

Brooklyn Community Board 17
4112 Farragut Road, Brooklyn NY 11210
Re-Zoning Committee Meeting
ONLINE
May 30st, 2024

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 pm.

Approval of the minutes for January and March 2024:

- Marguerite Vigliante made a motion to approve the minutes of January and March 2024.
- Motion was seconded by Brie DeCosta.

Howard Slatkin's Presentation:

The presentation discussed the need for zoning changes to legalize basement apartments in low-density districts in New York City, due to a housing shortage and lack of affordable options, while considering the concerns of residents regarding property values and quality of life.

- The presentation is about zoning for housing preservation and equity, with a focus on basement apartment legalization.
- CB seventeen has been selected as one of the pilot areas for this project.
- Low-density districts in New York City have become significantly more diverse, with growth in the Asian and Hispanic populations.
- The housing available in low-density districts does not fit everyone's needs, and residents often feel insecure about their ability to stay in their homes.
- Housing Fits All, there is a range of what is needed in housing for a community. Instead of moving when your housing does not fit your needs, they plan on finding ways to make your house fit them
- Regulations and costs are major obstacles to modifying or expanding homes in low-density districts, leading to a lack of housing options.
- There is a housing shortage in New York City due to population growth and a lack of housing construction.
- Basement apartments can provide lower-cost housing options and additional rental income for homeowners.
- Many basement apartments are currently illegal due to city and state regulations, preventing necessary improvements and putting tenants at risk.
- The state has passed legislation allowing for a pilot program to legalize basement apartments, but further changes to building codes and zoning laws are needed.
- There are two separate programs being discussed: the state legalization program and the City of Yes pilot program.
- The state legislation allows for changes to the multiple dwelling law and the city can make changes to building codes and zoning.
- The pilot program covers basement apartments and other types of accessory dwelling units, while the state legislation only covers existing basement and cellar spaces.

- The general feeling among residents in districts 1-5 is that they are being discriminated against and forced to accept a different style of living.
- Many residents have invested their hard-earned money in these houses and value the unique character of their communities. They are concerned about the impact of high-density development on their quality of life and property values.
- The speaker expresses concerns about programs that increase density in low-density communities and the assumption that older homeowners want tenants.
- The speaker mentions an illegal basement apartment situation that is already causing chaos in their neighborhood.
- The housing professional explains the need for additional housing options and the potential infrastructure impacts but also emphasizes that the proposed programs are not mandatory for homeowners.

Discussion:

1. Is this a part of the City of Yes?
 - City of yes a part of this zoning proposal but isn't the entirety of it
 - The City of Yes is needed for this proposal due to the zoning issue
2. Is this program just for basement apartments or also for ADUs?
 - ADUs are covered by zoning but not the state
3. What's the average cost of legalizing a basement apartment?
 - Thousands of dollars
4. Can you get a permit for someone who already illegally renovated their basement? - The law would give them the authority to waive any fines or violations they had - Will converted apartments be marketed as a 2-family home?
 - Yes, the certificate of occupancy would call it a 2 family home.
5. Is adding floors to a building a part of the city of yes
 - The zoning for most of these areas is 3 stories maximum. If the zoning allows for a larger amount of stories then renovation is legal
6. There are fewer screenings for tenants and with a rising amount of new people in New York there are concerns about safety?
 - How will this city pass this law, since it would cut into their revenue if it passed - The city wants apartments to be safe, and property taxes won't increase, but they also won't decrease either so their revenue won't be harmed
7. Keeping things the way they are makes it really hard for people who don't have homes

8. This is a less concentrated way of dealing with the housing crisis.
9. The Committee members are opposed to the new proposal that would decrease the amount of parking that would be built.
10. Committee members believe that this proposal is not an effective way of dealing with the housing issue in CB17. There are safety concerns, and how a program like this will affect life in the community.

Motion to bring discussion to the board:

Tamara Thomas: Motioned to bring this discussion to the board

David Boatswain: Seconded the motion

Adjournment:

Marguerite Vigilante: Motioned to adjourn the meeting

Vanessa Quashie: Seconded the meeting for adjournment.

Meeting Adjourned at 9:26 pm.

ROLL CALL:

Brie DaCosta

LaShawn Freeman

Kimberly Shelly

Alexandra Schmidbauer

Valarie Booth

JL James

Anoinette Smart

Jibrill Morris

Vanessa Quashie

Marguerite Vigliante

Lilieth Heron Robinson

Ayanna N, Giles

Fatima A Muhammad