.

KL 57:12

So we go to the next slide. Here are some additional ways to create structures that embody our values -- for example the creation of an office. Right, the Mayor's Office of Climate Resiliency to continue the environmental right, use a science-based analysis to build proactive resiliency in communities, and we're not just responding to disaster -- disasters once they happen, the Mayor's Office of Community Mental Health right, incorporating mental health into all aspects of the government. The creation of process, so we just, I just alluded to the budget process as you all know, the public process to allocate money that runs through the Council you know, every agency goes in front of the Council to talk about their budget, and we have elected Representatives grilling them on different aspects of the allocation of money and what they are seeking through their budget. Lots of public hearing and input in that process, that's a value right, that was built in structure of the Charter. Another way to do that is through giving agencies enforcement, if an agency has enforcement jurisdiction then issues of enforcement become a priority. A good example is CCRB, they educate people about human rights, but they also prosecute individuals who violate those rights -- writing a Charter preamble is as I think the Chairwoman has said, another way to frame priorities and influence interpretation. Next slide please. As I said at the beginning, the 1989 Charter revision had to reimagine government after the Supreme Court declared the Board of Estimates was unconstitutional -- Similarly I think the Chairwoman is asking all of you to reimagine government, to reimagine government to be more fair and equitable. The 1989 Charter Revision Commission conducted significant revisions that established the current power balance between for example, the Mayor and City Council structures. They also for example, reduced the Borough President's powers.

JJA 59:42

Henry, if you could mute that would be helpful. Thanks. Okay, sorry about that.

KL 59:49

No, no, no worries. And so in 1998 as I was just saying, it reduced the Borough President's powers. The Borough Presidents used to be members of the Board of Estimate and had disproportionate power so Staten Island had the same number of votes as Brooklyn -- meaning its values were over-represented arguably in the, as a result of the revisions in 1989, the Council's power was expanded and more members represented smaller districts --thus each person in New York City had a more direct role in choosing their representation and minorities in particular had a greater chance of electing representatives of their choice. Now, Borough Presidents didn't become completely powerless in that process. They certainly retain certain powers, especially in terms of working with the Mayor and preparing the annual budget, but it is clear that there was a value judgment made back in 1989 that we needed to modify our structures so as to give more power -- The City Council and the Mayor, and it came at the cost of Borough Presidents arguably, I'm sorry, I was going in and out, I apologize, I think I'm back on. Can you hear me Madam Chairwoman?

JJA 1:01:22

Yes.

KL 1:01:22

Okay, I apologize. So we added a total of 16 City Council seats to improve neighborhood representation, thereby greatly expanding the powers of a more representative Council. The 16 Council seats, if you're interested, the goal as expressed by the Commission then was to encourage fuller representation of all New Yorkers, and you know you all would be the judge of whether or not indeed that has taken place, but the refinement of those roles is a great example of a structural change -- you will see recently there were changes made to the CCRB where there were, there was a public advocate position added, this, the Chair is now a dual appointment of the Mayor and the Speaker -- so again, a structural change to a body, it was that again evidenced, that particular Commission's value. So again, when you think that when you all are thinking about structural change, you should be thinking about values because when you look back at your predecessors as well as the South African Constitution Convention so to speak, they never called it The Convention but the discussion there was not about structure, it was about value and the structures embodying those values. So with that, Madam Chairwoman, I will turn it back to you but I really think it's important that people from the very beginning always encouraged us to think of and some of the more micro changes that we're talking about will fall under these structural umbrellas, these broad, but you've got to start at a much higher level in order because you're not talking about changing things -- like one or two things here and there, you're really talking about reimagining this Charter in a very similar way to what happened in 1989 and that is a very very different task than the last you know, 30 some odd years of Charter Revision Commissions have been tasked with.

JJA 1:03:44

I so very much appreciate all that you shared and I want to provide an opportunity to Commission members to ask questions of you. I will begin because I want to make sure that I am clear and you know, and perhaps in me being as clear as I possibly can, others will be as well and so if we take, if we just stop this, stay with environmental racism, you know, or let's turn into the positive environmental well-being, what as a value add, everybody should everybody, all New Yorkers should reside in communities that are environmentally safe you know, we should not have a situation where children growing up in one neighborhood are more exposed to pollutants that you know, that affect their breathing, and are more likely to become asthmatic at just using that as an example -- what we then would have to do is look at you know, how are decisions made about environmental cleanup, about you know, how to control going forward for, you know, you know the management or the reduction of pollutants, and I'm just using some examples and so then that becomes who makes those decisions, is that a power issue, are there issues around who actually gets to compete for you know, the cleanup work, is that an access issue, it's the way that you begin looking at the Charter to see who holds these powers -- but if you begin with the value that everyone in New York City has a right to live in environmentally safe conditions, then you look at who gets to decide you know, where resources are doled out. If everybody has a right to have quality of health care in their communities and to not have to travel, who's making decisions about where we cite hospital facilities where you know, like clinics and the like, things of that nature -- that's the value base that then helps us to figure out where we're going in the Charter to work, to affect that change -- Is that fair? Okay are there,

AV 1:06:21

If I could just enter, interject here -- We don't have a lot of time left in our meeting, we did have some discussion questions for you conversation starters, I'm sure you already have thoughts and

ideas in your mind, but we also want to make sure we get to presenting the public engagement plans at least quickly, so I just wanted to flag that since it's 5:30.

JJA 1:06:48

That's fair, so let's take like, about, let's try to give ourselves five to eight minutes just want to make sure, what I really want to do in this conversation is make sure that everybody has a clear understanding of what it is we're talking about when we say structural change and how we go about thinking about it, taking the issues that are presented to us by the public because the public is likely not to come to us and say we should change such and such and such, because it impedes or it impairs or it you know, or it allows for, they're going to bring an issue and it's going to be incumbent upon us to look at the Charter and how the Charter structurally you know, allows or disallows for what is being presented to us as an issue into concern -- any thoughts, any questions, any comments, any concerns?

PT 1:07:50

One thing I'd be curious in learning and maybe our staff can research this, is whether or not there's ever been an infrastructure equity or infrastructure Bill of Rights kind of thing because I think when you talk about environmental impact, a lot of that is Infrastructure. When you talk about broadband, that's infrastructure. When you talk about energy access because you need energy to be able to you know, go online or have an air conditioner or recharge your car in the future, whether or not there's anyone's done anything like that because I think that's more and more you know, that's really, these are critical issues and I, an anecdote is I had a student five years ago who studied the racial policies of the Tennessee Valley authority, which provided electricity throughout the most of the South and it had never been done -- No one had ever looked at the racial policies of and guess what, it was entirely segregated. Black farmers didn't get electricity, white farmers did, and black folks lost land because of that, huge amount of land. So anyway, to me, this could be a really interesting thing to dig into.

JJA 1:09:13

I think that's an excellent point and frankly, that then helps us also when we look beyond the city government and how does the structure, the Charter speak to people doing business in the city of New York.

PT 1:09:25

Yep

HG 1:09:26

And Madam Chair, I hope you can hear it because this thing you know, to that point, what is happening right here in the city with the, and I'm gonna as I said, I'm gonna name names -- with Verizon and the access of broadband and provided when the city engage Verizon, when a multi-billion dollar contract to provide broadband to the community and certain communities might have gotten in many communities up in some places in the city did, even though it was being sponsored by taxpayers and I think the decisions to terminate some of the fossil fuel industries right now and the power plants right here in New York are being done by the utilities companies. I have in my opinion a very institutionalized, a bias towards certain neighborhoods -- I think that's a critical, I don't know if infrastructure would be that -- the concept that would capture it all, but I am with Phil

and I think we should figure out which, which one does, if it's more than just that you know, but definitely it's one of the biggest in inequitable distribution resources in the city in my opinion.

JJA 1:10:46

Very helpful. Are there others? I see very pensive looks -- that gives me some comfort.

AV 1:11:10

I will not, we will share with these slides with you in follow-up. We also post them on our website publicly. I know there's a lot to digest here, so we will make sure we get them to you and encourage conversation in the days and weeks ahead.

JJA 1:11:30

And just one call, like just one, one statement that I'll make that may be a concern, that needs to also serve as a caution when we talk about structural change, the language has to be, has to seek to, has to be concrete with respect to the issue of a concern, but it has to also at the same time, try to capture you know, the how do I say this -- the issues, things that we are aware of, and things that we are not if that makes sense to you, so it's not, we're not gonna catch everything but if we're talking about environmental racism and addressing environmental racism, we may not speak to every specific environmental issue but the preamble itself can speak to what we believe all New Yorkers should experience when it comes to their environmental health and well-being, what constitutes you know, environmental health and what and well-being, what constitutes you know, every New Yorker having you know, living in communities that meet their basic rights and needs, and then looking at the Charter and structural changes that need to prop it up, so you might find if you talk about it like just building on Commission member Thompson's point about infrastructure and equity, you know that might be something that we look at that can speak to another a number of disparities you know, in our society, in our city, in society. Are we helping, are we raising cons, like more questions -- Lurie, Commission member,

LDF 1:13:39

So I just want to make prior age, if we had concerns about housing equity for example, while we might not be able to get to all of the intricacies as to how perhaps NYCHA might be restructured, we might be able to use the preamble to say something like all New Yorkers should have healthy accessible housing that meets a minimum standard of habitability, which would guarantee some changes had to be made at NYCHA while also speaking to broader housing inequities, not to be housed within a NYCHA paradigm but which also exists throughout the city -- Am I understanding that correctly?

JJA 1:14:25

Correct correct, but then we might go the next step and also look at issues of procurement as they relate to public housing -- we might look at environmental issues in communities and so we would, you have an example, but then you'd look at ways throughout the Charter you can support the preamble.

KL 1:14:53

Yeah and a lot of NYCHA-- Oh sorry,

JJA 1:14:58

Please. I'm sorry Lurie, any more? Commission member Daniels --

LDF 1:15:03

No ma'am, just, I'm very excited to move into this portion of the substantive work.

KL 1:15:14

Madam Chairman, I was just going to say I agree with everything you're saying -- I think it's interesting like as you know, a lot of NYCHA is regulated by the state right, and so in terms of what you're actually going to be able to do and not do, that's something you all will decide as you discuss it, but the preamble, there is nothing that prevents you all from doing what you just suggested, to talk about housing and as a value statement in the preamble and there are many Constitutions that do that -- I can think of four off the top of my head -- So it would be something that has historic precedence and if that is a deed, an important bout in a preamble.

JJA 1:15:53

Absolutely, but we could look at also intersections so if we believe that you know, every community should have broadband access right, then how do you, how does that play out in other places chartered as Commissioner Thomas was saying, and as you were alluding to commissioning for -- are there others? If there are, please --

LDF 1:16:20

So in that example where NYCHA is a state regulated agency the city of New York can still establish minimum standards of habitability that would be informative for any regulatory agency that was examining whether or not the state were in line with our bare minimum standards of habitability and that would also be while not binding perhaps on the state -- it would certainly be informative or at the very least persuasive. I just want to see where how far our potential powers can go recognizing that if we're talking about an agency that is technically regulated by this state, but which has, which provides housing and if we were to provide a basic level of understanding as to what it had, effective or appropriate housing would be, then would that be a bar the state would then be encouraged to meet, or would we simply be speaking to a minimum standard for housing that is appropriate for everyone except those who live in state regulated housing. I just, I'm just trying to make sure I'm clear -

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JJA 1:17:26

The way that I would look at it is twofold. One, we might determine that the preamble should stepset forth minimum standards and we then could do the work of petitioning, advocating at the state level to bring about critical changes with respect to public housing in New York City, but then you could also have New York City set its own minimum standards and have NYCHA as although it you know, it it has federal, their federal controls and their state controls -- it still would have to abide by some of the city rules and regulations or by city rules, and regulations very much like we do say with Board of Correction -- the government, the state, may set the standards for the jails, but then we can go to the next step. So it is, this is good and what happens to us is these are critical issues that we have to unpack together to make sure that we're on the same page. We never want to just brush over the issues. it's 5:55, we need to talk to you about public engagement so you all have a good sense of where we're going next and the process that we're undertaking. I'm going to ask those Commission members that can just stay on for another 10 minutes. We've had two-hour meetings before and we've also

had 90-minute meetings -- we've been trying to keep it to 90-minute meetings, appreciating that your time is very valuable, we try not to go over. We're going to need a few minutes until we ask you, of you to stay on or as many of you, if not all of you, to stay on, we'll help you all stay on, but maybe everybody can't but as many who can, please do. We'll try to end at about 6:10 but we do want to make sure that you have a full appreciation for the public engagement work that's about to get underway. Anusha.

AV 1:19:12

Absolutely, thank you so much. We'll do a breeze through here -- Cutting to what you'll see at the end is that we want to do follow-up meetings with each of you to go over the strategy in greater detail and get your input and give you a sense of how we'd like you involved, so I will hand it here to Jackie and to Jimmy to do a very quick run through, and then we will have time to work with you individually on any refinements and how to plug you in. Jackie.

JK 1:19:43

Yep. Can you hear me clearly? Awesome, okay. So quickly, we've outlined our public engagement in three phases. So each phase of engagement builds upon the knowledge gains in the prior engagement -- as you can see, below our city agency engagement occurs throughout this entire process. Our first phase will launch this month and it will be preliminary conversations that are held in private, but with targeted external stakeholders. These include civil rights leaders, racial equity scholars, and leaders, and key stakeholders that are organized by issue area and the real purpose of this, these targeted preliminary conversations is first and foremost to gain trust and buy-in, to focus the preliminary policy research that we've already been doing and begin to narrow in on how we talk about and identify solutions to structural racism, and very importantly -- we really want folks to share honest feedback on the processes, on the process that we put forth through our Racial Justice Commission framework -- in addition, holding these conversations privately, will allow for candid conversations, candid conversations from stakeholders and allow the Commission time to build and refine what we want to talk about, how we want to successfully facilitate public events which will occur in phase two. So for phase one, for the platonI conversation that I just outlined, we'd love to have one to three Commissioners present at these conversations and again we'll talk a little bit more about what that looks like in some of the coming slides, so phase two of engagement is our public meetings where we work with our Consultant to hold listening sessions, focus groups, community-based workshops, surveys, and other events that we hold. Phase three of the engagement will focus on reviewing our preliminary draft and reviewing our preliminary draft and producing our final recommendations. So where are we now, actually sorry, go back again one more. Yeah -- So where are we now, we're currently in phase one, focused in on the first two thematic stakeholder groups, which is the civil rights leaders and the racial equity scholars, leaders. Before the end of June, we want to, we want to meet with these groups simultaneously. We'll be planning our issue area stakeholder conversations which will happen soon after. As Commissioners, you all are key to who we engage, how we engage, and what we discuss -- So we need your support. If you already, if you haven't already lent it in identifying stakeholders, sending out invitations, collaborating, and lending your expertise as we plan these meetings and sometimes even co-facilitating these presentation-based discussions -- Alright next slide -- So for phase two and phase three, are heavily informed again by phase one. It'll dictate what we talk about, how we leverage our framework of power, access, and opportunity, to work at the systems level, and stay at the intersection that's getting us closer to identifying the recommendations we need for our report. Phase two will expand our capacity, and bring on

expertise through our Consultant to have facilitated dialogue with the public about structural racism. So we'll work with the Community Engagement Consultant to gather community-based input -- we'll service ideas, recommendations that inform sexual racism based Charter reform, as well as informing our reconciliation efforts, which we don't want to forget about. Some sessions also I want to highlight will be spaces to unearth examples of structural racism as experienced in the lives of New Yorkers who are most impacted by racism. The purpose of the phase two engagement is to validate New Yorkers experiences of racism, build out our knowledge base, bolster the ongoing policy research, reveal unforeseen structural barriers, and enable the truth telling which is so vitally important to this process and by phase three we'll have a drafted document based on the valuable input we received from the first two phases through public hearings, public comments soliciting feedback. Synthesizing all of that input we'll be able to produce and finalize our recommendations. Alright, that was very quick -- I'll save the questions that y'all have maybe for the end and we'll jump to Jimmy to talk more about our expert panel.

JP 1:23:57

Thanks Jackie -- So by the time we have extra panels in July, this will be each chance to engage with experts which is academic experts, policy experts, or experts in practice and have a chance not just to listen which is the focus of the listening sessions that Jackie is going to be leading, but to actually engage in extensive Q&A with the leaders in the field so each panel is going to have about three or four experts and we're going to ask you know, as many Commissioners as possible to come to each expert panel, and many of you will probably already have ideas for structural change as well some of the experts, so it's just going to be a really good time to exchange ideas and really test the proposals you may already be thinking about. Right now they're organized according to the needs that people have to live a fulfilling life and I'm not going to go through every potential sub-topic here but the idea is that we'll have experts to talk about healthy communities or to talk about economic justice and by having several experts there talk about different topics, we'll be able to cross-pollinate ideas and start to get to a higher level of structural change. For now, the crucial thing I want to mention is that even though expert panels are organized into these buckets, I just really want to emphasize that the Commission's proposals are not necessarily going to have to be within one particular bucket and in fact you know the higher level they are, the more likely they are to cross over several buckets at the same time so we are organizing it this way -- intuitively, organically in a way that people understand but by the time we're putting something onto the ballot they could touch on many of these systems at once and we almost hope that they do.

Yeah, I mean the very last thing I'll say is just given the timeline of starting these in July, we'll need to move on them pretty pretty quickly and I think Anusha will mention that we'll definitely lean on you all for ideas for experts to invite to these panels because you know the experts in the field.

AV 1:26:27

Absolutely, so getting us to our next steps are our meetings with all of you -- we want your feedback on both the public engagement and the plan for organizing the expert panels, your thoughts on who we need to tap for the expert panels, who we need to engage both early on in those preliminary conversations and in broader public engagement, and work with you to have a plan for how we can leverage -- and leverage your network. Just moving to the next slide in terms of public meetings and next steps -- we will have our special Commission meeting next Friday in honor of Juneteenth with civil rights leaders and community leaders from New York City and then

we have Commission meetings scheduled for July and August. I will note that we're at this phase in the process where Commission meetings are scheduled for monthly but you will be joining other meetings such as the expert panels and community listening sessions between these meetings so do expect to be on a lot of meetings this summer. Not all of them will be mandatory but these are the ones, the Commission meetings where we do need you to make your best effort to attend so that we can hear from key folks, have the discussion, and move forward on any critical decisions with the Commission -- which will certainly be the place that we're at by definitely August and even moving into July, so that's it for the prepared content. I know some folks may be able to stay on with additional questions and comments and we welcome that --

JJA 1:28:19

Those who may have to leave, so we've established in this meeting that there are a couple of Commission members we did not hear from but I believe that the general consensus is that we should create a preamble and what I committed to is that the staff will begin the work of building something out that we can respond to -- but if you have thoughts that you would like to, as they do, that work to inform the creation, please share them, please email them to Executive Director Anusha Venkataraman. Also if there are examples of preambles that you want us to center on, to help guide -- please share that, and as I said, Commission member Bain, we'd love to see the code that you all have created for your work -- that could be very very helpful to us, the public Commission meetings that -- we definitely want your participation -- are listed on the screen right now, but we're going to find a way to send to you, with some regularity without overwhelming you. Perhaps it's a weekly -- a week in advance, a list of the meetings that are set up with experts, stakeholders, and the like in addition to the public conversations, so you can have them and you can put as many of them or those that you choose to on your calendar and be a participant in them. We also want you, if you have not already provided the names of experts, stakeholders, community groups, others, that you want to make sure we hear from, we want you to give that to us. And then lastly, as we begin to move out and engage with the public later this summer, we have engaged some community outreach experts to help us do that work -- but any thoughts that you have for how we can do that? Any media channels that we need to engage with to make sure that we reach as many people as we possibly can and we get to hear from any, as many people as would like to be heard from, that would be most helpful. Questions, thoughts, comments -- I see that we've got one from Commission member Daniel Favors, so please talk to us.

LDF 1:30:36

I'm going to defer to Commissioner Bermudez, who I believe had her hand up before I did.

JJA 1:30:52

I'm sorry, I don't know. I'm looking at thumbnails.

AB 1:30:57

Thanks Lurie. So I forgot that I did have some experts or some people that I thought we should listen to, but can you go back to the previous slide on the groupings of the experts -- is that a set piece or you know, because I'm just not sure that family separations within a legal system concept is like strong enough of a statement about you know, the, how we treat families as a as a government in the city and to me, and think about the preamble and the importance of the preamble -- to me there needs to be something about families and family stability and family --

the privacy of family over separation of families and so I think that putting it within a fair legal system doesn't give it the sort of strength and gravitas that it needs,

JJA 1:32:14

And so let me ask you, is --That's a great point and I agree with you. When you look at healthy communities, should we be looking, should we be centering more on individual family, individual family and community health and well-being -- I'm just yeah,

AB 1:32:35

I mean I we could talk about it some more, I didn't mean to like conversation.

JJA 1:32:39

Is that speaking to your point, that it's

AB 1:30:57

Right.

AV 1:32:44

Absolutely. Something I'll note is that the discussions that will happen with the expert panels are really going to be driven by the experts so we're organizing them by the topic on the left but the potential subtopics on the right are just examples of the types of things that they may bring up to help us understand the organization of what's included so

JJA 1:33:06

I think that's fair but what I do want to know though is that it cuts both ways -- this is what they may raise but there may be things that we also want to hear from them about

AV 1:33:19

Right,

JJA 1:33:20

And so we have to be, right, so a point well taken,

AB 1:33:25

But yeah, I'm totally on board with the, with the preamble and I passed it back on to Commission member Daniel,

LDF 1:33:35

Thank you for that. Just a process, question -- sorry to be so procedural but as the city and state are reopening are these summertime meetings anticipated to be remote or are we going to be conducting any of these in person, just for planning purposes.

AV 1:33:55

That's a good question. For the Full Commission meetings, they will be all remote, all virtual over Zoom. As far as the more community based engagements, they will be likely virtual -- to begin with, we do hope that we can move towards some in-person things once it is advised by our city that people are gathering organically in communities over the summer -- some of those may be

strategic places for us to sort of tap into those conversations and meet people where they're at, so absolutely look for your ideas on what some of those places and spaces may be.

JJA 1:34:53

I don't see any other hands raised but please if I'm missing someone please jump in.

AV 1:34:58

I did earlier see Kui's hand up okay -- I don't know if you still have a question.

Chris Kui (CK) 1:35:05

No no no I was gonna speak about the other part but I think overall the trend you know, going towards is good you know, I just thought that you know, like of the structural things -- could be something where you know about policing, whether we could say something about you know, the police or some of the first responder has to be New York City residents -- that kind of thing you know, that may be the I think, there was some discussion about police commission should be a civilian just like you know, I don't know if that's like the correct thing but something like that you know, could be a structural thing but I'm not saying that you know, I don't know enough you know, about that particular point. Yeah, that's that thought you know, but I think the direction that we're taking is -- I'm very supportive,

JJA 1:35:48

Very helpful, thank you Commission member. We, Commission member, you did, you have your hand up

JY 1:35:55

-- I just had a quick question. The expert panel groupings -- Well Jimmy, will you send that out to us to take a look at and start to fill folks in or how do you want us to respond.

JP 1:36:10

We certainly can and I think also when Anusha and or other staff reach out and have these conversations you know, I think I want us to explore them in greater detail as well.

AV 1:36:27

Okay, if you have folks in mind now and you don't want to forget them, feel free to just email us a list and we'll make sure they go into our organization system so we can do it formally and informally,

JJA 1:36:39

Before we before we wrap -- I just want to ask Commission member Hamilton if there's anything that he wants to add at this point or any comments -- He's good to go. Then we're good to go.

Darrick Hamilton (DH) 1:36:56

I think I love the preamble idea. I see we're gonna be moving, walk speed so the extent to which we can be engaged and even have some a little more insights before would that, that's not only contribution I think we'll be able to even contribute more and better that way, but I love the fact that we're going to do the preamble. I think that might be perhaps our greatest contribution as a

committee if we set values as a guide for many of the reasons everybody else has already expressed, which is why I didn't chime in because you all said it so eloquently.

JJA 1:37:35

I like that this is good, and then I'll just quickly Commission -- Commission member Hanities do you have your hand up again?

AB 1:37:43

Yes I do, because I thought of, I just want to put this out there again, not to talk today but to tee it up for another day -- As we were talking about structure, this came up in another meeting that I had unrelated to this and I don't know if we, if any entity has ever really looked and back to Lurie's point of the historical contexts etc., how have the police precincts been decided, who decides what the size, location, and of police precincts are and do they differ by you know, does Harlem have more police precincts than the upper east side or the upper side and how are they you know, saying like, like how we're talking about defining the police but let's look at the structure of the police department and the geography of it and why were those precincts created and why you know,

JJA 1:38:39

And right,

AB 1:38:40

If we look at where they're looking etc. -- Anyway, so it was you know,

JJA 1:38:43

And the flip for me right now are the jails right? And yeah, very very helpful, and homeless shelters, all the like, right -- This is good, the point that Commission member Hamilton made, duly noted and again would really appreciate if you all have any language that you want us to center on. As they begin this work with reaching out to you about the public engagement, they'll also engage on this particular issue about the Korean -- good to be with you all, those who can join us on June 18th, please do and just stay safe and stay warm, stay cool, stay cool as best you can, good to talk with you. All, the meeting is adjourned.

JY 1:39:35

Good night,

AV 1:39:36

Thank you so much.

Tashawn Morgan (TM) 1:39:40

Peace and blessings.

Hey Steph, are you still there?

I'm just grabbing the comments now --

I was just, I was just kind of asking about the comments.

Yeah, I was hoping we were making a record. I asked for the transcriber, transcriber --

Yes. Excellent, you're one step ahead of me -- Thanks Melanie. Okay, alright bye. Thanks.