



NYC Racial Justice Commission

Achieving Racial Equity in Housing and Land Justice Panel

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- [Reverend Fred Davie](#)
- [Chris Kui](#)
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- [Anusha Venkataraman](#)
- [Monica Bell](#)
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- [Emily Mock](#)
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- [Jimmy Pan](#)
- [Barika Williams](#)
- [Kapil Longani](#)
- [Regina Cannon](#)
- [Jennifer John Saulston](#)
- [Juanita Lewis](#)
- [Michael Pardis](#)

Jimmy Pan (JP): 00:00

Just a few seconds -- Looks like it started now.

Henry A. Garrido (HAG): 00:45

So good afternoon everybody, good afternoon Commissioners. Thank you all for joining us today, I will be sharing the Committee on today's topic. As we have been continuing to do is related to housing, a topic today for the Racial Justice Commissioners that will discuss -- Let me start by having a roll call of the Commissioners that are here. So if you can kindly introduce

yourselves, and we will start in the program right after that. I'm Henry Garrido, I'm the Executive Director of DC37 -- I'm also the Vice Chair of Commission and if there are other Commissioners that are on board, I am apologizing because I can see some of you but I cannot see all of them. I certainly can see Reverend Fred Davie who is participating, I can see Commissioner Jo-Ann Yoo, who was also here. Ana Bermudez, Commissioner Ana Bermudez, who is participating. But I cannot see anyone beyond that, so if I miss anyone I said -- Deputy Mayor Phil Thompson who's here as well, but forgive me. Because of the screening, I'm unable to see who else is part of the meeting, so did I miss --

Anusha Venkataraman (AV): 02:29

We also have Commissioner Chris Kui.

Chris Kui (CK): 02:31

Yeah too, yes, thank you.

HAG: 02:34

Okay, Commissioner Kui is participating, and so thank you all for joining us. Let me just say, in general, that we've been doing these expert panel groups that have been discussed, and this is the third -- We did a panel on healthcare, we did a panel on education, which was very rich and informative. And today, we're having a panel on housing, which is one of the biggest challenges that we have heard from members of the Committee. So bear with me a second -- I will be introducing the panelists that we are bringing here today. I think that the ideas will be considered on the Commissioners' potential Charter changes that we're going to be recommending, and so we are going to, we're looking forward to the recommendations of those expert panelists. Let me start first with the first panel, and I have the honor of introducing first, Barika Williams, who is the Executive Director of the Associations for Neighborhood Housing Development Inc, a leading nonprofit organization focused on creating housing and economic justice for all New Yorkers. Barika previously served as the Assistant Secretary for Housing for the State of New York on the, Governor Andrew Cuomo, where she managed New York State's major housing priority, including the 20 billion dollar housing plan and expansion of tenant protection statewide. So we want to welcome Barika. Also Regina Cannon, who has served or serves now as the Chief Equity and Impact Officer and Vice president of Housing Solutions at C4 Innovations, and as the Director of the National Initiative Racial Equity Design And Implementation Initiative, Regina has more than 90 years of experience leading anti-poverty initiatives, addressing homelessness, supportive housing, criminal justice reform, community capacity building, and youth leadership development. She leads the teams at C4 Innovations and for the federal hud to review racial equity principles in funding guidelines, housing policies practices and services. Also on this panel, we have Juanita Lewis, who is the incoming Executive Director for Community Voices Heard -- Janita has 17 years of community and electoral organizing experience. Community Voices Heard as an organization is a member-

led multi-racial organization principal of women of color and low-income families in New York State that builds power to secure social, economic and racial justice for all. So welcome all three of you. I thank you for joining us. First, let me start with you Barika, if you can start your presentation please.

Barika Williams (BW): 06:06

Can you hear me okay?

HAG: 06:09

We can hear.

BW: 06:10

Okay, I will go ahead and get started -- So good afternoon everyone. My name is Barika Williams, I'm the Executive Director at the Association for Neighborhood and Housing development, or ANHD as we are generally called. I want to thank the Commission Members for holding today's hearing and for all your work and commitment moving forward racial justice in New York City and thank you as well to the staff who have been in communication and working very hard on these, on this work behind the scenes in many different spaces and positions. So ANHD is a nonprofit organization that's based here in New York City -- Our mission is to build community power, to win affordable housing and thriving and equitable neighborhoods for all New Yorkers. We have been around for nearly 40 years now and actually have a number of close partners, allies, former board members, and friends who are, we're very happy and pleased to see sitting on the Commission, including one of our origin founding ANHD seven organizations, which was activity which Chris previously, Commissioner Chris was previously Executive Director of our membership -- Includes more than 80+ neighborhood-based and city-wide nonprofit organizations that have at their core mission, affordable housing and or equitable economic development as a central component, and we at ANHD, what we do is we use capacity building, research, organizing and policy advocacy to advance our mission. We are now a central city-wide voice in bridging the power and impact of our member groups to build up the community power of New York's cities, specifically by Black, Indigenous, people of color, immigrant, low and moderate income communities, and we value justice, equity, and opportunity, and deeply believe in the importance of movement building that centers racial justice and marginalized communities in our work. So this is very core and fundamental to who we are. We were founded out of the movements and struggles of New York City's BIPOC neighborhoods in the 60s and 70s that specifically used protesting and community organizing and affordable housing to force changes to systems of injustice, inequality, and racism that we are still grappling with today. And our collective power comes from our membership organizations and the people and communities that they are rooted in, so we believe very deeply that our communities are powerful -- They're valuable, they're vibrant, they're beautiful, and they're intelligent. Yet what we struggle with is that all New York

City communities are not valued equally. If we want to actualize equitable and thriving neighborhoods for all New Yorkers, we really have to challenge the systems that value some lives over others in this time. When we see New York City's social safety net struggling, if not crumbling, and as the city continues to reel from COVID19 and the unprecedented need coupled with the historic uprising against white supremacy and injustice, it's really unconscionable for the city to continue to uphold systems of injustice and inequity -- And so that's why this Commission's work and conversation is so important and so essential for us moving forward as a city. I want to do a little bit of a note up front, sort of understanding who ANHD is and who some of your panelists that you'll see today are, that the framing of the question around big ideas that tackle racial inequality and really go beyond our current legislative regulatory and resource fixes and frameworks right? Really thinking about what we can do beyond. And thinking about using the Charter is generally not how we as nonprofit advocacy tend to and organizing groups tend to operate and work. The city has repeatedly really communicated either explicitly or implicitly its disinterest and unwillingness to address fundamental systemic inequities, and so what we often do and pursue is winning changes that move us towards transformation when in a sense, the city has taken the work of jumping to the transformation -- We actually want to see off the table and so I think it's kind of important for us to recognize that some of the solutions are things that in some ways, we works towards, but it's very rare that we have a moment to say "let's move all the way there" right? So we at ANHD and our members at many points in time have experienced being marginalized, dismissed, and quite frankly and outright laughed at by multiple administrations for policies that we have proposed that move forward racial equity and justice, and yet, and still have had huge wins like right to counsel, like permanent affordability, like questions around deep affordability land use justice, the racial impact and displacement impact of development -- All of which are huge conversations and huge wins that are now -- Right to counsel is being discussed as a national model, having and maintaining our manufacturing space was critical for us in retooling for PPEs as we thought the pandemic, but those are all things that we pushed and we led government to do despite government pushing back against us, trying to push forward structural change. So in terms of, you know, one, I think it's just important to recognize that that part of our work is the work of moving the government despite government systems fighting us. Often times, every step of the way right, in terms of what system sand challenges need to be surmounted to overcome racial equity -- It's obviously a lot and a big list, but at this pivotal moment in our city, as we think about the disparate impacts of COVID and the vital urgency of Black Lives Matter protest and Anti-AAPI violence, it's clear that our government needs a fundamental course correction and one centered around racial equity and undoing the damages of centuries along injustice right? And part of that reform, of reform, and a core piece of that is our, of that is our built environment, our city's planning and development processes are failing us. There's just, it's, we have to say it -- That way our current system for making land use budgeting policy decisions really perpetuate a landscape of an equitable development, an investment that fields displacement and on the one hand, at the exclusion of certain people on the other right? Our low income communities are suffering the effects of decades of disinvestment are pushed to accept destructure rezonings in order to have their existing needs addressed. I think this is something that folks really don't understand, is that oftentimes, the city is forcing and pushing

certain agenda in order for communities to have the resources, the fixing of street lights and curb cuts and basic infrastructure needs that really should have been met and provided by the city all along while white, wealthier communities are largely exempted from doing their part to address city-wide needs and frequently from blocking affordable housing and homelessness and shelter housing as well. If this is, if racial equity is really truly a priority for our city, then we need a transformative and cultural shift in how we think about planning beyond any single institution or Euler process right? This is not one agency, one specific mechanism to really address a stubborn developer centric approach that privileges capital generation over community. And at the heart of that truck, at the heart of that, and one thing that we will see is that it's, that we struggle to see the hardest hit -- Sorry -- I've last made place at the heart of that shift is rebuilding communities in the name of equity. So I just want to touch on one thing specifically, which is that in our decades of experience, the DCP, specifically the Department of City Planning is not a partner and more specifically an obstacle in this conversation. We specifically, and including me, personally have been told by DCP themselves that DCP does not do race, that that is not something that they engage in. And that's a striking position and approach for a government agency in this moment -- In time, top to bottom, they're an institutional barrier and our belief and our experiences and the way we work, it has to be accordingly, and we know that other elected officials, agencies, partners, city entities have to, and are trying to find a way to address that. And so in a sense, we are all operating in a planning framework where a central component of city planning, of city development, and of the city housing environment has been taken out of the equation as being a partner and being somebody that you can engage with specifically around racial equity and racial justice. So I'm going to pause there because I think I'm out of time, and I know there are a couple other folks who will touch on certain things coming after me.

HAG: 16:46

Thank you very much Barika, thank you. We might, we're gonna finish the conversations and the testimonies first, and then we'll have questions. So if you don't mind hanging around, we may have some questions for you after this. Now next, we're gonna move on to Regina Cannon, Chief Equity and Impact Officer and Vice President on Housing Solutions C4. Regina, are you here?

Regina Cannon (RC): 17:15

I am, can you hear me?

HAG: 17:17

I can hear you.

RC: 17:19

Fantastic -- Okay, first of all, thank you all for inviting me to the panel today. And again, I'm Regina Cannon, Chief Equity Impact Officer, Vice President for Housing Solutions at C4. AND our focus is really on behavioral health and recovery and housing stability. And our thought line is social change, that is what we are built on now. We work specifically at the homelessness community, and so I want to start there, especially around the big ideas. And so some of these are perhaps not big -- These are ideas that have been around for a long time but we've not perhaps paid attention to them. So I want to go through some of the things that we're experimenting and trying with under a HUD equity demo. And so first of all, is to see being without housing as part of a continuum of housing. Affordable housing a lot of times, we look at homelessness as it sort of its own mode piece rather than looking at it as a continuum, and making sure that we're working to build affordable housing for folks at every range of, you know, affordability or finances. So that's one of the things that we're looking for and working with communities to do that, and so that means that the folks that are working in the homelessness community around the homeless response system, they are at the table for the planning that goes on in each one of those cities around housing. Another one of the big ideas, which is perhaps not so big, is making sure that folks that are most impacted, which are disproportionately Black and Brown folks and the homeless, that they're actually at the decision making table in the work that we do. We actually do not continue working on a project in a community unless we have folks that have been impacted through homelessness, through evictions, at the table. And let me be clear here not in a tokenistic way, we make sure that the body that was already established are folks that are already at the table, that they are just as prepared to receive folks that have been marginalized at the table, and making sure that folks are feeling like their voice actually counts and that they are there to make decisions and not just there you know, to check a box for funding. So that's one of the things that we've been doing, especially in the HUD equity demonstration project. One of the things that we're also looking at is making sure that we don't default to those dominant cultural norms that continue to perpetuate, you know, racism and discriminatory outcomes. And so we're literally interrogating every single tool that we use, especially around deciding who gets what housing. We come with the notion that we actually reject and we resist this notion around scarcity. We reject this notion around zero sum. So we start with the notion that everyone has the right to housing, and then we work backwards from that. What are our strategies to make sure that happens and so far in the communities that we're working with, it's working. So we start there. And then one of the other big ideas is that, even in the homelessness system or in extremely low income housing, that we don't make the assumption that everyone who signs up for a job in these areas is actually an anti-racist practitioner. We understand that there has to be a cultural shift that has to go on, and so we actually provide the kind of learning sessions so that the kind of services that are delivered are more equitable. We have heard too many horrendous stories of folks being served so poorly and dehumanized, and so our aim is to exchange the experience. If one has to be in the system, then one should be treated with dignity and respect. And then when I say system, we talk about cross systems work. Again, it goes to the fact that we have always been so siloed and rather than looking at the adjacent systems for housing and working with them, we do piecemeal work. And so as part of our work, we're bringing in the criminal justice system, law enforcement, the healthcare system, the

employment system, and the financial system. And they're all at the table. Now, let me be clear -- It is hard, folks are not used to working in the same way together. People don't want to play in the sandbox together and so sometimes, it's like pulling teeth. But what we tell people is look at your life, like a day in your life -- How many different systems do you touch? Well folks that need housing, especially deeply affordable housing, they touch many of the similar systems. So all of those systems have to be at the table, which leads us into probably that last big idea, is that we have to treat people who are experiencing homelessness. The work that I do or that are experiencing addictions over and over actually equals now, that sounds like well of course, that's a given -- But it's not every, most of our policies and our practices make sure that we, otherwise folks, that are actually looking for housing, that are experiencing homelessness, and then we do not have an accountability system in place. And so one of the big ideas is that you can actually measure the impact, a racial equity impact, you can measure it, you can evaluate, you can hold people accountable. And so if people don't have it in the goodness of their heart or they don't see all the potential that they are losing by not focusing on racial equity, and not even just focusing, but practicing that. Well, we can actually do that through funding right? We can say that there has to be an accountability mechanism in place for your funding and not for someone to check off the box now they're -- It is nuanced, it is complicated, it is layered, but there has to be accountability for racially equitable outcomes across all the systems. So whether it is around housing, our employment, those adjacent systems, and yes, in the criminal justice and law enforcement system as well, otherwise we're going to continue to have this revolving door of folks that are experiencing homelessness in and out of that system. Okay, one of the other things that we have begun to do as part of our big idea is look more and more at the root causes. We know that when we see those numbers at the top, we react to those and we say oh my goodness, well let's go and see if we can do something about that. And it'll change the numbers, may change for one, wk, three months -- But it's not sustainable unless we actually get to the root cause. And those are the structures that we have to change, and I believe that was the second question. So let's talk a little bit about those structures that we have to change, and so some of those structures are around our eviction system, and the way that people are put out without a real hearing right? And so how do we make sure that we're both addressing that in the short term, in terms of keeping people in their homes around targeted addiction prevention, assistance, and using that to stabilize communities. Because you will see, if you do some overlays of this and all those outcomes, you'll see that they are clustered like that. There are neighborhoods where people are being evicted most often, and typically it's in Black and Brown -- Predominantly Black and Brown neighborhoods, and so we can use that to actually stabilize whole neighborhoods. And that helps us with the housing right? And then there's the employment -- If we continue to give these minimum wage or put out minimum wage jobs in a maximum wage you know, world, then we're going to continue to see folks that are losing their housing, are not getting the kind of housing that is safe, that is quality for them and for their families. And so we have to address that and make sure that that is across all of our cities and our communities, not just a few here and there who are a little bit more progressive. And then of course, there is healthcare, making sure that folks have full access to that because now think about this from COVID -- All of those folks that we deemed as essential right? But that we'd never paid essential wages and

how that healthcare and the lack thereof stopped us in our tracks. Well, think about the folks that were really, that were the most impacted by it. Yeah, once again, Black and Brown folks, and especially those that were without sustainable housing. And so those kind of structures that have to be done and listened to, we're not gonna turn over the world in one night. But we can certainly start piloting to see how we can do some cross system work and then begin to scale that other major structural roadblocks, the exclusionary zoning. We see it all the time as a way to keep some folks out of different neighborhoods, and so we have to make sure that we're reducing or eliminating that kind of exclusionary zoning. We don't have enough proactive policies against displacement in gentrifying areas, and we can do that. We're choosing all of, this is a choice and we're choosing not to do that. The siloed funding streams and expectation of those streams, the administration, the national administration -- I mean, the federal administration are, we will be releasing mounds of money that it'll just be flowing through. But again, it's siloed. Some from HUD, some from treasury, some from all these different places. It's like come on people, can we get this together? Can we at least look across all of these funding streams and begin to figure out how we can leverage them, how we can braid them and then work with philanthropy to see where they're working rather than everybody's always got to be you know, the you know, star or the person that's putting it out because that's a hindrance right? If you've got to go to all these different places to try to tie together your community rather than actually having a group that can bring together all of those different funding streams and to figure out where they best use to stabilize those communities that have been under invested in, are just left behind completely. And then we do not want to leave behind just the racism, the biases, and the prejudices right? That structure, that uphold those policies and those systems that continue to perpetuate all of those outcomes. And don't put into place the kind of accountability that should be there. We think that if we just sort of go to work and do our job and many of us, you know, were part of the government and you know, it's sort of the bureaucracy that happens there that's just not good enough. We've got to make sure that the folks that are working, that are using taxpayer dollars, that they're actually working for people you know. There's that little thing about you know, for the people by the people. Well, we need to actually do that and so if we can't find a way to do that, we're going to perpetually stay in this whole notion of homelessness and folks really looking for housing constantly over and over. Okay, I think that's all of my time.

HAG: 27:39

Thank you Regina, thank you for your testimony. And before I move on to the third person, I want to acknowledge that we have been joined by our Chair previously -- Jennifer John Saulston, who is the Chair of the Commission. We want to thank her for being here.

Jennifer John Saulston (JJS): 27:59

Thank you Henry, thank you Vice Chair. I'm just going to remain silent and listen.

HAG: (28:05)

Thank you. I also neglected to introduce our team, that we could not do this without the support of the tremendous work of our team lead by our Executive Director Anusha Venkataraman and also Melanie Ash, who is our General Counsel, as well as -- There are other members of the teams that are here, so I want to thank them for their patience with us as we go through this very very difficult process, as we get prepared. So let me move on to the last member of this particular Panel, Janita Lewis, whom I introduced earlier. So Juanita, would you start please with your presentation --

Juanita Lewis (JL): 28:52

Treat, thank you and thank you again to the Commission and to the other panelists that are here today about this very important topic. So just a little bit about me and CVH -- As it was stated, my name is Juanita Lewis and I will be the incoming Executive Director of Community Voices Heard, starting September 1st. And for those that don't know, Community Voices Heard is nearly a 30 year old community power building organization that has chapters in New York City, Westchester, Orange, and Dutchess counties, and a lot of our New York City work has been focused with tenants in public housing. So NYCHA and also with tenants in private development, and so a lot of the things that Barika said and Regina said are completely resonating with me and the work that we do at Community Voices Heard because our members are truly the experts, they are the ones who have been deeply impacted by the problems that these systems have perpetuated and are often very clear about what needs to happen in order to fix these problems, and by when they want it. And at various times when they've had those conversations or just thinking it's unfortunate that the bias already comes in, that if you don't check certain boxes, you're not seen as an expert. And when you're not seen as the expert, it's just seeing like okay, this person is just talking to me about a particular issue or problem, and it could feel dismissive. And so we of course, we don't want to perpetuate that when we're talking about building a true, equitable New York City that will benefit all. And so you know, looking at the work that we do at CVH when it comes to leadership, development and engagement, we know that we have to meet people where they're at. So when we do a lot of door knocking, we're asking those, what do you care about most and why and you know, when we do that, we're able to follow up from there about, what are things, if you want to see change in your neighborhoods, and then we're able to build a strategic campaign off of that. That allows us to know who the people are that have the power to move this and what are the tools and the tactics that we need in order to move things forward, and the one of the biggest barriers that we come up across right? Because a lot of our members are clear about the fact of having residents have control or input around how processes happen, whether it comes from you know, how are decisions made with NYCHA in particular right? To how money is spent in particular communities, to make sure that's actually benefiting their needs. And so one big bold idea that would, that would be interesting to think about is having tenants from public housing have a saying who the next chairperson would be, because they're the ones who are directly impacted right? So you know, residents working with the administration to be able to say like, this is the criteria that we're looking for right? We actually want to see a partner in this as

opposed to at times, you know, an adversarial relationship when it doesn't have to be. The other thing that'll be interesting in, Barika and Regina talked about this as well, around like zoning practices and projects and how they've happened in communities that have excluded those who are directly impacted, and you know, historically been impacted and particularly Black and Brown communities and low income communities, and knowing that if we want to change that system, and problem is that there has to be some real investment around staffing and community engagement in those areas where projects are, because what would it look like if there was more money set aside, and real money set aside to have additional staff people that would be hired front he community. Because they have an intimate knowledge of the neighborhoods and being able to do some real engagement with people in those communities, to be able to say like, this is the kind of plan and type of development we want to see here. So then again, it doesn't feel like it is a process that is being told to people in communities, to be able to say like this is the kind of plan and type of development we want to see here. So then again, it doesn't feel like it is a process that is being told to people in communities, and then saying yes, we do want your input, but then it feels like when there's little, when there is some input, the opposite at times will happen. And so that doesn't lend itself to have a healthy relationship or a productive relationship or partnership with those in various administrations or decision making positions to improve communities. And then we deceive the further segregation of communities and people think left out, and we don't want that to continue. The other piece that I would say that was a big, that's something big and interesting to look at is you know, how are we funding particular programs and in particular, if there's an organization that is needed to help people for instance, fill out the emergency rental assistance form right? We know that that is, there have been some challenges with it, but being able to have additional staff people or an organization have additional staff to help individuals fill that out, that's something that's necessary but it's not thought of as something that's urgent, that money needs to be put upfront. It's usually added on right, or given at the end of when that job is done. And you know frankly, that adds an extra burden to those organizations because usually staffing needs to happen, that a lot of those organizations don't have the extra funding for and so in a place where you're seeing that you want to help, it's not helpful so being able to have those agencies receive their money up front for the full contract, so getting their contracts paid out earlier to allow them to be able to do the work of like, staffing up and adding capacity to be able to help residents in particular od whatever they need to do, community residence what have you, and then that also just leads to the overall how funding happens. So you know at CVH, we did a lot of work to push for participatory budgeting in New York City and what it would be interesting to see, if that was something that was just adopted citywide and the way that we think about our budgets, do you know, outside of just having like City council Members be able to allocate some money from the discretionary fund, can we start looking overall at you know, various budgets right? And using the fund framing of how do we look at being able to invest in places as opposed to completely just shutting down right? That we're investing in particular services and activities and programs that will act, that will help build up the community and curb this whole idea of what crime is and does that funding, is being spent and being clear about where they would want that money to go. The progress of that, and so I think Regina had mentioned that she's around accountability, so for us, it's clear

that we need to be able to track how things are happening. So it's great if you know a particular program is getting extra funding or a particular policy is passed. But then, being able to track the progress to see impact is crucial and for a lot of our members right? I feel at times well, okay, that that particular thing got funded. But I can't feel that right, and I don't know if you say it happened. We can see in somewhere in a budget that it happened, but we don't feel that direct impact. So how do we start to really track impact and improvement, to be able to go back and say this is what we saw from doing this, what do we need to do to actually make it better so more community members feel that impact and so having more, I would say, direct conversations with community members and having a real strategy around community engagement and overlaying that with the history of particular communities, the history of segregation, disinvestment, what have you to be able to come informed to those conversations, to say we have to do things differently. Which takes time, energy, and resources, and listening to those who are exports of their communities right? who have been directly impacted by these particular situations and I believe my time is up.

HAG: (37:11)

Thank you, thank you for your remarks for Anita. I think this is a good segway to, and thank all the panelists, but I think this is a segway to the discussion you, that you mentioned, and I want to welcome the panelists who may want to ask questions about it. But let me start with this -- You talked about the big ideas, this is directly for you or for any members of the panel, and you mentioned some of those ideas -- I think part of the struggle, or at least that the circumstances that we have as a commission, is that the intent is to have what we present as ideas right? As recommendations to the public in general, what we voted on in the November 22 election. So what's happening is we have a limited number of big ideas that we want to push under the issue of equity right? And so I think this is not just for you because I think you mentioned it Juanita -- But this is for all of the panelists, which is what do you believe, would be the biggest ideas that this Commission can push towards the idea of, in the housing area. Given all the challenges right? Mental health access to the community right? Lotteries, all the stuff that we've talked about in many. But what would be like the big ideas that you propose for us to consider that could be on, in the Charter, proposal next year in November 2022. And that goes for any of the three panelists.

JL: 39:03

I mean, I believe I would say something like one of the biggest things, the big bold ideas that could happen that like you said, I could go on the ballot for next year -- Definitely this issue around budgeting right? Like how budgets are done, who you know, who has a say in them. Because being able to know, you know, how much money is allocated for particular programs that we're talking about in particular -- Some of the housing programs right? Gives a sense of okay, this program needs to be funded at a particular level in order to do this particular, to do this thing, or people who are impacted by this program should have a say in how that money is

being spent and whether that's you know, participatory budgeting going on the budget, or something to that effect. Being able to have a say around the budget, it would definitely be when you, because when you look at how money is allocated, that's where the inequity begins right? That's how you see who gets money and who doesn't, and we -- We traditionally know what those communities look like.

HAG: (40:06)

Thank you, any of the other Commissioners have questions around this issue or for the panel? Okay, my next question I think is specific to Regina if you're still here. Yeah. I want to ask you because there's something you said about the issue of homelessness, the video of housing as a holistic approach as it applies to you know, sort of like, not only the actual physical infrastructure of a home, but also the social aspects that accomplish, and one of those issues in homelessness, which is often ignored, sexual mental mental health right? How important it is to connect the two issues. And so you mentioned something that I thought was very interesting, when you said that you want to concentrate on folks that are mostly impacted. And at times, I think one of our things have been where we have these, what Commissioner Hamilton often said seemingly race neutral ideas that, but in application become you know, quite the opposite right? It's like we try to structure applications that are similar that anybody could apply -- But if you have somebody with mental health who could not apply to begin with that usually you know, so what I think, what change do you think, since housing and, seems to be completely devoid of these, what other ideas do you think we can, the Commission should look into before making recommendations?

RC: (42:04)

Yes, especially for those folks that are experiencing homelessness to always pair service dollars with the housing, to just say it's about housing. It will not work now, folks can choose you know, not to accept the services, but to not to have those services available. You're just setting up failure for so many folks because it is not just the four walls, and it's not even just the mental health. I mean, it is the physical health, it is also the connections. I cannot tell you how many times I have gone to local shelters and people talked about having come back to the shelter because they were put out in some place that they could, that they had no connection, no community, no family, that's part of mental health too. So mental health has a range but if we do not invest the dollars in the kinds of services, so across the spectrum, whether they be mental health, whether they be recovering, whether they be connecting with the community, all of those things that actually make life well and so that folks have wellbeing. And I would say to always pair those two and it seems like it never gets paired. It's, the focus is on the brick and mortar, which is wonderful. But if you leave the other out, you leave part of someone's life out.

BW: (43:16)

Could I answer your previous question as well, which will build on some of what Regina said, is that okay? In terms of ideas, so I think one big idea that I would suggest the Commission look at is comprehensive planning, and we don't mean that as tied specifically to just land use technicality, but really having a robust conversation about planning for the needs of the city and where the resources of the city go right? So whether I mean, Regina's talking about shelters, Juanita's talked about night shifts right? So how can we as a city say we are going to dedicate resources to these different aspects and elements, and we're going to do it fairly so that every neighborhood and all the communities in the city take on some of the responsibility, the opportunity, the obligation of what that means financially, socially, culturally, to serve, protect and support these various different parts of our city and our government right? So we don't have a way right now of saying every community is responsible for x amount of affordable housing units. So instead, we have a system that just says we put them where we can find a location in the moment, that it is time to build them. We do the same thing for our shelter units, we do the same thing for our supportive housing units right? And so therefore, we end up in a system where it's the communities who have been more marginalized, who historically have been, that places that don't have resources. But oftentimes, are also still the communities that have available land, are where all of this goes. And the other communities are able to say we don't want it, we're opting out, we're not doing it. And so we continue to perpetuate the cycle with, without a conversation of what everybody in the city's responsibility of affordable housing or shelters of up zoning and increased density. And so those are, that's something that I think we ANHD and many of our members, thriving communities coalition, really deeply believe that we have to have. Because if you're asking a community of color who has suffered for decades to take on something that is difficult as a community, you better believe that we expect that you're asking our other communities, and especially white wealthier communities, to be taking on more than what we are taking on ourselves. And that conversation is not happening right now.

HAG: 45:55

Thank you Erica. I believe Commissioner Davie has a question. Sure.

Fred Davie (FD): 46:00

Thank you Vice Chair Garrido, and I want to thank the panelists as well for their thoughtful and expert remarks. I want to see if I can just do a twist on your first question Vice Chair and ask each of the panelists -- If you had to look over the last 10 years at one sort of significant accomplishment you think you organization or some other organization in the field of housing, particularly affordable housing, deeply affordable housing has made -- What would that be and what kind of structural change would need to be made in the city to be able to replicate that significant success throughout the city or in other neighborhoods if that's a fair question.

HAG: 46:56

Any one of the panel members?

RC: 47:03

I can answer -- I think for us, it has been to build out supportive housing that actually have, that are live, work, and play that, so that you're literally building out an entire community, helping to stabilize the community because just as Barika was saying, if you just say I'm going to put some affordable housing there, put it over there, but if you are working within the community, what are all the things that the community needs? So whether it's an FQAC you know, a healthcare center, youth centers, all of those things, and so part of the work that we do is actually build out that kind of supportive housing that is live, work, play, so that you're bringin in everything at the same time. New market tax credits, you're working with an array of partners so that you're literally saying community, what else do you need so that we can build this community together. And so that's some of the work that we've done over the last 10 years.

FD: 47:52

And what kind of structural changes or Charter changes if I can ask that might be made in order to sustain and replicate that success.

RC: 48:06

Part of it was for us, was making sure that those that were building this deeply affordable housing, the support of housing that they actually, through the finance corporations and all that they were incentivized you know. Whether it was through the four percent of the nine percent tax credits, that's saying that if you're building you know, this deeply supportive housing, this deeply affordable housing, that you get first dibs, that you are actually, get those additional points when it comes to the tax credits. And the same thing with the new market tax credits. If you're building in a neighborhood where folks have said they want you there, you know, around whatever the new centers are, then you get additional points for that. So that's how we built in to incentivize that kind of work in the community.

BW: 48:52

Do you want each one of us to answer?

HAG: 48:55

No no, I think Commissioner Davie, that is, is that sufficient that you want to continue your questions?

FD: 49:04

No, I mean that's fine, but if I don't, if the others want to contribute, I'd certainly be open to hearing from them if that doesn't take up too much of our time.

HAG: 49:16

Real quick because we have a little bit of time constraints, and we ask if we can address that.

BW: 49:23

I will go quickly. I will say very quickly to Commissioner Davie, one's right to counsel, which is still limited in its scope, but really has changed not only our New York City but our national conversation about the power dynamics that happen when people get evicted, and how much we change and can really transform, how many people are facing eviction. When we provide people with legal representation and the other one is a little technical and wonky, but I would say is a recent win which is the racial impact study legislation, which will require data on the racial demographic information, housing development and displacement risks at a local geography level on a regular basis by city government. And this is because for a long time, we have been fighting folks who don't believe that displacement and disparate impact as it comes to race, is a real thing. And now we finally have the information to move that conversation forward.

HAG: 50:26

Thank you Barika. Let me just turn it over to Commissioner Yoo, who's been waiting. She has a question. Commissioner.

Jo Ann Yoo (JAY): 50:35

Thank you so much, I loved hearing this panel. I come out of the community development background, so you know, fight the good fight sisters. I'm with you. But just a couple comments, you know, I think about affordable housing and you know, I live in a neighborhood that's like the hot market. And I wonder, are we ever going to have a conversation about the definition of what affordability means? Because I would say that you know, I look at what affordable housing you know, units that go from my neighborhood, and I laugh because I think like, I have a job and I can't, there's no way I can afford to live in one of those buildings right. And so I think you know, that puts a lot of strain on working families, low income New Yorkers, and so you know, I'd love to figure out at some point, how do we have an honest conversation about what affordability is and I really appreciate the conversation about NIMByism right, because you know that too is an issue in my neighborhood. We talk about homeless shelters and we talk about what is coming to our neighborhood, and I've seen some really, I've seen pushback. But from the tone of just complete tone deafness, that is heartbreaking, infuriating. And so you know, I hear that in my own neighborhood and you know also in our own

community, in the Asian American community, there's you know, we have hidden homelessness. I don't think people realize that Asian Americans have homelessness but you know, I worked with Commissioner Kui and you know, we would take bankers and advocates and allies through some of the affordable housing projects that you know, we were working on at raffy and people would cry at the doorway because they couldn't believe that this is how people live. There were 10 adults living in a you know, a tiny one bedroom apartment. And so I think there's this, you know, sense of hidden homelessness. When we talk about homelessness, often Asian Americans aren't included, and I think it's because of this -- I've seen people live in like shifts on bunk beds, you know, and there is no dignity to that. And then ultimately, you know what all this leads to is, you know, with Black and Brown communities being chronically underfunded when new immigrants who are low income don't have jobs, they move into those communities that sets up a natural fight right? Like why are you coming, there's a displacement, conversations that are happening that we need to figure out how to teach people that you know, their stories are all tied together and their plight is, they're in it together and their solidarity, work. And finally, I just want to thank Regina for, you know, all that you said about homelessness. I know Barika had mentioned the Anti-Asian hate crimes that are happening and so many of their perpetrators have mental illness and you know. It's, the people can be angry but the reality is you know, we're all outraged about what we see but the perpetrators don't have homes where they have an address to be able to get medication, to be able to get medical services. And so in this way you know, it's a system that plays out. And you're absolutely right, that things are siloed, but that's the problem. It needs ot be comprehensive, we need to look at this as a whole. You need to have a home to have an address, so you can get a caseworker, and you can go to a doctor and get medicine right? Like, we need to think about all of this that ties in together. So I am very profoundly moved by all their testimonies and thank you for all the great work that you're doing.

HAG: 54:09

Thank you Commissioner Yoo. Let me, I think Commissioner Bermudez had her hand out.

Ana Bermudez (AB): 54:19

My question I think, was answered in part, but I also wanted to ask -- The comment that I think was Regina who you made this comment, DCP does not do race, is that, was that you or was it, can you tell me more about that because aside from Charter revisions, we want to influence policy, and if there's like a sort of more city wide policy we can have that applies to all agencies regardless of you know, since we all know that even if you say you don't do race, you're doing race. What was the context of that, what would you recommend to counteract that attitude in a city agency?

BW: 55:04

So the context is pretty much the way that DCP operates to say it bluntly, I mean they see themselves as more technocratic brokers. And I say this as a planner so this is not around the planning profession, but that they see themselves as administering what many of us would frame more so as zoning changes than doing actual planning for communities. And so they see their role as moving the process and increasing or decreasing zoning and density. And that in their framework, is a race blind process, and that is what they have communicated to many of us many times. Across the city, we run into DCP staff who are responsible for rezoning in a neighborhood in the Bronx who have never set foot in the entire borough of the Bronx right? So that, those are the circumstances and that's the environment that we encounter. And then I think it was both Juanita and Regina touched on this, and then when they end up in those community meetings, are delegitimizing and devaluing those community members' voices of what they see as truth, what their experiences are. And so for us, it has become incredibly difficult to move forward conversations around transformation and race equity with an agency who says I am race blind. We do not have race-blind neighborhoods in New York City, and that is the dilemma -- That we regularly struggle with face and are really out of stalemate with, and I would say this doesn't just extend to ANHD, and our partners and ur members quite frankly I think, even for-profit developers are realizing how broken this process is and how much development processes seem to be running up against real difficult moving forward sometimes for very good reasons. But sometimes because it's just not working anymore.

AB: 57:16

Thank you.

HAG: 57:18

Thank you. Well, let me thank the panel --

CK: 57:23

May I ask a question?

HAG: 57:25

Yes, absolutely.

CK: 57:27

I'm sorry, just the following comment -- I used to serve on the Commission, the City Planning Commission, so I can you know, kind of testify to some of that experience you know, so that's the question I have -- Is that you know, weather any of the panelists and especially ANHD, have you guys kind of looked into maybe perhaps there needs to be some kind of structural creation of an agency or some sort of entity that really looked at planning for New York City as a whole,

and then look at you know, infrastructure needs, and then you know, look at the, down to the various neighborhoods and then the various kind of a plan that we need to develop as a city overall. You know, long term plans, whether it's like a three year plan, five year plan, ten year plan, etc. And then look at what are the different components that will create an equitable city. And I think right now, we don't have anything like that Department of City Planning, really does not do overall planning. I think you know from our own experience serving as a Commissioner there, so it's more like you said -- Based on really looking at various different individual projects, whether the zoning requirement or that you know, that a developer, what is the nonprofit or for-profit comes in, and they look to kind of say we have a project, and then what it conforms to various zoning elements. So I think that's something that I'd like to hear more from you know, from the panelists and especially I know has a lot of that larger picture.

BW: 59:21

One thing I'll say specifically, is that in the right to a roof platform and agenda, which was a series of community groups, and Regina mentioned this not being in those silos that unifies folks working on homelessness and NYCHA and home ownership and the totality of the continuum of housing, which we often don't talk about, is a specific proposal to have a Deputy Mayor that sits over all of those issues, as opposed to homelessness sitting separate from housing development, which sits separate from the Department of Buildings, which sits right. So recognizing that as residents, as homeowners, as landlords, that you deal with the totality of that environment -- But right now, we jump between various different government agencies. I think to your other question in terms of transforming that approach to planning, I think in the most optimistic framing, I think we'd be hopeful that a very aggressive direction from you all and an administration might set it on a better course. But this is a very entrenched way of approaching a practice as an agency, and it's very concerning if and how they start to transition and shift.

HAG: 01:00:48

Thank you, I think this idea is fascinating. Between the role of the City Council, you learn the role of the agencies and the role of the department like City Planning and how they appear to be, always in my view, a disconnect of the three. And then the fact that you don't have a Deputy Mayor on top of all three, like in this holistic way, you know, we talked about mental health as a component of it, completely detached from economic development in a way is, I think it's amazing, certainly something that as a Commission, we should have in our discussion. But let me just conclude by thanking you all, the three panelists for coming today. We're going to take a short break as we transition to the next panel, a small short two minute break as we transition to the next panel. So please don't go too far. Thank you all panelists for coming today. Thank you panelists, thank you for having us. Thank you.

~BREAK

HAG: 01:04:41

Okay, so we should begin to return back. Commissioner Yoo, before I start, is that your hand still up from the previous panel?

JAY: 01:05:03

Yes, I have no questions yet -- Sorry, let me lower my hand.

HAG: 01:05:13

Alright. So let me introduce the next panel. The first member of that panel is Michael Pardis, who is the Executive Director of Bronx Cooperative Development Initiative, which is a nonprofit organization focused on advancing economic democracy through shared wealth strategies and community-based planning with working class Bronx residents. He is also the co-founder of the Bronx Brotherhood Project, a volunteer-based college success and mentorship program for Black and Latino teams at the New Settlement College Access Center. So next on that panel, we have Tarry Hum -- I hope I pronounced it correctly -- Professor, a Chair of the United and Chair of the Department of Urban Studies at Queen's College, City University of New York CUNY, and an affiliate faculty member of the CUNY Graduate Center. Professor Hum is an Urban Planner with a Master's in City Planning from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and holds a PHD in Urban planning from UCLA's Luskin School of Public Affairs. Professor Hum's book, "Making a Global Immigrant Neighborhood: Brooklyn's Sunset Park " received a 2015 Paul Davidoff BOK Award of Honorable Mention from the Association of Collegiate Schools of Planning. And the third member of the panel is Diane Wong, who is an Assistant Professor of Political Science at Rutgers University in Newark. Her research and teaching interests include American Politics, Asian America Politics, Gender and Race and Sexuality, Urban Governance, Comparative Immigration, Immigration, Race, Ethnicity, and Ethnicity Cultural media Studies, and Community-Rooted Search.

Thank you all three of you for joining us today and let me start with Michael Pardis, the Executive Director of Bronx Cooperative Development Initiative -- Michael.

Michael Pardis (MP): 01:07:42

Good afternoon everyone, thank you. I'm excited to be here. So BCDI, we aim to facilitate and coordinate equitable economic development and the goal is to create a sustainable and democratic economy that eradicates the racial wealth gap and for us, we believe that this is achieved through movement building and community organizing, specifically with BIPOC leadership with a clear aim of racial justice and economic transformation. You heard that our organization's approach is one rooted in what we call "economic democracy." Economic democracy is an asset-based approach which I think is important for setting the conversation here around justice -- It's an asset-based approach where we believe that the Bronx has the

talent, human capital, and solidarity right? And social capital to transform long-term poverty, and that in fact, we are investing in red line communities and their leadership because the solutions exist there now. An example of the solutions that I want to set for us in April -- We kicked off a Bronx-wide planning process where in coalition, we are creating a 30-year economic development plan for the borough, one that's rooted in racial justice and economic democracy that I mentioned before. And that process involves a cohort of community, faith, and labor organizations from all across the Bronx. Now from design to implementation, this is rooted in community and to set that one of the things that we have done is we've had people's assemblies and those people's assemblies are grounded in mapping assets, challenges, threats, and opportunities, and we use that as the foundation to uplift current solutions that we need to invest in and scale and also co-create the systemic solutions over short, medium, and long term. Now at the June 26 assembly, we had over 70 Bronx heights at 10 and specifically discuss challenges in housing and I want to raise those challenges to you very quickly as drivers for us to think about -- A group mentioned things that we know around repairs and evictions right? We know the deep crisis that's happening, we know what we would call the rent burden, lack of affordable housing, and how rent is cutting into family incomes. But the other challenges they mentioned were lack of community ownership, holding elected officials accountable and real estate speculation driving development. I think this is important because we asked two questions right? We asked two questions and two critical questions came up from the group, and I want to lift those two questions here. One question the group asked, who's approving all of this? A second question that the group asked is why can't we only. And I think those two critical questions that the group raised really sets a foundation for what in this Commission we could do immediately. So our coalition in 2021 created a Bronx people's platform, and I want to highlight the housing components of that platform -- There were three things that provide permanent safe and quality housing for all New Yorkers, implement development without displacement, and support community intended ownership. Some concrete solutions within that -- Low interest loan grants and other forms of non-extractive finance that could be provided to groups that are facilitating local ownership and cooperative management, passing the community opportunity to purchase act at the city level and TOPA at the state level, enforcing transparent community, legally binding community benefits, agreements, and adding community governance and feedback on the design and implementation of, as we just mentioned, the ratio impact study bill, to ensure that all land uses examines the impact on people of color. And straightforwardly, the platform acts to end all current efforts to privatize NYCHA. Now, as our coalition, in our lessons from zoning and housing discussions that we've had in the borough throughout several different neighborhoods from Southern Boulevard to Jerome Avenue, it's also aligned and I think it's important that I want to lift and elevate here the joint principles for shared equity that was recently created by 20 organizations who are part of the New York City Community Land Initiative. And in those joint principles specifically tied to housing, three things that this coalition brought together that is important for us to address immediately work with long-standing financial supporters of community land efforts like credit unions -- Improving transparency accountability and inter-agency coordination, especially when it involves the development of public land. And I think we've heard that in the previous panel, and enacting policies that create property pipelines for

community land trust that includes abolishing city tax, lien sales, prioritizing CLTs, community land trusts, and social housing for public land disposition. Now to conclude what this points to, I think is the transformation that we want to invite the Commission to consider regarding housing justice and again, building off of the New York community land trust, those 20 organizations and their joint principles, one transformation is simply taking a transformation, sorry, simply taking a reparations framework, taking that on what would that be -- It would be based and led by low-income Black, Brown, and immigrant communities, keep long-term residents who are facing displacement pressures in place, provide wise shared benefits over time, address long-standing racial disparities in our economy and promote equitable access to safe and affordable housing, living wage jobs, responsible financial services, healthy food and environment and other essential needs.

Now a few things that I think along with that transition that this initiative mentioned that's important -- Let's ensure that equity means decision making residents, cooperative owners and communities have a weighted share in voting or whatever other mechanisms are used to decide the design development and evolution of housing projects and policy. So from vision to implementation and throughout evaluation, that those most deeply connected actually have power, I think there's a note here around nature to raise for you all to consider. Let's approach NYCHA hop programming and strategies from an asset building perspective, resources and training -- I'm sorry, resources for training and access to investment for entrepreneurs, even retirement savings for residents, ownership of repaired NYCHA properties. Some ideas around asset building and taking that approach would be really transformative in the nature bucket. I think we've talked about abolishing rent arrays, I think it's something to consider as there's a barrier to receiving financial support for housing costs, there's a challenge with the public lottery system that needs amending for affordable housing, for us to consider how the housing insecure in their neighborhoods could actually be kept there and last. I think a transformation would be adding the right to housing to the City Charter; now the series of both what can be done immediately and what can be done to transform, those are raised again from community conversations in coalition, in deep partnership and through a co-governance, co-designing process that not only the BCDI organization I'm a part of is a part of coordinating and facilitating with partners, but is representative of what's happening throughout the social sector as the New York City Community Land Initiative, and their joint principles represent that folks have been researching, practicing, innovating, and fighting forward for innovative transformative solutions that they've come to, and that represents the list that was just shared and I hope that is considered. And we'll have more time to discuss later. Thank you all for your time.

HAG: 01:16:35

Thank you Michael, thank you for your testimony. If everybody stood in or the Commissioners were gonna hold up questions for the next panelist -- So we're gonna move forward. A panel

member, give me one second, my system is freezing -- But the next panel member that we have is Professor Tarry Hum. Thank you, I've not been able to pronounce your name correctly.

Tarry Hum (TH): 01:17:18

That's okay, yeah it's pronounced Tarry Hum, but that's fine. So good afternoon Commissioners, I'm honored by this invitation to present before the Racial Justice Commission, primarily through the lens of recent housing and land use struggles in Flushing, Queens, an immigrant community of color. I like to address in my presentation today, the New York City Economic Development Corporation, which is a powerhouse driving private, commercial, real estate development, and subsequently direct and indirect residential and small business displacement and the role of community boards in the uniform land use and review procedure or Euler, which is the public review process for zoning and land use changes and the disposition of public publicly owned land -- In a capitalist economy, planning and development are driven by a growth imperative and not by principles and strategies of racial equity inclusion and justice. A growth imperative privileges the exchange value of land, that is to say, the highest and best use of land as determined by the marketplace rather than its use value, meaning its value to people, communities, and users. For example, affordable housing community gardens -- This tension between use and exchange values is captured in the simple phrase "people not profits," a transformative approach to land use would be to privilege use value community land trusts, as some of our other panelists have mentioned, do this by taking land out of the private market, thereby decommodifying land and establishing non-profit ownership. It's encouraging that the new city budget includes a historic investment of 1.5 million in the city-wide Community Land Trust Initiative. All public land should remain in public or non-profit ownership, and used to advance racial equity and justice. Another transformative idea to tackle racial inequity is to dismantle planning and economic development agencies that are singularly focused on a growth imperative, and to reimagine cities and comprehensive planning initiatives with racial justice and inclusion as a core and central mission. Dr. Lisa Bates, an urban planner and scholar, worked with the Portland African American leadership forum on a people's plan, which posed the question, what would it be like if your city, neighborhood, community loved Black people. In Boston, City Councilor At Large, Michelle Wu, a mayoral candidate, is running on a platform which includes abolishing the Boston Planning and Development Authority. According to her 2019 report titled "Fixing Boston's Broken Development Process," the Boston Planning and Development Authority is much like the New York City Economic Development Corporation, in that the authority acts as a property manager and collects revenue without full accountability to the public good. New York City EDC manages over 64 million square feet of city-owned commercial real estate and is tasked with promoting job creation and economic development; however, New York City is a component of the city's architecture that supports structural racism and inequality. Although it is a mayoral controlled quasi-public agency that is organized as a not-for-profit, the New York City EDC has long been criticized for subsidizing private corporations and commercial real estate development while creating few jobs for everyday new Yorkers New York City EDC's 2004 downtown Flushing framework is illustrative of its role in catalyzing transformative gentrification

and contributing to a hyper-speculative real estate market. The Downtown Flushing framework involved rezoning and the subsequent displacement of hundreds of immigrant owned auto body repair shops and industrial small businesses and their workers. It also involved the rezoning and below market sale of the former municipal parking lot number one, a five-acre site in Downtown Flushing which was the city's first experimental off street parking field created through urban renewal, which entailed the displacement of many African American property owners and residents in the 1950s. In 2010, this site was sold by the city to transnational developers, who have completed phase one -- Comprising 148 luxury residential condominiums and a privately owned public space. I want to underscore the below market sale of a five-acre city-owned site to real estate developers with no requirements for affordable housing or substantive public benefit despite widespread opposition -- The special Flushing Waterfront District is the third and final component of New York City EDC's Downtown Flushing framework. It completed Euler and was approved by the City Council last December. This special waterfront district will add 13 towers with 3 million square feet of luxury hotels, residential condos, retail and office space, and minimal number of affordable housing units at 60% of the area median income, which is \$46,620, even though the Department of City Planning finds that the median household income in Flushing is \$39,800. The addition of 1,725 luxury residential condos represents more than half of the luxury condominiums that were added to the Flushing market in the past decade. Since the site is largely vacant, the Department of City Planning and the developers noted no direct displacement will result from the special district; however, the speculative impact and surrounding property values was not accounted for homelessness, as Commissioner Yoo mentioned, in Flushing has spiked during the pandemic and a homeless elderly man died on Prince Street just blocks from the special district. Hopefully the new racial impact study mandate and the creation of a city-wide equitable development data tool will include property sales data to track real estate speculation and potential risk of secondary displacement. The Euler process for the special district underscores the inadequacies of the 2018 Charter reforms pertaining to community boards and the outstanding need to further democratize land use decision-making first despite the massive scale the complicated environmental matters including the remediation of Brownfields and the Flushing Creek and construction in a coastal flood hazard area. The Department of City Planning issued a negative declaration, which eliminated the need for a comprehensive environmental impact statement and opportunities for public engagement review and comment. Second, the single most important function of community boards is their role in land use review and Queens community board 7 illustrates the abuses of the city's lack of conflicts of interest rules. Queens CB7 Vice Chair and Land Use Committee Chair acknowledged he had a conflict of interest because he was a paid consultant to the special district developers, regardless he was permitted, he was not precluded from participating in community board discussions of the Special Waterfront District Proposal. A Youtube video recorded this individual's strong appeal to fellow members to approve the Special District Proposal on the evening of the community board's vote. This loophole should be corrected so that New York City aligns with the stricter New York State rules, that public officials may not vote or engage in discussions of proposals in which they have a personal interest to close. Inclusive and participatory community engagement and housing and land use decisions must

be one of the tools to dismantle structural racism in urban planning and development practices while the New York City charter creates an orderly and predictable land use review process. Euler is still not conducive to meaningful public input, serious deliberation, or decision making, as Barika Williams noted -- Comprehensive planning is necessary to plan and prepare for resilient and racially just neighborhoods and cities, City Council Speaker, Johnson's Planning Together Proposal relies on community boards to represent and advocate for the interests and concerns of local stakeholders and residents; however, addressing racial inequities in housing and land use will require further Charter reforms to address the significant and persistent representation gap in community board composition. It will require, we should adopt strict conflicts of interest rules, we should create opportunities for substantive public engagement in pre-europe discussions and land use application review, and we should imagine new definitions and approaches to economic development that are not centered on private actors and commercial real estate development, but rather, create substantive opportunities for economic mobility and justice for all New Yorkers. Thank you.

HAG: 1:27:30

Thank you Professor Hum, let me move on to the last member this panel -- Diane Wong, Assistant Professor of Political Science at Rutgers University, Professor Wong.

Diane Wong (DW): 1:27:51

Yes, thanks, thanks so much for organizing this convening. Can folks hear me okay? Okay, great. Yeah, thanks for organizing this convening, to the event organizers, Commissioners, and other panelists. It's really wonderful to be in conversation. My name is Diane Wong, I come to you from the unseated territories of Lenape people. My pronouns are she and they, I use them interchangeably. I start by acknowledging that we are on the homeland of the Lenape, which is and always has been a place of indigenous movement; therefore any and all conversations around housing and then equity must honor right the fact that indigenous peoples are the traditional stewards of this land and continue to do so today, so these conversations around racial equity must include the voices of indigenous scholars, organizers, activists, youth and elders, and must stand with all those advancing indigenous resurgence and decolonization. And so to truly reckon with dispossession, erasure, and displacement, I urge the Racial Justice Commission to take on the responsibility to dismantle the ongoing effects of the other colonialism and just for full disclosure and transparency, I am an active member of the Chinatown Art Brigade, which works closely with CAPS and their Chinatown Tenants Unions. I've worked closely with Emily Mock over the years around eviction defense tenant protection language justice. I'm also a Co-Founder of the WAH Project, which is an Asian American Youth Slide Initiative of space out of the oldest store in Manhattan's Chinatown, located at 26 Month Street called Wing on Wo & Co that uses arts activism to combat displacement and cultural racial from gentrification specifically. And so drawing from this work, I think it's really important to recognize that any conversations and possible solutions for housing justice and land equity

in New York City must be understood from an intersectional framework right? That takes into account policing language, access, poverty, unemployment, indigeneity, as well as disability. But today, I want to talk about the critical intersections between housing and policing and the need to take seriously what residents and organizers in the city have demanded for quite some time, and that is to divest, disarm, and defund the police to reinvest in communities, in New York City's working-class folks, communities of color, and Black communities in particular continue to be hyper-policed, which by definition, is the excessiveness in policing in terms of both resource allocation and in terms of intensity of criminalization. According to NYCHA Rising, a report released in February of this year, hyper-policing often occurs in the areas that are closest to where people live and spend their time, disproportionately impacting those who are on house or residents of public housing in New York City. Black men are 2.5 times more likely to be killed by the police and White men right -- Black women are 1.4 times more likely to be killed by the police than White women. Trans people of color are six times more likely to experience police violence during an encounter than White cisgender people. I'm also thinking of migrant workers who continue to live in the city with the persistent effects of force displacement and inequitable resource distribution, and hyper-policing women like Yang Seong, an Asian massage parlor worker who fell to her death in Flushing, Queens in November of 2019, fleeing law enforcement during a targeted advice raid right? These racial realities are crucial when we consider the intersections of housing, policing, and state violence in terms of resource allocation. A high percentage of exponentials are dedicated solely to policing last fiscal year, 11 billion from the city's budget was allocated to the NYPD, making it the the largest police budget in the country. The NYPD's budget outshines allocations for other services like parks, library, sanitation, health, hospitals, and housing by at least 2.5 times right? Over 36% of the city's budget goes to the NYPD while only 1% goes to public housing. So in other words right, for every dollar that goes to the NYPD, only 29 cents goes to homeless services, 19 cents goes to housing preservation development, only 12 cents goes to youth and community development. And so the city is also now choosing to spend another 11 billion dollars to build four new jails in the Bronx, Manhattan, Queens, and Brooklyn -- which will disproportionately impact Black, Brown and the Indigenous youth who are already hyper-criminalized right? And funneled through the school to prison to a school to prison pipeline. And so this is really a time where people, especially youth, want to see radical structural changes to institutions and to the systems that no longer work and no longer serve our communities. According to a gen forward survey fielded last summer that asked young adults ages 18 to 36 questions about policing, 85% of Asian American, 76% of Latinx, and 77% of Black Youth support the creation of a new agency of first responders that would specialize in de-escalation of violence, providing mental health support, safe housing, other social services that would take over the responsibilities from the police. In addition, 75% of Asian Americans, 70% of Black and 60% of Latinx youth support divesting from police departments and putting their entire budgets towards investment in other areas that include healthcare and housing. And according to a wonderful report and resource put out by NHD, the amount of money allocated to one year of the NYPD budget could cover five year citywide capital needs for like electrical, mechanical elevator work in all mitral buildings, and that's tremendous right? So for me, the critical question at hand here becomes, how do we care for our communities because

before it becomes too late, right? Before more New Yorkers become unhoused and become unwell; and so I think the answer really is to divest, disarm, and defund the police because that's a way to reimagine community wholeness and to build what scholar activist Ruth Wilson Gilbert calls "life-affirming institutions programs and infrastructure" instead. Right at this moment, people want change, they want structural changes, they want radical changes, the COVID pandemic as well as a pandemic of police violence have revealed the deadly impacts of structural racial violence and the need for investment in communities, in Black communities and communities of color, in immigrant communities, in working class communities across the city. And so for this fiscal year, the city shifted 22 million right out of NYPD capital funds towards reallocating towards renovating three nitro centers I believe at the Monroe houses in the Bronx, by houses in Brooklyn and Wagner houses in Manhattan right? This is just a small step to what else could be possible -- Imagine what could be done if the 11 billion for the NYPD in addition to the 11 billion to build four new jails in the city were reinvested back into communities, and so in amplifying the demands of those on the front lines, I recommend a Charter amendment that one, replaces the police department with a new Community Safety and Violence Prevention Department, and two, immediately reallocate resources towards community control over land right, through land trust as well as safe housing for low-income residents, as well as health care youth programming, localized conflict management, and community-based violence prevention programs that exist outside of the law enforcement. And so there's so much more to say, but I'm going to end here. I actually, I have another appointment to get to right now actually, so I might miss a discussion, but I would love to continue the conversation -- I'm happy to take questions via email. I think Eden has my contact information, so please send that around.

HAG: 01:36:32

Thank you, thank you for your testimony. We'll follow up on written email testimony, so hope all as well, let me invite the Commissioners to ask questions. I want to take a moment to ask clarification from Mr. Pardis on his presentation regarding homeowners, community ownership, and one of the things that he mentioned -- I don't know if he's still with us, is Michael still with us?

MP: 01:37:05

I'm here.

HAG: 01:37:07

Yeah, so one question you mentioned in your presentation if you don't mind, when you talk about community ownership, you also talked about the banning of lien sales or private link sales that that have been discussed and I think this one just mentioned about the elimination of, possible elimination of the community land trust was your suggestion to connect the two. In other words, were they independent? Was your proposal, was your discussion about community ownership independent of that particular proposal? And I couldn't quite figure out whether you were suggesting that we turned the banning of lien sales, which has been talked

about as a challenge for communities of color, and turn that into homeowners, into community ownership, or whether the two issues were separate ideas that should stand on their own.

MP: 1:38:04

Thank you for the question. I think what we're raising here in one place is the process right? So abolishing the lien sale regarding what happens to the land -- So if we think about changing that and abolishing that, what could happen is this becomes an opportunity to create community ownership. I think the market-based approach that often is associated with the lien sale does, can be complicated and can be part of the issue. So if we kind of reimagine what do we do with these, with property and land that is available, the abolition is not a suggestion -- That would hurt the ability to create community ownership, but rather, it opens up new processes where we can think about what do we do with public, what do we do in land that can be in the public hand, and that can be designed towards many of the innovative solutions. So the abolish part is really around the market-based approaches that kind of then create difficulty, and what could be different processes if there are land that is available, that is in the hands of the public sector. What could it do, how could it be used as a tool of community ownership, so those are the two pieces that we were trying to connect there. I don't know if that gives a little bit of clarity.

HAG: 01:39:24

Oh, thank you. And for Professor Hum, I also have a question about your presentation. The EDC that you mentioned is such a powerful organization within the city, and at times, those who are questioned, myself included, about whether the EDC delivers the value for what is doing for everyday people, the land deals and sometimes are not clear right? To the public job creation proposals that seem to promise big jobs right, in the communities that they are located and deserve in exchange for tremendous tax break and other things you know -- Was your suggestion sort of similar to what Ms. Wong said, was to have a replacement of the EDC as a form of community, a particular housing area, or were you suggesting reforms within the EDC?

TH: 01:40:29

Thank you for that question, that's a great question. I think that, I mean the EDC as I understand, has an annual contract with the city to provide, you know, the asset management functions as well as its job creation and economic development functions. But oftentimes you know, we were just talking about how the New York City Department of City Planning fails to plan and is just kind of involved in technocratic kind of land use, rezonings or whatnot. It often feels like the DCP you know, kind of carries out the EDC's you know, economic and land use visions. There is a call to abolish the New York City EDC and to you know, because there really isn't any opportunity for public engagement as it exists now, for public engagement. There's been, you know, long time issues regarding transparency and accountability. I think when John

Lew was comptroller, he described the New York City EDC as a black hole, but since then, I think that there have been changes in the administrative code in which New York City EDC does need to kind of report revenues and expenditures and I think under its umbrella, it also oversees the New York City industrial development agency, which provides a lot of tax abatements and stuff like that. I think there needs to be greater accountability, I'm not sure that it's necessary to have EDC exist as is, as a separate entity in contract with the city. There might be greater possibilities for public engagement and review and accountability if it was abolished and if those functions came under the city again. I mean, I think that the origins of EDC was that it was once a public development corporation, which was a city agency. And then that was dismantled, you know, during the fiscal crisis era and EDC was created.

So I think that it's worth it to really explore and research, but EDC as is right now is a powerhouse. It drives a lot of the private development and the gentrification, particularly, I didn't mention this in my testimony, but it is promoting kind of the future sectors of New York City's economy, which for some reason for EDC, centers largely around tech, and a lot of the re-activation of New York City's waterfront is centered around creating these innovation hubs which don't create jobs you know, for everyday New Yorkers, as you noted.

HAG: 01:43:51

So I mean, I think it's interesting -- I want to invite all the Commissioners to ask questions, but I think from this panel, on the panel, before we begin to see what emerges as a real in my view, a pattern right? A discernible pattern, what you have, agencies like these -- Like EDC, and they all seem to have three letters, except for NIGEL, now that's five right? The land trust right, the communal interest, all these ideas where there seem to be promises for the great deliverables, whether it's jobs or affordable housing or other pieces that in many of you, in the view of many that necessarily transform into actual benefits of the community. But from the promise of the liberals an dl think that I'm beginning to see that as a pattern right, let me ask any other Commissioners who may have comments or questions to kindly raise the hand and just bear with me, because I see that -- Deputy Mayor Phil Thompson has his up.

Phil Thompson (PT): 01:45:04

Jo-Ann was ahead of me so I'll wait my turn.

HAG: 01:45:07

Oh okay, my mistake Commissioner Jo-Ann, pardon me.

JAY: 01:45:13

No worries, you know, if anybody gets to jump ahead of me, Deputy Mayor Thompson certainly should always be getting that priority, but my quick question for Tarry actually -- It's so good to see you, I hope you are well. But you know, my question kind of goes to what Henry

also posed is, when these developments happen, there's all of this community give right? Like we're going to do this for you, we're going to do this for you but you know, how do we hold those problems? How do we, you know, my question is around accountability right? Because after you know, group communities rally and then the project goes through and then like three four years we all kind of forget about the promises that have been made and you know, how do we really drill down and make sure that the commitments that the developer or anybody who has made are followed through with? So that way you know we get every community benefit that has been agreed to, and then, that's my question one. And question two is you know, we see so much of the developments happening in low-income immigrant communities of color and we end up, they end up having to be pitted against each other right? It is this constant, I guess this is my theme of the day today, it is the fact that like underserved communities, invisible communities are always made to fight each other right? And so I look at like what happened with Sunset Park and you know, one community wanted the possibility of more jobs without really understanding and there were other side of the community that were saying no because it's going to hold our communities, it's going to be harmful for our communities. And so when we have these tensions you know, what's the solution for bringing everybody together to really understand, because you know, it's who gets the information, it's who gets to you know, who the developers see could be a natural partner that often puts them against people with a similar interest right? And so what do we do especially in this time when we do need greater affordable housing? And I appreciate you mentioning, you know, the affordable housing crisis, but it's not just affordable housing -- It's this verbal effect on small businesses and you know, everything else in the neighborhood that gets dismantled when rapid gentrification happens. So I'll throw it over to you.

TH: 01:47:38

Thank you Jo-Ann. It's great to see you too, and that those are two hefty questions. I think I can answer the second one actually better than maybe the first one, because your first question is, you know, how do we enforce promises that are made by developers regarding community benefits. You know, I don't know if there really is a strategy that is legally binding to do that. I mean, there are community benefits, agreement, but I know that John Lew, when he had the, his kind of letter exchange with the Deputy Mayor of Economic Development and CEO of New York City Economic Development Corporation, that John thought he was signing a community benefits agreement, which for the Flushing Commons Project included you know, open space, a town plaza, it included a new home for the local YMCA, which even so, are still fairly modest community benefits for a five-acre site sold at below you know, market price. And those things have not materialized. Supposedly they're coming you know, in phase two -- Well, phase two hasn't happened but phase one certainly has and that development you know, brands itself. Is kind of setting the standard for new luxury in downtown Flushing, which in fact has come to fruition. I don't know what the tools are because I think that what we have at hand as the best model is a community benefits agreement, but the question of enforcement is always there, given transitions, a political leadership, etc. The second question, I think you were talking about how in racially diverse neighborhoods and certainly Sunset Park and Flushing, Queens,

and many you know, neighborhoods, are racially diverse. Majority, minority, but racially diverse, how do communities not get pitted against each other regarding, you know, development as a zero-sum game. Is that, is that the question? I think that a lot of it has to do with leadership and I, and it's kind of connected to Diane's presentation in which she really made a really compelling argument that a central part of a racial justice agenda for the City of New York has to be about defunding the police and what we found you know, in many of these racially diverse immigrant neighborhoods, is an emergence of an immigrant growth coalition that shares this kind of imperative of development and maximizing you know, their profits without having to provide any social housing or affordable housing. But that also, as part, also kind of exploited a lot of the community's fears around the Anti-Asian hate and violence during the pandemic. To call for greater policing of the communities and you know, and in fact, this past election season we saw an unprecedented number of Asian American candidates running for political office, which was very exciting, but what troubled me is that so many of them were very conservative also, and really were all you know, their agenda was primarily about public safety. And so you know, a company gentrification often in many you know, transitioning or mixed-income mixed-race neighborhoods is the presence of police and in some of these neighborhoods, Sunset Park, Flushing, we have auxiliary police, so we have some of the community leaders that are not only members of immigrant growth coalitions but also members of an auxiliary police force. So I think it has a lot to do with having, elevating the voices of activists like Diane and I can happily say that in Sunset Park, we have the Sunset Park assembly, we have other you know, forms of other kind of grassroots mobilizations that really do see the commonality and shared experiences and concerns and issues of of working class people in New York. I don't know if that answers it, but yeah.

HAG: 01:52:40

Thank you. Let me turn it over to Deputy Mayor, Phil Thompson.

PT: 01:52:46

Well, thank you and nice to see you here and also nice to see you Michael. And my question/comment is one on economic development. I believe NYCHA is the number one purchaser of elevators in the United States, but we don't make elevators in New York City and I also believe that we're going to be the number one purchaser of electric vehicles in the United States, but to my knowledge, we don't make electric vehicles or nor are there any plans for us to make electric vehicles in New York City. And I know Springfield, Massachusetts just lured and built a 4,000 worker factory to make subway cars, but they don't even have a subway in Springfield, Massachusetts. Really, it's to sell probably to us.

And my understanding is that the reason we don't make the things we buy and put a lot of New Yorkers to work is because there's a state municipal law that says the only thing we can consider when we purchase anything is price and the lowest price, and so I'm wondering kind

of what we need to change in state law versus things we can do in the city, or consider for a city charter, and kind of like getting clear on what our obstacles and limits are when it comes to generating jobs and using the city's procurement power to generate jobs. So that's kind of a question I have in general about like, how we, what we need to do and related to that -- I used to work at NYCHA, but I also worked in a lot of cities around the country, and New York is the only place where people would let the federal government off the hook and say well, the city should pay for public housing and put the billions of dollars in to fix it, when it's a federal program and they have walked away from that program. I know of no other city where people would say oh well, we should just pay for it and we should do that all ourselves. And I'm not disagreeing with the sentiment, but my question is what is, how much of housing is a right when it comes to paying for it? How much of that is a federal responsibility. I mean, I haven't heard anyone complain about the subsidies we give for homeowners, which is extremely retro aggressive -- The richer you are, the bigger federal subsidy, you get it. Dwarfs in size the money we put into affordable housing and it doesn't even come up. So how much of housing should we think of it as a federal responsibility? How much is a state responsibility? And then how much has a city, responsibility? And to me, I think about economic development also similarly and I'm just trying to like get help and sort of parsing this out you know, as we think about what we as a Commission like, what makes sense for us to focus on.

TH: 01:56:12

That's great. I don't know it is, I'm not sure that I mean, I thought that you're, I absolutely agree with your comment. I think that in some ways, the relationship between city and state, you know, certainly with regard to conflicts of interest rules regarding public officials you know, is something that has come up. you know why doesn't the state kind of law take precedence? Because it's a stricter conflict of interest you know, over a city. I, you know, your point earlier about the kind of manufacturing and where we are and the fact that we purchase a lot of the things that the city needs from outside of the city. I mean, I think that the de-industrialization of New York City, which was never kind of a fortis model of production anyway -- I'm not sure if we ever really manufactured refrigerators or big appliances. I think much of our manufacturing was really garment manufacturing just in time because we were close to consumer markets that made it competitive and viable. But I think that you know, the history of kind of the governing elites and the growth coalitions kind of not valuing manufacturing or industrial production, something that should take place on premium real estate is well documented. So I know that New York City you know, in terms of garment manufacturing, that remained in Sunset Park and in terms of their developing, their Made in New York Campus really was not interested in supporting immigrant garment manufacturers that were kind of hanging on and in large part, I think that it was because many of them were informal businesses and the city doesn't do you know, the city regulates the informal economy or tries to, but the city does very little to kind of provide financial or any kind of support to the informal sector, which is you know, a very significant part of the city's economy and especially so for immigrants of color. I'm not sure Phil, that that answers your question. I'm just kind of trying to, I'm just kind of augmenting I guess, the importance of your question.

MP: 1:58:56

I definitely think then, just to build on it, I think, maybe on to the NYCHA piece and workforce, maybe you know, many people have talked about section three of the HUD, of the affordable housing piece -- Section three workforce being really sharp on that and tying it to procurement and the other kind of areas in manufacturing, using it as an opportunity, even if you know, even if there isn't precedent, but thinking about the Green New Deal infrastructure, you know all of this that is coming through, those are wealth building opportunities and you know in a lot of our work in the Bronx, we have HVAC, we have refrigeration, we have integrated pest management, we have Bronx residents who own and/or work in those businesses that will be ready for those procuring opportunities. I think the question is around designing the legislation and policy and how it's designed and implemented to not miss those populations, because also, it ties to those workers and or businesses, MWBEs right? If they qualify as that, they also live here, they're residents too, and so that is a part of the housing, and so we have to think about it in a broad way. I think the other higher level point here around not, this is a theme throughout all the panels -- Not siloing our thinking on the housing question and taking it on, in every dimension. There's the city, state, federal level piece and I think there's also the piece around you know, not just the deep affordability and I want to come back to this, but you know, the economies of scale and in the economies of scale where housing kind of teeters, it shouldn't be offset by the challenges that we have in workforce and or entrepreneurship, so the manufacturing opportunity is present Green New Deal civic and sorry, infrastructure bills, whatever mechanism they come, relief, like those things need to be tied into housing strategies where we're being, we're using you know, targeted universalism to really be serious about the b pocket working class populations. Not only to have the governance in what housing we build, but also to have the resources to be able to grow and build wealth and build and have an asset building approach to place making. So I think the question is right, and I think you know what we're doing in the Bronx and surfacing those businesses leveraging procurement to be targeted to folks who own, who are business owners and or working in neighborhoods and have outcomes that are social, I mean, venture capital, even venture capital has social impact, or these kind of outcomes tied to economic development by and large. It's time for us to have those type of impacts as well and I think the push to add that to the criteria and evaluation of what is worthy to invest in, worthy to procure, or competitive -- It's not only going beyond zero sum, but it's about taking the social and economic asset-based approach, so I think that's the riff on that.

HAG: 02:02:07

Okay, thank you. Commissioner Davie had his hand up. Commissioner Davie --

FD: 02:02:14

Excuse me, thank you and again, thanks to the panelists. Quick statement and then a, just a small question, quick statement, is that I know at some point, we're going to discuss proposals that we put forth, and a couple of us have already put on the table the importance of some type of chief equity officer and an equity watchdog agency, perhaps that looks across all of these issues, whether it's looking at disparate racial impact on major economic development or looking at what contracting and whether or not we're actually establishing and meeting MWBE goals or we're looking at community benefit agreements for large-scale development, and whether those are actually being enforced and implemented and monitored. So I, you know, I'll continue to beat the drama until the proposals are done around some kind of equity watchdog agency with a chief equity officer overseeing it to ensure that not only we do everything we can to advance equity across the city and across the city's agencies, but also you know, to ensure that there's sort of a reporting out of that accountability, and that people actually understand what is happening if it's happening, and what needs to be done to correct it on a consistent, ongoing, long-term basis, and not just one-shot deals or one agency enforcing some of these things one way and another agency enforcing them other ways. But I'll say that to the, to the point that we get to that discussion -- My simple question is and I think it's for Michael, I just look at my notes quickly here and that is, there was a mention of Community Opportunity to Purchase Act, and my question is, does that act currently exist? Is it proposed? If it does exist, who is considering it or has it been, to what extent, does it currently exist? It was my first time hearing of it.

MP: 02:04:38

The act is proposed, part of what for, the setup of this session, I'm just mindful of time -- Was for us to submit one to three kind of, suggested readings, so about to make it homework; however, I definitely will submit that along with the testimony that we gave today, just to surface it, but it has not passed. It's been introduced to the city and also, there's a corresponding state level one called TOPA, the difference is with the C at the city level is Community, but the T is Tenant. And so I'll submit the background on that, but neither one has passed. And so in our coalitions and initiatives, lifting this is a critical aspect -- Sorry, go ahead --

FD: 02:05:23

One's at the city, one's at the state is that right? City Council State Legislature. Okay, thank you.

HAG: 02:05:30

Thank you Commissioner Davie. I would just say that this has been real good discussion. I would just say for the future, we want to make sure the Commissioners direct the questions to those who are testifying. We all have, you know, strong opinions about some of the stuff that's happening, myself included, and sometimes we want to scream of what we hear because it's just enforcing what many of us have been feeling for years. So I appreciate the passion and the

intelligent questions. But we want to make sure that those who are in the panel testify to their recommendations and the panel will then deliberate them. I want to thank all the panelists. I know that Ms. Wong had to leave, but I want to thank Professor Hum and Michael Pardis for their contributions today. We're gonna conclude this panel. We're going to take a short two minute break and then move on to the last panel. Two minutes folks. The last panel, which will be moving on, so let's take a break and let's move on to the last part. Thank you, thank you very much. Thank you all, take care.

HAG: 02:12:16

Okay, I would like to start resuming. So we're gonna move into the last panel of our discussion, cognizant at the time, so I want to start with a third and final panel, starting with Monica Bell, who is an Associate Professor of Law and Sociology at Yale University -- Her work aims to change prevailing conceptions of law across multiple areas, most centrally policing, housing, and neighborhoods and public benefits by centering the voices and experiences of communities that have been marginalized by law. Her award-winning research has been published in many top journals in her field, including the Yale Law Journal, NYU Law Review, American Journal: Sociology, Law and Society review, and more. We also have today with us, Edward Josephson, who is the current Director of Litigation Housing at Legal Services NYC. From 1996 to 2003, he was the Director of Housing Low Units at South Brooklyn. He has defended tenants in eviction proceedings since 1988. Mr. Josephson has litigated or canceled a number of affirmative cases on issues of significance to low-income New Yorkers. Also today, we have Emily Mock. She is the Lead Organizer for the Chinatown Tenant Union at CAAAV: Organizing Aisan Communities. Emily works to develop the political leadership of Chinese working class people in Manhattan, Chinatown. She's also an artist and educator, and has facilitated in English and Mandarin at all ages. So let us welcome the new panel. Let's start with Ms. Bell or Professor Bell.

Monica Bell (MB): 02:14:39

Thank you, I'm happy to be here. The time is very short so I'm going to dive right into the two main points I want to make, so I'll just say you know, it's really important to think about these issues of housing from a racial equity lens and not solely and only from a housing affordability lens which has been largely been the structure of the conversation in New York City over the past you know, a few years and part of that racial equity has included two things -- So first, I wanted to say a bit about participation, a collective efficacy. So you know people are talking a lot about participation, I know I'm not the only person to raise participation as a key factor of what a racially equitable new york would look like. But I want to say a little bit more about what that will entail and part of that is what sociologists refer to as "collective efficacy." So this is in part, by people defining what type of housing is best for them, so I think perhaps, especially in the housing space, there tends to be a top-down approach to deciding what the agenda is for housing because that's sort of easier to administer; however, it's really important from a process perspective for people to be able to define what housing is best for them and that's

partly because it helps build community within new housing. So you know, of course, as more housing is developed you know, wherever it is, people will be new to communities and the process of integrating people to have a sense of power, both formal and informal, is actually what holds communities together. So it's part of what makes it possible for people to share resources and also to mobilize for improvements to their communities, so implicit here is the idea that whatever happens in housing from a racial justice perspective, needs to be contemplating not only what people want right now, but also enabling people to better organize for what they want in the future. So it's kind of like building housing for voice, so this is true, not only a formal power -- So participation and voting and local activism, etc. It's also part of what sociologists call "informal social control" or simply how we all help each other as neighbors interacting with each other. So you know Jane Jacobs famously talked about eyes on the street, which is like informal community dynamics -- Other mothers looking out for the community and it's in, these are really really important parts of what racially equitable neighborhoods are enabling those informal community dynamics. So one key challenge as we hopefully move toward the establishment of new affordable housing, is how to construct that community as soon as possible, how to kind of re-establish what is lost. Usually collective efficacy tends to emerge from tenure in place, so you know when people haven't been in a place for a long period of time, they tend to be less invested in it, and the alternative is also true of course. Simply living in a place a long time isn't how pride and inter-reliance and connection emerge, but they're part, but tenure is usually a key part of this so as the development of housing occurs, part of the mission has to be constructing not only units, but community across units for the purpose of building collective efficacy. So community organizations, especially because there'll be a lack of tenure, tend to play a key role in fostering collective efficacy, which has an indirect impact on other priorities of racial equity -- So violence reduction, schooling, etc. All of this emerges out of community organizations being strong. So one thing that the Commission should certainly be thinking about, is how to construct funding and governance structures that yield a lot of control to the community organizations that'll have the responsibility for reestablishing a sense of power and collective efficacy in communities as they are reorganized now. This is especially important because of what I've written about in some work, the idea of legal estrangement, so this is essentially the idea that trusting government officials -- Like basically the government can't really be out front leading on all these issues and have real community buy-in actually, and it's not going to be quickly forthcoming. So you know there are these ideas that, oh, if the government only behaved in certain ways from the outset, then people would build trust and kind of see governmental actors as partners. My research suggested that's not true, and so we have to be thinking about how to marshal the power that is already in communities to build collective efficacy as the housing landscape changes. The second point I want to raise is actually quite connected to what Reverend Davie was speaking about at the end of the last panel -- I think so, the second point is the interconnectedness of housing with other aspects of community, so housing is never just housing. So things like declaring housing or right, don't tend to have knock-on impact for all of the other institutional actors that make housing what it is. So I've written about in some work what I call "located institutions" or the idea that housing is the backdrop for so many other institutions that operate in a neighborhood. We understand this idea well in the

context of schools, which is why there has been such a sharp move away from basing schooling solely on where people live. But there are other located institutions where that type of solution doesn't work. So for the past few years, I've been studying and writing about how experiences of policing differ across space and while this may seem obvious you know, we know that policing is different in different places. We don't know as much about how people conceptualize this, to where they should live and also how they see that as a racial equity problem. So for example, proposals like building more affordable housing in wealthier parts of the city are really important for shifting race class segregation and its implications. But a large body of research shows that an unintended consequence of relocating Black people to White neighborhoods just as one example is heavily racialized policing. So the way that police districts are organized is implicated by this entire conversation, which is to say that housing tends to map on to the way policing is organized, and also different precincts and different police leaders have different priorities for what happens in an area, so this is a way in which housing and policing are deeply connected but are rarely discussed in policy conversations together. So with with an eye on the time and wanted to stick to my eight minutes, I could be more specific but I want to say a word related to this equity officer watchdog idea, which is that is the type of policy solution that links up with my second kind of concern here, which is that we often don't think about the relationship between policing and housing in an attractive way, but they have these deep interconnections and that's true across so many other aspects of the racial, of the the aspects of racial justice. So racial impact statements, changes in housing is another example of something that could happen in the context of an equity officer or some sort of watchdog agent agency. I will stop there but I'm eager to answer questions.

HAG: 02:22:53

Thank you Ms. Bell. We will get back to you, but I want to move on really quickly because we are behind. The next panelist is Mr. Edward Josephson.

Edward Josephson (EJ): 02:23:13

Sorry, I was muted -- Good afternoon, thank you so much for inviting me. I'm Ed Josephson, I'm the Director of Litigation at Legal Services NYC and we are the largest provider of civil legal services in the city and we're the largest provider of right to counsel on the new you know, wonderful program that is hopefully keeping people out of homeless shelters. And I'll say that at Legal Services, we're not policy analysts and we don't have PhDs you know -- We're just lawyers and we sue people who hurt our clients and we try to keep them housed. And so I'm going to be very concrete, you know, in my remarks and try to keep them brief because I'm not a policy analyst. When I was preparing for this panel, I went back and looked at the report that the city came out with last year called "Where we live in New York City," which you're probably familiar with, which was supposed to be a plan for addressing exactly the kind of racial equity issues that are the subject of this panel. And I read that report and I was struck by what a wonderful report it is, you know, 237 pages of excellent analysis and recommendations and the only problem is that reading that report, you would never guess that it was produced by an

administration that had spent the last seven years pretty much dropping the ball on every single one of the goals that was outlined in that report. And so what that says to me and I apologize, you know, to those of you who are in the administration or on this this panel -- I don't mean any offense, but the fact is just to take one example, the first goal in that report is aggressive enforcement of fair housing laws; and yet it's recently you know, come out scandalously in the news that the Human Rights Commission is retreating from its enforcement of source of income discrimination loss, so how can that be, and the the answer to me is that really, what is needed here is not more plans -- It's the political will to put existing plans into effect and to come up with the money that it takes to make those plans real, and that is what has been missing all along. And and the ideas in the in the plans, you know, I think everyone agrees on you know, and for example, out of that plan, build more affordable housing that's really affordable to people in the communities and that means affordable not to 60% of AMI but affordable to my clients who are at 30% of AMI. And similarly, we need to dramatically scale up housing subsidies, portable housing subsidies -- What we essentially need is section 8 for all, just like anyone who is income qualified can get public assistance. Anyone who's income eligible should be able to get a housing subsidy and of course, that's a million miles from where we are. Why is that not happening, it's because it's really really expensive and so that means since the city can't print its own money, it has to be a partnership with the state and the federal government to make sure that these plans are real. And I will say also, you know, with respect to you know, community participation -- I think that's a wonderful thing, but you know the community has these communities of color, low-income communities have already participated in decades of discussions and they have demanded some of the things that I'm talking about; affordable housing, housing subsidies, more supportive housing you know -- The communities have spoken, now is the time I mean, so by all means, we can have more meetings but what we really need is to make real the recommendations that low-income people have told us they wanted over and over and over again and have not gotten. And the other thing I just wanted to touch on is something that Professor Bell said which I think is very very important, which is that it's not, it's very important not just to look at housing in isolation from all the other needs of the communities because we recently, the city asked us to set up an office in Brownsville and when we went out to Brownsville and set up our office, what we noticed was that there's an unbelievable amount of subsidized housing out in Brownsville in East New York and you can't go like a block without seeing a giant housing project. You know, with affordable low income housing, section 8 NYCHA housing, and yet Brownsville and East New York are at the very bottom of so many of the other indexes of you know, community health -- On healthcare, jobs, schooling -- At the bottom, and so without those things, affordable housing you know, becomes in a way, kind of warehousing low-income people instead of creating you know, a vibrant community -- Which is what everybody wants and needs. So that's my takeaway here -- I think it's very basic and maybe simple-minded, but the answer is we need to make these things real and we have to hold people accountable for doing the things because here is an administration that said it was going to do all these things and how can it be that those things did not really happen. That's the answer. I'm not sure as a lawyer I have the magic solution to that, so I will stop with that.

HAG: 02:28:46

Thank you Mr. Josephson. And last and certainly not least, let's hear from Emily Mock.

Emily Mock (EM): 02:28:52

Thank you Henry -- Good afternoon everyone, my name is Emily Mock. I'm representing CAAAV Organizing Asian Communities, where I work as the Lead Organizer of the Chinatown Tenants Union, which is a chapter of CAAAV. So thank you staff, for coordinating -- Thank you Commissioners, for your invitation to share, thanks to other panelists, the interpreters I've been seeing you -- Billy and Anthony, thank you. There's another RJC, which is a citywide coalition, the Right Justice Coalition, which works around the right guidelines for annual votes, so good associations with this acronym for me. I'm going to use my time today to give you a little bit of context for CAAAV's work as a working class organization of members, to share a few specific recommendations for the City's Charter revision and then also provide some framing for those recommendations that I hope will address your questions about big ideas and structural roadblocks. So firstly, CAAAV is an organization of working class Asian people in New York City -- The organization was founded in '86 by Asian American women with the analysis at that time, that we must fight racial violence on all levels from private, interpersonal, to state violence. And as the organization grew and began to develop roots, specifically in Manhattan, Chinatown -- The growing assessment was that housing was a location of vast and very dynamic systemic violence, and so as a grassroots organization, we also know deeply, something we believe deeply is that our people deserve better and that they should be the protagonists in their own lives. This is the sense of power that I think Professor Bell discussed earlier, and so as an organization, we see community organizing, community leadership, as necessary to change this problem of housing being a site of systemic racial violence. So for example, a community that is organized is a much safer community than one that is not -- So today, CAAAV organizes and develops the leadership of working class Asian immigrants within three different chapters. There's the Chinatown Tenants Union that I work on. Members are people who live in regulated apartments in Chinatown. There's also the Asian Tenants Union, who are Chinese, Korean, and Bangladesh people in public housing in Western Queens. And then the third chapter is our youth, who are all over the city. CAAAV has organized against gentrification, tenant displacement, many harassment and conditions issues over the years for public housing, for language access, and of course, for healthier living conditions and beyond affordability too. Speaking personally, my appreciation for my position and also my tendency is that it has an intergenerational nature and these intergenerational relationships that are really about growing power and knowing ourselves as protagonists, as agents of change, are the core of our organization. And so this means we spend a lot of time learning and discussing together mostly, not in English right? In our own languages. So I want to share some of the contradictions that have arisen directly from our membership of tenant leaders. One such contradiction is the majority of people who live in New York City are working class, yet we have no say in our homes and our neighborhoods right? We, this is something that a lot of panelists have discussed today. Developers and real estate forces make decisions about and have power

in our neighborhoods -- Oftentimes not us or there are individuals from our neighborhoods who do but not us, as organized people. So I really appreciated Professor Bell's raising this in relation to the EDC. Another contradiction that CAAAV tenant leaders have raised is thinking specifically about Chinatown rent adjustments for rent stabilized units are indeed regulated, but the cost of that rent is entirely unaffordable to Chinatown Tenants Union Members. So anecdotal, like I know that most of the folks that I work with -- Their income is closer to 10-20K a year, which makes them eligible for lots but they are still ineligible for many types of support that the government might provide. Another example of this is that environmental assessments for rezoning or new market rate developments often dismiss the possibility of what's called indirect residential displacement in areas where there's a lot of rent stabilized units. Even though we know that market rate and luxury development drives harassment and displacement tactics. So these are some of the examples of contradictions that are very real for the people alive, for the people that I work alongside, echoing Barika Williams and earlier this afternoon, thinking about the question about big ideas. Our organization isn't so much testing big ideas as building the conditions that make the people's ideas possible. So people who are experts in their own experience as working class and poor immigrants, we believe actually do hold the answers and should have more power to materialize our ideas. And so thinking specifically about the city charter and revisions -- CAAAV thinks about this as an opportunity for co-governance to not only be tested as a big idea, but implemented with organized communities, especially working class communities. I think you know, we all agree, we know that our communities are too often sidelined, are excluded from the political process. And so, we should be building towards community control of land use and development. COVID's also revealed deep inequalities in our city, many of which that people knew about for a long time. And so I also see the Commission's task as to not only move COVID-specific solutions, but to transform our city long-term, to shift racial and class inequality. So CAAAV is offering the following recommendations -- Firstly, the status quo of Euler fails communities. Other folks have talked about this too -- Organized working class communities need direct voting power in the Euler process, not just hearings. Our decision-making ability is nil and our organizing and demands are often taken as suggestions or too often ignored. So instead, organized working class communities, their organizations that they form, should have direct and majority voting power over any and all Euler processes that take place in their own districts. The people most at risk of displacement from irresponsible development should be empowered to make the land use decisions. Secondly, organized working class communities should have direct representation in our government city planning decision making body. So I'm talking about CPC here, through community-based organizations and democratically elected representation. The majority of the City Planning Commission Members should be people who live and organize in our working class neighborhoods. Thirdly, the Chair of the City Planning Commission should not also be the Head of the Department of City Planning. That's an wholly undemocratic concentration of power that consistently hurts working class communities across the city. This also concentrates power via appointments in the hands of the mayor who not only controls the majority of the CPC's appointments, but controls the rent guidelines, board's appointments, and sets the agenda for land use and city planning. The Mayor, as a variety of candidates or as an individual in office is also very susceptible to the interests of organized real

estate money. And we all know that city planning processes are expensive -- They're technically bureaucratic, they're really not designed for the community to navigate -- They're designed for technical people who have a lot of capital behind them. So for example, it's much easier as a wealthy developer to find a firm to do an environmental review. If submitting a land use application -- It's much more difficult for a community coalition of residents to find a firm and find the funding, if they're submitting a land use application. This is something that CAAAV is working on right now in two bridges. And so lastly -- Last recommendation is really important regarding the confines of what the city can do about public housing, which one of the Commissioners raised earlier -- The lives of public housing tenants in New York City are incredibly overly determined by the state and of course, on the federal level too -- By lawmakers in Albany who don't have a stake or understanding in our lives. I don't think many lawmakers in Albany understand the nuances of how immigrant tenant households in Queensburgh houses the largest public housing development in the country, what their experience is and what their needs are -- So a recommendation we have is that the Charter should authorize more local oversight, particularly that the New York City Council can oversee more activities of NYCHA, of the New York housing, city housing authority. The logic being that, if the City Council, local City Council Members that represent public housing tenants have greater oversight powers over NYCHA tenant voices the majority of whom are working class tenants of color -- Will have greater influence over their own homes and that we know that public housing tenants are a significant part of every single City Council District and CAAAV would like to see a future when organized working people can co-govern and who, and that means that they make the important decisions. Well I'm gonna stop there. I look forward to discussion and questions on these, thank you.

HAG: 02:39:27

Thank you Ms. Mock. And thank you for the members of the panel. I would just say one thing though -- There are some things that this City Charter panel, the City Charter vision can do and there're some things that are outside of the scope. One of those things is it applies the rules of the federal government and so we have some limitations. But I appreciate your comments. I want to thank everybody for their concerns -- Let me raise any, Commissioner, questions and concerns. I do have one point of clarification -- I think for the both of you, for both you Emily and Ms. Bell, which was a little bit, I think bears further clarification which is the idea that was discussed earlier about having some entity right? That oversees and enforces the accountability in some of these processes away from the institutionalized systems that you have mentioned before, with the CDC of the Euler process. But I take it to both of you where advocating that that is not a good utilization, but that rather, it should be in the form of community engagement, or did I get that incorrect?

EM: 02:40:46

I can start off -- The model that I'm talking about is co-governance of which when I sent resources later, I'm gonna send something from cooperation -- But co-governance are different

models where people who are directly impacted, there are structures, there is support in order for them to have control over all aspects of the decision making. So for me, it's less a question of like, what specific format does it take. I would say however, that having one body is not as good as having many bodies of directly impacted people having control.

HAG: 02:41:26

Yeah, thank you.

MB: 02:41:29

Yeah, I want to jump in on that just to kind of agree, largely with what was just said, but also just to clarify the difference then between mere participation and actual governance. So this is right, so this is what Mr. Josephson brought up -- It's like you know low-income people have been speaking out and going to meetings for a long time, that doesn't do anything in terms of actual control over decision-making, and so that difference is really key as a racial equity concern, and so that's why the structures have to be put in place for continual kind of forward-looking work and not just kind of listening, meeting, listening sessions and things like that.

HAG: 02:42:14

Great, very helpful. Any Commissioners who may have questions? I see Commissioner Davie --

FD: 02:42:23

Maybe you asked my question, Vice Chair, but I'd just be interested in hearing Professor Bell and then any one of the other panelists just expound a little bit more on this notion of how we ensure that community participation results in actual action. How do we move the needle I guess is the question.

MB: 02:43:01

Yeah, that's a really important question, and you know, I think part of it comes down to what Mr. Josephson was saying about political will and just, kind of the lack of systems, of accountability to ensure that when community speaks up about something that that thing is done. Now part of this has to do with the kind of limitations, and this very much ties to you know, Mr. Garrido was just saying like, Commissioner Garrido saying, there's often not a lot of, basically communities often make demands that can't necessarily be met in time because of governance issues like who has control over what's kind of like, the technical aspects of government, and so what happens is that an organized collective speaks up, makes demands, nothing happens really, and then the conversation ends there. And so part of this is like not just education, but like changing the structures so that it's easy for impact to be had. And so part of this has to do with models like co-governance, but I think specifics have to be worked out

based on the particularities of the aspects of government that's like -- The general issue, it's like there has to be an accountability to those organized collectors in order to actually see through, see that the chances are made, they'll stop there.

HAG: 02:44:41

I think this is really important. I think our Chair, Commissioner Jones Austin has a question -- Jennifer.

JA: 02:44:53

I do and I've been listening, very much appreciate all that has been shared by all the panelists and I'm really appreciating all of the dialogue concerning Euler. I've been through a few Euler processes, both as a government employee and then on the outside. And I very much appreciate all that's been said. My question concerning Euler is you know, one of the issues that present when you're going through the Euler process is that -- There's very much of a, kind of like, well not in my backyard, not in my backyard -- Whether we're talking about homeless shelters, burrow-based nails. I remember years ago, we were seeking to cite -- I was working for the Administration of Children's Services and we wanted to put the children's center in the old Bellevue building. Ultimately it was achieved, but there were people in that community who didn't want it there, and so the question that I have is that -- I do believe and I appreciate the interest in having a more democratic and representative process with people on these community board engaging you up, looking like the people who live in the communities; however, the concern that I have is that, if we stop there, then it becomes a kind of ping-pong ball and we may see more of a "not in my neighborhood" -- So I'm hearing you and I'm appreciating, that I want to delve into that -- But I guess, I'm also curious if as a city, if we're seeking equity, should we be looking at more what communities should look like, but all communities -- How do we achieve equity and balance in our communities when it comes to certain sightings, whether they be environmental, whether or not, whether they're justice related -- Should we be looking at equity also in the you know, what's is happening within specific communities and trying to achieve some type of equitable distribution? That's my question. So is it just democratic process more, you know, representative process, or should we be trying to address the equitable distribution of whatever sightings there must be, whatever must be, in various communities in the community.

EJ: 02:47:39

Yeah, if I could just respond Commissioner -- I think you know of you know, hit the nail on the head in terms of the hard you know, dilemma here, which is that if you empower communities to have veto power over what happens in their zones, I don't see how you revise the Charter to say that communities of color have veto power, but white communities do not. And so, and then you end up with NIMBYism, which is a big problem. So I think that's why here's a tension between giving more control to the communities and on the other hand, giving more power ot

the elected government of the city as a whole that is equitable, and that's a really hard dilemma because people you know -- I've been to Europe meetings as well, and people in the communities very much want control over their communities, and yet that often leads to the very inequities that we're trying to solve. And since I'm just a lawyer, I don't have an answer to that -- But I think it's important that we grapple with that tension indeed.

JA: 02:48:43

Thank you, thank you.

EM: 02:48:45

Yeah, thank you for, Commissioner, for that question. I think also, the tension is about giving control to communities, also about who has to give up power in order for that to happen, because currently, developers in real estate have an outsize power compared to working class communities. I think also that responses to proposed development would look very different -- Like NIMBYism is absolutely a problem to me especially, because of the root reasons of what it's trying, what the, what its values are, actually have nothing to do with community right? So I think that responses to luxury development or new development would be very different if organized community were in the affirmative position of getting to author city planning land use rather than constantly be responding to threats of luxury and irresponsible development. Because I also am just asking myself, when have working class people gotten to decide what is built in for what purpose. SO I can, feeling very thoughtful about that question. And I'm also wondering about what would happen if the situation were different and like, what Professor Bell was saying, what are the structures that would create those conditions.

HAG: 02:50:06

Yeah, but can I ask this question -- Because this is really it. I think the key component which is, what's the tipping point -- Like in some instances, if you accept that we already have a highly segregated society in New York, segregated in terms of neighborhoods and schools and access to quality health[care], which in my opinion, happens to be in many cases pretty prevalent. And then you institute those same communities, the same, a community ownership and power and governance. You talked about, how do you change it, how do you prevent, and I think that Mr. Josephson said it right when he said -- How do you prevent a largely white neighborhood, with which is the crown of privilege, to allow anything other than what they've been doing in the first place. If you give them community ownership, how do you make that a more equitable access to the good you know, the good neighborhood to good schools and so on and so forth.

EM: 02:51:08

Yeah, I think thinking about equity here, like it would be useful to think about what resources already exist in this hypothetical neighborhood, where there is more wealth and the majority of

the residents are white. The chances are, if you look at and also look at the way that New York City is segregated, that those resources actually do -- Those neighborhoods do have more resources and in addition, to organized people. There are also ways that money and resources get organized, so with wealthier residents, there is more ability to organize and capacity to organize money for their use. So in a lot of ways, there is already an outsized ability to make decisions locally. I think that still speaks to the concern that you're bringing up. I think that's why the city and I hope that RJC will push for an investment in learning about co-governance practices, and how they can be implemented in a large city like New York City that isn't relying just on community, boards isn't relying on token members of the community, et cetera.

JA: 02:52:16

Alright, so may I ask one follow-up? Just go ahead. I just wanna, I guess what I'm saying is that, I think that they're, I appreciate what you're raising and I see the value in it, and I guess what I'm asking is -- Does that need to be coupled with some, if we were to do something like that, an element of equitable allocation like, or like you know, an examination and a continuous accountability around equitable distribution of that, which is good -- But what would be considered by neighborhoods to be good? And that which would be considered by neighborhoods to be challenging you know? We saw it with borough-based jails most recently, we've seen it with shelter siding and so you know, is the way that you really get at equity not just by giving. I think it's important to ensure that everybody has power in decision making, representative power -- But then, I think you have to go, the next step to have an examination of what you know, what it looks like in terms of environment siding, in terms of citing certain you know, institutions and structures that you know, sadly some people don't want in their community because you could get into a situation where you have, you know, what we've long seen in many spaces and places -- The oppressed become oppressors.

MB: 02:53:57

You know, I think that's right and I just want to chime in here to say, I actually don't think there's a tension between those things. I mean, maybe there's attention often in practice, but there doesn't have to be attention. So yes, there needs to be expert technocrats who oversee and kind of think about equitable and not just equal distribution of these kinds of resources, positive and negative across space. But what's really important is the process here, so I mean like, I've written about you know, a legal estrangement and one way, one pathway through which that happens is communities feeling, community members feeling totally shut out so that their voices don't matter at all. So I think what's key is not whether you have these kind of two things happening at the same time, but how they happen, how transparent those conversations are about equity. And then finally, I wanted to say about the kind of, what about the organized White people and all the power they're going to want to have, the White and affluent communities. It's like well, we have to define equity with a reference to historical marginalization and not just equality, and I think that like keeping that framework in mind is really key when thinking about like, what co-governance looks like, and then finally, this is just

amplifying a point that Emily was making earlier to some degree -- Community doesn't mean like a neighborhood as it exists right now right? Like, so you know, really, what the goal is for housing in many ways is like self-determination. That doesn't mean, just like a place that's already segregated. I don't know, having more power or resources or whatever. And so thinking more broadly about what community means and be what equity means is really key for avoiding some of that kind of slippage that we were just talking about.

HAG: 02:55:56

Yeah, thank you everybody. I think this is a fascinating conversation, but it is six o'clock. We have unfortunately run out of time. I thank the panelists and we're going to be coming back to you. We may have to go back to you to ask additional questions, but I want to thank you all for your participation and just and for the Commissioners, for the continuing engagement. Let me just announce that our next panel hearing will be planning for a racially equitable future. Will be held on Tuesday, August the 3rd and at 3 PM. This is, it will be held in Staten Island. And so we want to thank folks that are going to be participating -- The focus of that will be environmental and climate justice infrastructure and transportation, public space, public history and environment. So let me direct you all to our website, which has the information on the next panel. I want to thank you all for participating and this concludes our panel for [racial equity] in housing and land justice.

AV: 02:57:15

If I may chime in before we close for our panelists and everyone tuning in, we also have opportunities for the general public to weigh in, starting with our first in-person public input session this Thursday in Staten Island at 6 PM, followed by Brooklyn and Queens next week. We have or we'll have information on all of those on our website nyc.gov/racialjustice -- Thank you so much.

HAG: 02:57:47

Thank you, Anusha.