

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

of the

COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HOUSING

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August 16, 2012
Start: 1:25 p.m.
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HELD AT: Council Chambers
City Hall

B E F O R E: ROSIE MENDEZ
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Christine C. Quinn
Helen D. Foster
Ruben Wills
Peter Koo
James Vacca
Michael C. Nelson
James G. Van Bramer
Letitia James
Charles Barron
Maria del Carmen Arroyo
Robert Jackson
Daniel J. Halloran
Gale A. Brewer

A P P E A R A N C E S

COUNCIL MEMBERS:

James Sanders, Jr.
Stephen Levin
Jessica S. Lappin

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

John Rhea
Chairman
New York City Housing Authority

Raymond Ribeiro
Executive Vice President Of Capital Projects
New York City Housing Authority

Velmanette Montgomery
Senator
New York State

Erik Crawford
President
Davidson Site 166 Resident Association

Nancy Ortiz
Vladeck Houses

Getulio Cruz Jr.
Manhattan Together

Father Frank Skelly
Pastor
Immaculate Conception Church

Lucy Newman
Legal Aid Society

Mary Riddick
Pink Houses

Luther Stubblefield

Louise Green
Vice President
Pink Houses Tenant Association

Keith Ramsey
Resident Council President
Eastchester Gardens

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

Madeline Innocent
Douglas Houses

Alan Feinblum
Rights for Incarcerated People With Psychiatric
Disabilities

Jenora Johnson
Douglas Houses

MR. X

Gloria Wilson
Caroline Webb
UPACA Five

Stuart Reid
Co-chairman
Digital Divide Partnership

Herma Williams

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: This hearing is coming to order. Good afternoon everyone, I'm Rosie Mendez and I'm the Chair of the New York City Council's Committee on Public Housing.

Today, the committee will hear an update from the New York City Housing Authority on its use of City Council funding to install security system in its developments. I will be joined by the Speaker--I am joined by the Speaker--

SPEAKER QUINN: Timing is everything.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: --of the City Council, Christine Quinn, who will speak after my opening remarks.

Before we turn to this afternoon's hearing, as you may know, the Speaker and I have called for the release of the Boston Consulting Group's 10 million analysis of NYCHA's operation. This morning, the administration responded to our request and released this report in its entirety. We appreciate the chairman's willingness to provide this report, which will allow for greater transparency regarding NYCHA's management. We

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2 will be reading this report in full to learn more
3 about how the Authority can continue to improve
4 its processes and anticipate holding a hearing on
5 this subject in the fall.

6 But today, we will be focused on
7 security systems at NYCHA and recognize that this
8 hearing is necessary because of our concern for
9 the safety of more than 400,000 residents
10 currently living in New York City public housing.
11 It is because of this concern that City Council
12 Members within the last seven years allocated a
13 total of \$65.4 million in discretionary funds for
14 security devices at NYCHA developments. This
15 funding was to provide layered access and security
16 cameras.

17 This is not the first time this
18 Committee has taken up safety and security issues
19 in NYCHA developments. In addition to hearings
20 held in 2006 and 2012 dealing with policing in
21 NYCHA developments, this Committee, jointly with
22 Public Safety, held an oversight hearing on
23 February 17th, 2011, which considered resolution
24 423, calling on the federal government to fund
25 security cameras and explore the structure, role,

1
2 and recommendations of NYCHA's newly created
3 safety and security task force. Additionally,
4 that hearing examined the use of cameras, the
5 funding allocated by this body, and NYCHA's
6 decision to freeze Council Members' funding. At
7 the February hearing, NYCHA presented to us with a
8 request for the reallocation of Council camera
9 funds to include a layered access component and a
10 collaborative approach to addressing safety and
11 security in public housing. Chairman Rhea, you
12 told this Committee that NYCHA wanted a security
13 system that not just increased everyone's sense of
14 security, but had a real reduction in crime, and
15 that our million of dollars, and I quote, didn't
16 go down a rabbit hole to be stuck in an account
17 without a plan, end quote.

18 Today, Mr. Chairman, you get to
19 tell us how far NYCHA has come along in that plan.
20 Specifically, we want to know where is our money
21 and when will it translate into safer developments
22 for our constituents.

23 We will also hear from NYCHA
24 residents on what they have done to secure these
25 cameras and about their experiences with safety in

1
2 NYCHA developments.

3 I want to thank everyone for taking
4 the time to testify today, and I want to thank my
5 Speaker, Christine Quinn, who saw the growing
6 problems in New York City's public housing stock
7 and raised the Public Housing Subcommittee to full
8 Committee status in February 2010.

9 I will now hand it over to my
10 Speaker of the City Council for additional
11 remarks.

12 SPEAKER QUINN: Thank you very
13 much, Chair Mendez, and, Chairman Rhea, thank you
14 for being with us today. I also want to echo the
15 Chair's remarks as it relates to the BCG report.
16 We look forward to reviewing that report in full,
17 working with you to implement the recommendations
18 in the report and, as Chair Mendez said, most
19 likely moving forward with an oversight hearing on
20 those large other additional issues some time in
21 the early fall.

22 NYCHA is the largest public housing
23 authority in the nation with over 178,000 units of
24 housing to manage. Overseeing such a large and,
25 let's be honest, aging inventory presents unique

1 challenges, and without the full financial
2 resources to do so, we can have enormous obstacles
3 and challenges. We understand that.

4
5 However, we're here today
6 specifically because the New York City Housing
7 Authority must dramatically improve how it
8 implements and tracks the use of City Council
9 capital funds in general, but particularly today
10 as it relates to security initiatives.

11 As Chair Mendez previously stated,
12 NYCHA came before this Committee in February of
13 2011. At that time, there was a request that
14 nearly \$30 million allocated by Council Members
15 for cameras be reallocated to fund a combination
16 of cameras and multilayered access control systems
17 at certain development. And there were tours to
18 go out to Newark and look at the other system and
19 other things that occurred beyond the hearing,
20 just for the record. As of this last budget, just
21 two months or so ago, this amount has grown from
22 30 million to 65 million that the Council has made
23 available for security initiatives at NYCHA.

24 After listening to NYCHA's proposal
25 in February in 2011 and through many, many

1 subsequent meeting and tours, Council Members
2 worked with the Authority to decide which security
3 plan would work best for each building or
4 development's needs, recognizing that the
5 Authority had an interest in layered access, but
6 not every Member saw it same way and there was a
7 commitment to make sure each building or
8 development got the type of security that would
9 work best there.
10

11 That said, despite this
12 cooperation, almost a year and a half later, NYCHA
13 has not, as far as we can tell, installed a single
14 security initiative with Council funds since 2010.
15 Obviously, we all agree that's not acceptable and
16 we're here today to find ways to change that--to
17 get this money out the door and to get whatever
18 money gets allocated in next year's budget and
19 future budgets out the door quickly.

20 In these difficult financial times,
21 when NYCHA has stated publicly, and correctly,
22 that you are in desperate need of additional
23 funds, we simply cannot have funds that have been
24 allocated failed to be used in a timely and
25 efficient manner. We're here today to work with

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2 you for the good of all of the 400,000 plus NYCHA
3 residents to get the security initiatives
4 installed and running, to do everything we can
5 together to keep NYCHA residents and their friends
6 and families and visitors who are in and around
7 the development as safe as we possibly can.

8 I want to thank the Chair for
9 holding this hearing in August when we usually do
10 not have oversight hearings, thank the Authority
11 for coming, clearly, with all the boards behind
12 you, prepared to have an in-depth conversation,
13 and I want to thank so many of my colleagues for
14 being here over the summer vacation. I think this
15 attendance speaks volumes about how seriously we
16 take this issue. Thank you, Madam Chair, and
17 thank you, Mr. Chairman.

18 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: So let me
19 introduce my colleagues. At my far left we have
20 Council Member Foster from the Bronx, Council
21 Member Wills from Queens, Council Member Koo from
22 Queens, Council Member Vacca from the Bronx,
23 Council Member Nelson from Brooklyn, Council
24 Member Jimmy Van Bramer from Queens, Council
25 Member Tish James from Brooklyn, Council Member

Charles Barron from Brooklyn--I can't see all the way down the row--and Council Member Maria Carmen Arroyo from the Bronx.

SPEAKER QUINN: And RJ behind you, I don't know if you--

[Pause]

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: --and Council Member Jackson from Manhattan behind me.

Mr. Chair, I turn it over to you, and just remind you to identify yourself for the record.

JOHN RHEA: Thank you. Speaker Christine Quinn, Chairwoman Rosie Mendez, Members of the Committee, and other distinguished members of the City Council, thank you for this opportunity to discuss the New York City Housing Authority's comprehensive strategy to enhance the security of our public housing communities. I am John B. Rhea, Chairman of the New York City Housing Authority. Joining me this morning, our executive vice president for capital projects, Raymond Ribeiro, as well as other members of NYCHA's management team.

When I was appointed chairman of

1
2 NYCHA three years ago, Mayor Michael Bloomberg
3 gave me a clear mandate to restore the financial
4 stability, maximize economic opportunity and
5 development, and enhance residents' quality of
6 life in our developments. Since then, together
7 with the administration's steadfast support, one
8 of our critical priorities has been to improve
9 resident safety. For over eight years, NYCHA and
10 the City Council have worked together to further
11 this aim, and it is in this spirit of partnership
12 that I am here today to share our record of
13 progress.

14 There have been significant strides
15 in reducing criminal activity in New York City
16 public housing communities. In fact, crime has
17 dropped a total of 23% in NYCHA properties over
18 the past ten years. NYCHA's over 400,000
19 residents are safer than they were a decade ago.
20 However, we know there is much more that can be
21 done and must be done to make the city's public
22 housing families feel safer in their homes. To
23 that end, I am here to describe the status of
24 NYCHA's planning and installation of security
25 systems over the next year and our long-term

1
2 strategic vision to improve safety for our
3 residents.

4 Recent media reports have suggested
5 that NYCHA failed to implement measures during the
6 past eight years that would safeguard the homes
7 and lives of our residents and employees. On the
8 contrary, during this period, we took decisive,
9 proactive measures and make cost effective choices
10 to ensure a long-term sustainable approach to
11 security. I realize that when I made the decision
12 in 2010 to take a step back to evaluate NYCHA's
13 security approach, we could have better managed
14 expectations about the length of time required to
15 evaluate our strategy and engage stakeholders.

16 But when I hear the experience of
17 resident leaders such as Nancy Ortiz of the Lower
18 East Side, who, together with Council Members
19 Mendez and Chin, secured funding for and actively
20 designed systems that will address the security
21 needs of Vladeck Houses, I know that my decision
22 was the right one for the families we serve. As I
23 will describe later in this testimony, this
24 evaluation period ultimately resulted in reduced
25 camera cost, more security options for our

1 residents, and a better value for the
2 expenditures. That is, more security enhancements
3 for the money.
4

5 Let me now set the record straight
6 on several actions that NYCHA took over the past
7 few years. It was reported that 42 million was
8 designated for security cameras in NYCHA
9 developments over the last eight years, but no
10 cameras were installed. Here's the reality:
11 NYCHA has 6,827 closed circuit television cameras
12 of varying scale installed in 538 buildings in 105
13 developments citywide. We installed more than
14 half of those cameras, a total of 3,497, between
15 2003 and 2012, to the benefit of over 87,000
16 residents. Seventy-five percent of the \$42
17 million in government funding for camera and
18 security enhancements was committed over the past
19 three years. While we did hold off on utilizing
20 new allocations beginning in 2010 in order to
21 develop a comprehensive standardized security
22 model, we continued to deliver on projects that
23 had already started and the number of cameras in
24 our developments continue to rise citywide.

25 It was reported that the price tag

1
2 for putting security cameras in the city's most
3 dangerous housing developments has gone up, even
4 as housing officials sat on money for that
5 installation. The reality is that in our new
6 security architecture, cameras are now 50%
7 cheaper. The average cost for installing CCTV
8 cameras prior to our evaluation period in 2010 was
9 \$165,000 per building; in our new architecture,
10 the average cost per building for cameras is now
11 \$80,000. Economies of scale, competitive bidding,
12 and more technology options account for the
13 significant cost savings. Residents get more
14 security from the City Council's investment.

15 It was reported that security
16 camera installation would move forward only after
17 it was revealed that \$42 million in funding was
18 sitting unused. The reality is that NYCHA revised
19 safety and security program was initiated in early
20 2011 to create a universal platform for selection
21 and placement of the security enhancements in all
22 NYCHA developments. This comprehensive approach,
23 known as layered access control, would include
24 modern intercoms, wireless key fobs,
25 technologically advanced cameras, and vandalism

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2 resistant door hardware. For the past year, we
3 have been, and still are, on track to roll out a
4 uniform technologically advanced security system
5 at 85 of our developments citywide by the fall of
6 2013.

7 In order to understand where we are
8 and where we're going, I think it is important to
9 recognize where we've been. Our first cameras
10 were installed in 1997. Historically, the
11 Department of Housing and Urban Development
12 provided us with over \$35 million annually for
13 drug elimination activities, including the
14 installation of CCTV cameras. But those federal
15 anti-crime funds were eliminated in 2003, leaving
16 NYCHA no secure--excuse me, leaving NYCHA no
17 recourse but to rely on financial allocations from
18 elected officials in order to sustain the CCTV
19 program. The effort progressed with camera
20 installations on a development by development
21 basis.

22 Following my appointment in 2009 as
23 chairman, preliminary feedback on safety issues
24 from staff, residents, and the New York City
25 Police Department indicated that we needed to take

1
2 a closer look at our security strategy to address
3 systemic and complex issues. The safety and
4 security task force, a partnership among multiple
5 stakeholders, was formed to identify areas of
6 vulnerability, determine how best to utilize
7 allocated funds, and find solutions to improve and
8 strengthen community relationships.

9 Based on the task force's
10 preliminary findings, I decided in 2010 to review
11 and evaluate any new CCTV-related construction
12 that had not yet been initiated so that a quality
13 assessment could be made. After evaluating the
14 existing system, speaking with residents,
15 consulting security experts, and reviewing public
16 housing best practices, the team identified a
17 number of issues: There was no consistent
18 methodology or technology platform for CCTV across
19 NYCHA developments, which resulted in less
20 efficient and effective use of the equipment. The
21 stand-alone systems were unreliable, antiquated,
22 and incurred high installation costs.
23 Additionally, the procurement process to furnish
24 and install cameras was found to be inefficient
25 and time-consuming.

Chief among the task force's recommendations was that a three-tier approach to better secure building interests would more effectively deter criminal activity than cameras alone. Equipment will be uniform agency-wide and capital costs for the initial camera installation, as well as maintenance, will be reduced, and the new system will offer greater value due to technological enhancements like fiber optics, smart cameras, and the use of network communication hubs known as security operation centers. Also, system standardization and a proactive contracting delivery method implemented by NYCHA will significantly shorten the procurement process.

As result of this innovative, comprehensive approach, NYCHA was awarded a national competitive grant of \$250,000 from HUD for layered access control improvements in 2010. With that award, together with additional funding from Council Member Maria del Carmen Arroyo and NYCHA's capital program, Mott Haven Houses in the Bronx became the pilot location for layered access control. Contrary to the notion that we have been

1
2 sitting on our hands for the last two years,
3 NYCHA, acting as a responsible steward of tax
4 dollars, took proactive steps to ensure the long-
5 term viability of the City Council's financial
6 investment while ensuring community support.

7 Over the past decade, NYCHA
8 received a total of 75 million in federal, state,
9 and city funds and has spent 33 million to-date on
10 CCTV cameras. Forty-two million dollars remain to
11 provide security enhancements for the 85 earmarked
12 developments. With a limited budget, it became
13 clear that we needed to develop a new process to
14 maximize cost efficiency and minimize
15 implementation delays.

16 After presenting the new security
17 system options to City Council Members, we sought
18 and obtained buy-in for the use of allocated funds
19 per development. We have been engaging residents
20 in the planning and design phase of the process,
21 believing that their participation is crucial for
22 improving security over the long term and expect
23 to complete these meetings by this fall. We're
24 leveraging their knowledge of their communities,
25 giving them a voice in prioritizing security

enhancements and identifying camera locations. NYCHA has conducted over 130 meetings with elected officials, resident leadership, and the NYPD since 2010. I, along with the NYCHA senior staff in Capital Projects, Operations, and Intergovernmental, discuss security program options, scope of work, and the technical needs at individual developments.

In addition, NYCHA provided testimony to the City Council about our security enhancement plans on several occasions, most recently on June 5th of this year. I testified before the Committee on Finance and Public Housing that we planned to complete all of the city capital-funded CCTV layered access projects by the fall of 2013, and that schedule remains largely unchanged.

Most critically, we developed detailed technical specifications for all of the components of the new layered access concept, which allowed us to begin the procurement of several job order contracts in the summer of 2011. NYCHA actively pursued these contracts, which allow up to \$65 million worth of work to be

1 performed in anticipation of any future funding.
2 This strategy has already paid off as we were
3 awarded an additional 10 million in fiscal year
4 2013 funds this past July from elected officials
5 that allowed us to implement safety enhancements
6 without a lengthy new bidding process. The
7 contracts also gave us detailed cost information
8 so that residents and elected officials can
9 clearly understand installation options, including
10 cost at each development.
11

12 And now I'd like to introduce Mr.
13 Ribeiro, the Executive Vice President of Capital
14 Projects, who will outline the other important
15 milestones of our process and the overall status
16 to date.

17 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Thank you. As
18 the chairman has indicated, resident engagement
19 and communication relative to this program is
20 critical to its success, so as a result, as we
21 progressed with the program, we provided or
22 developed detailed schedules for each one of the
23 developments on how they would progress. In an
24 effort to measure that and clearly communicate
25 that to all of the parties involved, we have, in

1 essence, boiled those schedules down into six
2 critical milestones, the first of which was the
3 repurposing of the funds. As was testified, we
4 required repurposing efforts, those efforts have
5 gone on over the past year and, at this point, 98%
6 of that work has been completed for the
7 developments that currently have funding.

8 The next step in that process was
9 resident engagement.
10

11 SPEAKER QUINN: [Interposing] Can
12 you just repeat that again, 'cause I know we don't
13 have what you're saying in written testimony, so
14 can you just go over the 98% part again? I'm
15 sorry.

16 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Ninety-eight
17 percent of the developments that we have funding
18 for that we required repurposing letters for, we
19 have obtained from the City Council.

20 [Off mic]

21 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Yes. So the next
22 milestone would be the beginning of the resident
23 engagement process whereby we meet with the
24 electeds, we meet with the residents, and the
25 NYPD, and we present several different pieces of

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2 information at those meetings, we present what we
3 believe to be the costs to outfit the entire
4 development with cameras and all of the
5 recommended layered access improvements. So we
6 present the total cost for the entire development
7 regardless of how much funding is actually
8 available.

9 We then follow that up with our
10 specific recommendations on how we would spend the
11 available money towards meeting that ultimate--the
12 ultimate plan. It's at that point that we began
13 the dialogue with residents, electeds, and the
14 NYPD to develop what the best approach is for each
15 particular development based on the needs and the
16 available funding. We've engaged or began that
17 process for 58% of the developments for which we
18 have funding.

19 Following that process, it's very
20 important for us to have all of those ultimate
21 plans that we come up with signed off of, again,
22 by the residents, by the electeds, and by the
23 NYPD. That's a critical step in that, without
24 that sign off, if we have to change things later
25 on in the process, it would significantly impact

our schedule. We have received to date design sign offs on 20 of the 85 developments, representing a 24% of the program.

Once we have the design sign off, we prepare the necessary detailed estimates and paperwork to provide to the office of OMB and the comptroller's office to get the required certificate to proceed. At this point, we currently have 17% of the program has been submitted to OMB or the comptroller's office, that represents 17 of the 85 developments.

Once we receive that CP from OMB and the comptroller's office, we are then free to proceed into construction, start construction. As of today, we are in construction at 5 of the 85 developments for which we have funding, representing 6% of the program.

Finally, the last step, the last major milestone would be the completion of construction, that process signifies the end of the expenditure for each particular development. And as we sit here today, we have completed construction for 1 development out of the 85 for which we have funding.

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1 must do more to ensure residents feel safe in
2 their own homes. As outlined in Plan NYCHA, our
3 comprehensive plan to make public housing
4 developments safer goes beyond security cameras
5 and layered access. Together with the NYPD, we're
6 rolling out a series of security enhancement pilot
7 programs to further drive down crime in NYCHA
8 communities. These efforts increase NYPD patrol
9 presence in 12 high crime risk properties and
10 create new Impact Zones at Soundview and Castle
11 Hill developments.
12

13 We're also expanding Operation
14 CLEARs, Community Law Enforcement Approach to
15 Restoring Security, a community, NYPD, NYCHA
16 partnership to tackle crime that has already
17 delivered results in seven developments. This
18 includes NYCHA staff performing building
19 inspections, monitoring internal and external
20 lights, and providing 24-hour emergency services
21 to address NYPD-identified building repairs.
22 CLEARs also involves the NYPD's expanded use of
23 Skywatch, command post vehicles, and the rollout
24 of youth engagement programs. We will also
25 continue our successful partnership with all five

district attorneys to optimize lease enforcement.

As part of our comprehensive approach to safety, NYCHA will cosponsor a gun buyback program on 18th of August. We also recently received \$110,000 grant through the New York Community Trust to improve our anti-gang programming and we are in the process of implementing the Operation SNUG anti-gang, anti-gun program at select developments. It is our hope that these efforts will alleviate acts of violence in our communities.

Ensuring that our communities remain safe is a collective responsibility. We-- NYCHA employees, elected officials, advocates, residents, and the NYPD--all play a vital role in making neighborhoods safer. We know that investing in new technology and creating enhanced security measures will take us only so far without the trust and cooperation of NYCHA residents, as well as the financial support and advocacy of the City Council. To address our chronic lack of programmatic funding, we have actively engaged many stakeholders to collaborate with us on improving the safety of NYCHA families by

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2 leveraging their financial resources and security
3 expertise. But NYCHA cannot do this essential and
4 urgent work alone. Improving the safety of our
5 334 developments, 2,600 buildings, and over 3,000
6 elevators is no small feat. Installing just
7 cameras alone will require a \$200 million
8 investment. And a comprehensive layered access
9 control implementation is estimated to cost the
10 Authority more than \$500 million. This new plan
11 offers the opportunity to reevaluate our funding
12 strategy in order to take a more holistic
13 approach, examining and prioritizing our entire
14 portfolio of properties instead of allocating
15 funding by district. We hope to work with the
16 Council to establish an annual programmatic
17 funding stream that would promote the most
18 appropriate allocation of funds.

19 Thank you, and we welcome any
20 questions that you may have at this time.

21 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Thank you, Mr.
22 Chairman. I'm going to ask just a few questions
23 and then I'll turn it over to my Speaker and allow
24 my colleagues to ask questions, and then I'll come
25 back at the end.

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2 First I want to ask in your
3 testimony that you just read, here on page nine,
4 you say installing just cameras will require a 200
5 million investment, and a comprehensive layered
6 access control implementation is estimated at 500
7 million. I believe your testimony in February of
8 2011 was that cameras would be about 100 million,
9 and complete layered access 500--200 million. So
10 these are increases over your prior testimony, can
11 you please explain that?

12 JOHN RHEA: So I'd have to see the
13 specific set of testimony, but what I will say is
14 that we've looked at providing--there's a
15 difference between current camera installation and
16 desired installation. So, for example, many of
17 our existing developments that have cameras don't
18 have the full complement of cameras. So when
19 money was allocated it was insufficient to outfit
20 the entire development. And going forward, even
21 in the 85 that we're proposing in many cases, as
22 Mr. Ribeiro said, the money is not sufficient to
23 outfit the entire development with cameras exactly
24 where we would want them and we've had to make
25 tough trade-offs.

1
2 So the \$200 million number reflects
3 two things: One, installing cameras in the ideal
4 locations in buildings that currently don't have
5 them; and two, going back to buildings that don't
6 have a full complement of cameras and installing
7 cameras thereto to complete the build out. So
8 that's the \$200 million reflects, and the 500
9 million, again, is 300 million for the additional
10 components of layered access--electronic doors,
11 new intercoms, and the interoperability that we're
12 proposing through the fiber optic cables.

13 [Off mic]

14 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: I'm going to
15 come back at the end with what you specifically
16 said 'cause I think this is important. Can the
17 old system communicate with the new system
18 currently and will it in this next phase?

19 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: No, many elements
20 of the systems that were installed previously are
21 of an older technology, do not--they're not IP
22 addressable cameras, for instance. So, no, many
23 of the cameras that were previously installed
24 cannot communicate with the more sophisticated
25 systems that are being installed.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Can they communicate with each other within a development currently?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: The current systems that are in place now?

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Correct.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: In many cases, they don't even communicate within the development. In many cases, you can have cameras within one particular development that are not connected to one another or simply connected to a VCR in the basement of each building. So in many cases, the older systems don't even communicate amongst the development.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: So in this layered access we're talking, there's a proposal to upgrade the old cameras so that they can all be connected and talk to each other, no?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: There are provisions in the contracts where, yes, we could go back and replace certain elements of previous installations to use IP addressable cameras and other technology to get them to be compatible with the systems that are being installed today.

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CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: In your testimony on page eight, you talk about expanding Operation CLEARs and that it's delivered results in seven developments. What developments are we talking about?

[Long pause]

JOHN RHEA: I know that three of them are Wagner, Armstrong, and Melrose? And Melrose, we'll get you the other four.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And further, on your testimony that spills onto page nine, you talk about Operation SNUG that will be implemented at select developments. Which developments are those and how are they chosen?

JOHN RHEA: The SNUG project was started as a public-private partnership working with Senator Malcolm Smith, as well as Senator Eric Adams and NYCHA, as well as a number of philanthropic organizations, principally New York Community Trust. We proposed creating a system that could fund these community-based organizations that work on the ground with particularly youth who are involved in gang activity or violent activity.

1
2 SNUGs is guns spelled backwards,
3 and the model is a cease-fire model that's been
4 implemented in many other cities. Our goal was to
5 ensure that these groups had some stable funding
6 stream, most of them are struggling to financially
7 support the work that they do. We also wanted to
8 ensure that these groups could have a direct
9 relationship with NYCHA management and leadership.
10 And so part of the funding grant goes to give
11 direct funding to the SNUG itself and part of the
12 funding goes to create a anti-gang coordinator at
13 NYCHA to support that position, and we're in the
14 process of creating that position, hiring the
15 person to do the work that will then coordinate
16 with the SNUGs. So there were seven SNUGs that
17 were funded and the developments in the
18 communities in which those SNUGs operate,
19 principally Brooklyn is the--and Queens are two of
20 the areas where we're going to be doing a bunch of
21 work, but I can get you the specific developments
22 that those SNUGs would cover.

23 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: So we don't
24 know which select developments they are yet and
25 these--

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2 JOHN RHEA: [Interposing] Well we
3 didn't select the SNUG based upon a development,
4 there was a--and, again, NYCHA, we have
5 relationships with the various SNUGs like there
6 are, many of you know them, but it's, you know,
7 Brooklyn Blizzards, King of Kings, there are a
8 number of them, I can, you know, keep going down
9 the list, but the bottom line is we work with them
10 throughout the community. Eric Ford's LIFE Camp,
11 there are a bunch of them. And what we
12 recommended to the New York Community Trust was a
13 list of them that we had relationships with, but
14 the ultimate decision of which ones were funded
15 was decided by the New York Community Trust. And
16 then, depending on what communities they currently
17 work in or where they have the capacity to expand
18 and where they think developments have particular
19 youth and gang issues, they will prioritize those
20 and then we will have NYCHA management and the
21 anti-violence coordinator work with them at that
22 point.

23 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: So I'm looking
24 at the nice backdrop, so all that green represents
25 our money? Yes? Maybe?

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2 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Yes, all of the
3 green represents progress that we've made towards
4 achieving those milestones that I talked about
5 earlier.

6 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay. I'm
7 going to turn it over to my Speaker and at some
8 point maybe you can talk us through which--

9 SPEAKER QUINN: [Interposing] They
10 can do that now if they want.

11 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Can you talk
12 us through where we see most of these long lines
13 and green lines and where we don't? Can you kind
14 of give us an overview here?

15 JOHN RHEA: You want us to do that
16 before you turn it over you said, or after?

17 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: The Speaker
18 said you can do that now.

19 JOHN RHEA: Okay.

20 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Okay. Again, the
21 green represents milestones that we've reached. I
22 don't think you want me to go line by line,
23 development by development and tell you the
24 status, but again, overall, I think one of the
25 critical milestones there is--

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[Crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: [Interposing]

Can you just tell me this, so all of those are developments, right?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Yes, each line on the chart represents a development.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And there are how many developments up on those boards?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Eight-five developments.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Eighty-five.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Yes.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay. And the last, the longest last green line, that would be what?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Well the longest last green line would be Bay View Houses, and the fact that the green line goes all the way across the chart represents that we've hit every milestone, including completing construction.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And that was done with City Council money or was that done with state or other funding?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: The work at Bay

1
2 View Houses was funded entirely with state
3 funding.

4 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: That is by
5 state elected officials or...?

6 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: That's correct.

7 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay. And
8 then the next longest green lines, can you just
9 talk me through those?

10 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Sure, the longest
11 green lines on the chart behind me are typically
12 those that involve state funding, and because the
13 state funding has one less milestone that we have
14 to achieve, that being the OMB comptroller
15 approval process, those projects are advanced
16 further than those that have City Council funding
17 associated.

18 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: So let me just
19 repeat, the City Council funding has an extra
20 layer, that means it needs to get approval from
21 OMB, Office of Management and Budget, and the
22 Comptroller?

23 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: That's correct.

24 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And the state
25 does not, is that correct?

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2 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: The state funds
3 do not require that process--

4 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay.

5 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: --that's correct.

6 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And so the
7 longer green lines have just state funding or
8 state and city funding together?

9 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Some of them are
10 just state funding, some of them have city and
11 state funding, so we were able to progress at
12 least the state funded portion of work. So in
13 many of those, we're in construction and we're
14 able to do that because the construction is funded
15 with the state dollars.

16 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And all the
17 other green lines that don't go as far, that's
18 'cause it's only City Council funding?

19 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So the other
20 lines that make it to, say, the middle of the
21 chart, the third milestone would be the city
22 funded projects that have reached the Office of
23 Management and Budget and the Comptroller's office
24 for their approval.

25 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: You said in

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your testimony that 20 were signed off on, where would that be, 20 of the 85 developments, where would that be in that green line process?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So that would be the third column that represents--that says design sign off, it's labeled as sign--

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: [Interposing]
Can someone just point to that third column just so that we can--that would be that column.

MALE VOICE: Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay. Thank you.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: That would be the resident, the elected, and the NYPD physically signing off on the design plans that we prepare as a result of the collaboration effort in the previous step.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And the next column after that would be?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: After, being to the left of the--

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: [Interposing]
Yeah, so it would be the fourth column would be?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Yeah, after we

1
2 get that sign off, that's when we submit it to
3 OMB, and that's an important distinction there,
4 that's part of the reason that we go through the
5 efforts of getting that sign off. The OMB--the
6 administrative process is one that can have an
7 impact on the schedule, what we don't want to do
8 is start constructing something with the approvals
9 and then have to make a change out in the field
10 because that change would require us to start the
11 clock over again and resubmit to OMB and
12 Comptroller's office. And in an effort to keep
13 the projects on schedule, we need to avoid that,
14 and that's why we're requiring the sign offs in
15 the previous step.

16 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay. I was
17 just handed a copy of that, you know, so that we--

18 SPEAKER QUINN: A draft.

19 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: --a draft one
20 so that we can hand it to our members, so thank
21 you. Madam Speaker.

22 SPEAKER QUINN: Thank you. Just to
23 kind of stay on this chart for a second, and I
24 think it's helpful to understand the different
25 steps, right, that something's going through. One

1 question, kind of, I had while listening to the
2 different steps is, do you know how long it takes
3 basically to go from one box to the other, do you
4 know what I mean? So if you look at, on the draft
5 that I have in the Bronx, Edenwald, which was
6 funded by the borough president, the repurposing
7 letters went out in April of 2011 and the scoping
8 meeting was 13 months later, right? And then in
9 Jackson in Council Member Arroyo's district, the
10 scoping letter also went out in April of 2011, but
11 the--I'm sorry, the repurposing letter, but the
12 scoping meeting wasn't until July of 2012. Now
13 that seems, whether it's May of '12 or July of '12
14 and the letters went out in '11, it seems like a
15 long time, right? So, A, what is the standard
16 that should be to go from repurposing to scoping
17 to sign off, I mean, then when it gets to OMB
18 that's beyond your control so let's set that aside
19 for a second. Do you have an internal standard
20 that you strive for to go from repurposing to
21 scoping to sign off?
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23 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So, yes, a lot of
24 that though is dependent on the specifics of each
25 development. So as you indicated, right, a number

1 of the steps, the milestones are out of our
2 control. We can--

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4 SPEAKER QUINN: [Interposing] No, I
5 only said OMB's was.

6 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Well, quite
7 frankly, the resident engagement one is also
8 somewhat out of our control--

9 SPEAKER QUINN: [Interposing] And
10 that would be, just so I understand that, that
11 would be the scoping meeting or the sign off?

12 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: That would be
13 both.

14 SPEAKER QUINN: Okay.

15 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So in some
16 developments we've experienced where we've sat
17 down and everybody was in consensus and, you know,
18 the resident engagement meeting consisted of one
19 meeting, everybody agreed, everybody signed, and
20 all of that happened, you know, very, very
21 quickly. In other cases, there's not a consensus.
22 Would we rather have cameras in the elevators or
23 cameras on the exterior? So sometimes that debate
24 amongst the residents can take some time to
25 resolve. So those, to a certain degree, can also

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be out of our control.

Another factor would be the amount of money, right? So, the resident engagement process takes longer the less money that we have. So--

SPEAKER QUINN: [Interposing] So would it be fair to say, kind of, the place we see the challenges around the resident engagement process or the stakeholder engagement process is from scoping meeting to sign off? 'Cause one of the questions I have is, once you have the repurposing letters or like, another point for me would be once the contracts were in, you know, last December--well let me just stick with this, why did it take so long to get from the repurposing letter to the scoping meeting? 'Cause it seems consistently it takes over, with one exception that took ten months, all of the others seem to take over a year to go from the scoping letter to the meeting. Set aside, I think you have a point, some meetings might be, like, great, love your plans, good to go; others might be, we need another meeting and then somebody was out, and let's set that aside for a second. The one

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2 thing that seems clearly within your control, from
3 my understanding but I could be wrong, would be
4 the repurposing letter to the scoping meeting, why
5 did that appear on this draft that I have to take
6 so long?

7 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Okay. So as I
8 have indicated earlier, the specific process
9 within the resident engagement is we present to
10 the residents, you know, in essence, a map of the
11 development, here--

12 SPEAKER QUINN: [Interposing] No, I
13 may not understand, what I'm ask--I may not be
14 saying this right. So you get the repurposing
15 letters, right, which basically means--so now
16 we're talking about the new money for a second,
17 right? So you get the Council Members to say, or
18 the borough president, whatever, that's fine, do
19 layered access instead of the old cameras, right?
20 So that's what happened when you got the
21 repurposing letter, right?

22 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: That's correct.

23 SPEAKER QUINN: So once you got
24 that letter, then you're scheduling a meeting,
25 right?

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RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Well there's a step, there's a interim step in there.

SPEAKER QUINN: Okay. So just I want you to understand this, I'm reading this that it took 14 months to schedule a meeting, is that not what I should be reading here?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: No, that was--

SPEAKER QUINN: Okay. All right.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: --there was a number of interim steps that need to occur before--
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SPEAKER QUINN: [Interposing] Okay. 'Cause you could see how it seems like that.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Yes.

SPEAKER QUINN: Okay.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So as I indicated before, the first step in that the resident engagement is we sit down and we have to provide, we want to provide the cost data associated with the development, so here's what the--

SPEAKER QUINN: [Interposing] And that's not the scoping meeting.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: That's the beginning of the scoping meeting, right? So--

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2 SPEAKER QUINN: [Interposing] So
3 then that is this.

4 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: --so we go from
5 the repurposing, which is the first column, is--
6 the first column being your repurposing letters,
7 the next column would be your scoping meeting.
8 The first thing that we have to present at the
9 scoping meeting is the cost of doing the work. We
10 did not have that information until the contracts
11 went out to bid and we had actual contracts with
12 the contractors. That contract process occurred
13 in the beginning in the summer of 2011 when those
14 projects went out to bid, they were awarded and
15 presented to the board in November, and a letter
16 of award went to each of the contractors in
17 January of 2012. Now, in January of 2012, armed
18 with that price information, then we could sit
19 down with the residents and say these are your
20 options and this is exactly how much it would
21 cost. So that would be the explanation for the
22 period of time between some repurposing letters we
23 got very early on in 2011, but we did not have the
24 cost data yet to actually schedule the meeting.

25 SPEAKER QUINN: And you didn't--

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[Pause]

SPEAKER QUINN: You didn't have the cost data just because the system wasn't fully...

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: We didn't have the cost data because we didn't have contracts in place. We need to present because what we're submitting to OMB is exact cost information for the work. So without having the job contracts and the specific price for each element, right? So we could not sit down with the residents. We now can sit down with the residents and I can tell them it costs \$15,000 for an elevator camera, it costs \$5,000 for a lobby camera, it costs \$2,000 for a roof camera, it costs--so I can literally have that, we have that with us when we sit down with the residents so if they want to make a decision that they don't want elevator cameras--

SPEAKER QUINN: Right.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: --and instead want exterior cameras, we, in essence, can tell them exactly how many exterior cameras they can get.

SPEAKER QUINN: And what was the timeframe it took from committing to the layered

1
2 access concept to getting the--I mean, I guess I
3 would call it master contract of sorts that had
4 the financial--that had the costs?

5 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So the safety and
6 security task force issued their recommendations
7 in February of 2011--

8 SPEAKER QUINN: Okay.

9 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: --at that point,
10 we developed the detailed technical specifications
11 on all of the elements that needed to go into the
12 layered access system, and in June of 2011, we
13 went out to bid publicly for the job contracts,
14 the job order contracting contracts, to perform
15 the physical work. They went out to bid in June,
16 as I said, we received bids that summer, and our
17 recommendation to award six contracts went to the
18 board in November of 2011, with a notice to
19 proceed in January of '12.

20 SPEAKER QUINN: Is there anything
21 we can compare this to in NYCHA's history to see
22 if that's, you know, comparatively exactly the
23 same as it usually is, longer than it should have
24 been, do you know what I mean?

25 JOHN RHEA: Are you asking about

1
2 the period in time from which we knew what we
3 wanted to do and how long it took us to get a
4 contract?

5 SPEAKER QUINN: Both, how long it
6 took you to kind of decide what you wanted to do
7 and then what you did.

8 JOHN RHEA: So, yeah, so I'll do
9 the first part, I mean, in how long it took us to
10 decide what we wanted to do, and then I'll let Ray
11 answer the question 'cause we have, obviously, a
12 lot of data about how long it normally takes for
13 us to--

14 SPEAKER QUINN: Yeah.

15 JOHN RHEA: --get an RFP design
16 developed and put out for bid. The part of this
17 process that, you know, certainly took a long time
18 but that was well worth it involved understanding
19 our options, engaging residents, the NYPD, and
20 NYCHA management in that conversation of what do
21 we want to accomplish, what are the options, and
22 what are we prepared to move forward with and
23 recommend to Council Members and to residents.
24 That involved multiple stakeholders, it involved
25 visits to other public housing authorities, it

1 involved visits to other private management
2 companies and looking at their security system, it
3 involved presentations from security experts. And
4 that process was done through the task force,
5 there was a specific subcommittee of the task
6 force that had responsibility for this portion of
7 the task force work that had to be then shared
8 with the broader task force, and then once it was
9 all agreed upon, then we could begin to make
10 recommendations. That took the amount of time
11 that it took, it wasn't a pretty process, but it
12 was a process of engagement and then we believe we
13 got to a better technical outcome as a result of
14 engaging all of the stakeholders in that process,
15 as opposed to NYCHA making a decision by fiat as
16 it may have done in the past and then not having
17 the kind of buy-in that's important for the people
18 who ultimately benefit from it.

19
20 The second piece of that was then a
21 very long and lengthy process to take what we had
22 recommended and to work with Council Members to
23 agree that that was something that they should
24 indeed support and repurpose the funds. And that
25 not only involved NYCHA presenting to Council

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2 Members and their staff what the proposal was, but
3 Council Members, rightfully, wanted to go back to
4 their constituents at the developments and in the
5 community and say are you comfortable with this.
6 And so that process took a very long time.
7 Admittedly, we would have loved to have done it
8 quicker, but we believe we got to the right
9 outcome and a better place even though it required
10 a substantial amount of time and dialogue.

11 SPEAKER QUINN: So let me just ask
12 three more questions and then turn it over to my
13 colleagues. So from where we are now, the old
14 money is taking care of, right, the old money is
15 out the door, two of them developments with the
16 new money so to speak are done, the rest of the
17 developments with the new money you're saying
18 would be done in the fall--

19 JOHN RHEA: [Interposing] By the
20 end of 2013.

21 SPEAKER QUINN: By the end of 2013.

22 JOHN RHEA: Correct.

23 SPEAKER QUINN: So that's--

24 JOHN RHEA: [Interposing] When we
25 were here before, we did say the fall and I say--

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SPEAKER QUINN: Right.

JOHN RHEA: --that as in my
testimony, we are--

SPEAKER QUINN: Okay.

JOHN RHEA: --largely on track,
we're committing that by the end of 2013 we will
be complete.

SPEAKER QUINN: So that's 16
months, 14 months, let's call it 14 to 16 months,
right? What could we do to speed that up, A?
Because the beat of that is if it's going to take
16 months from here to there, how long is it going
to take if we--theoretically, if Council Members
put in--I'm totally making these numbers up--\$10
million more for cameras for the budget that is
adopted for July 1 of next year, how long is that
going to take? But first and foremost, how do we
speed up the money we have?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So there's a
couple of--I think there would be a couple of
areas of opportunity to speed up the process, but
before I do that, I just want to point out one
thing, when we say that we'll be completed by the
end of '13, we're saying the last development on

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the list--

SPEAKER QUINN: [Interposing] No, I
get it.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: --will be
completed, so there will be developments in the
interim that get completed and we move on--

SPEAKER QUINN: I understand.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: --to the next
development.

SPEAKER QUINN: Can you send us
your anticipated completion dates per development?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Sure.

SPEAKER QUINN: Great. But
nonetheless, how do we speed them all up?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: [Interposing] So
a couple of areas, I'll say of opportunity with
regards to speeding up the process would be, one,
the sign off process. In some cases, it's
difficult to get consensus and to get everybody to
sign off and say, yes, this is what we want to do
with the money. So if we were able to accelerate
that process, I think it would go a long way
towards accelerating it. And quite frankly, the
funding aspect of it is also an issue that--

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[Crosstalk]

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: --lengthens the process.

SPEAKER QUINN: I don't understand what you mean by--

[Crosstalk]

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: [Interposing] If, as I said before, we present to the residents that, as an example, development X, it would cost \$4 million to do complete cameras and layered access in your particular development, we show up and we say, but we have \$500,000 for this particular development. A lot a very difficult choices have to be made by the residents and that difficult decision making process takes time. If there was money to do everything, that meeting is very easy and the decision is we'll do everything.

JOHN RHEA: And then I want to just add to that, I agree with everything he said, but it's not just if we have money to do everything, we recognize that the City and the Council--

SPEAKER QUINN: Right.

JOHN RHEA: --nor NYCHA have money to do everything, but if you provide us with \$10

1 million and that \$10 million is provided from ten
2 different Council Members for ten different
3 developments and each development really cost \$2
4 million to do, right, then that's what Ray is
5 referring to, then that becomes a very difficult
6 conversation about how. First of all, we don't
7 know who is going to allocate the money so, you
8 know, we don't have the designs in place in
9 advance, and then we find out that we have it for
10 these ten different developments, but we don't
11 have sufficient money for the entire development,
12 that's a very different process than if the
13 Council said, we're going to give you \$10 million,
14 NYCHA, and we know that now and you can come back
15 to us and tell us how you can spend that \$10
16 million in which developments most efficiently.
17 So I'm saying that's the kind of--it's a very
18 different kind of a conversation.

19
20 SPEAKER QUINN: I hear that, so
21 just a couple of things, we'll come back to the
22 funding point. Is there anything NYCHA can do to
23 speed it up? 'Cause you kind of said if the
24 Council gave us more money, if the Council gave us
25 money in a different way, or if the residents

2 could make decisions more quickly it would speed
3 it up, which I'm not saying either of those are
4 invalid suggestions, but is there anything within
5 the Authority's role or responsibility that you
6 could do to speed it up? And let me just say
7 before you answer it, on the funding question, I
8 think we should set that aside, because right now
9 the funding and the budget for cameras is all from
10 elected officials of different levels, right? And
11 if there wants to be a conversation about, you
12 know, some joint administrative Council initiative
13 around cameras, that would change things and we
14 could figure out a way to put it in the long-term
15 capital plan and then we could all plan for it,
16 that's fine, but I think that's a broader both
17 sides of government discussion--

18	[Crosstalk]
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19 JOHN RHEA: [Interposing] Fair
20 enough, fair enough, and then--

21 SPEAKER QUINN: --set that aside,
22 and we should have it, I'm not saying we
23 shouldn't, but this isn't the right format and we
24 don't have all the right people here--

25	[Crosstalk]
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2 JOHN RHEA: [Interposing] And we
3 appreciate that, and fair enough. And I want to
4 just take a step back and say that we are not
5 pointing a finger, we will acknowledge that at
6 every point along this timeline, at every one of
7 these six steps, NYCHA can do a better job as
8 well. So we believe that we can do a better job--

9 SPEAKER QUINN: Okay.

10 JOHN RHEA: --we must do a better
11 job and, obviously, when you have six steps, if
12 you can cut a month out of each step--

13 SPEAKER QUINN: Absolutely, right.

14 JOHN RHEA: --that's half a year--

15 SPEAKER QUINN: Right.

16 JOHN RHEA: --so I would not be--
17 you know, it would be inappropriate for me to sit
18 here and say that we can't get better too.

19 And then specifically, I think Ray
20 wants to comment on an area where we've taken
21 action that we think will pay benefits going
22 forward.

23 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Right, so as the
24 chairman indicated, I think the fact that we've
25 progressed these projects using the job order

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2 contracting mechanism has actually put us in a
3 position where we can accelerate it. In essence,
4 we can do the designs on-the-fly or in parallel,
5 we don't have to do a separate procurement process
6 for each and every one of these developments. So
7 we've put in place already a number of measures
8 that will help us accelerate the program.

9 SPEAKER QUINN: Great, so clearly
10 the whole process with the green and white boards
11 and all the questions is, at best, a little
12 confusing, right? So a thing I think would be
13 helpful to try to avoid us being back here, you
14 know, again, whether it's about cameras or funding
15 to redo playgrounds or community centers or
16 whatever, is if the Housing Authority would commit
17 to enter into a memorandum of understanding with
18 the Council for quarterly public reporting on how
19 the timeframe benchmarks, milestones, whatever you
20 want to call it, of how you are spending, what
21 stage in the process, you know what I mean,
22 Council capital dollars. So I think if we could
23 get that commitment here today to that MOU that we
24 would develop and commit to publicly, it would be
25 an important step forward.

1
2 JOHN RHEA: Well what I will
3 absolutely say is that NYCHA looks forward to more
4 clarity and transparency around what information
5 we are sharing with the Council Members, the
6 Council as a whole, and the timing, the periodic
7 nature of which we will share that information,
8 and I look forward to talking with you
9 specifically about how we do that.

10 SPEAKER QUINN: So you won't commit
11 to an MOU.

12 JOHN RHEA: We're happy to commit
13 to whatever we ultimately agree upon through that-
14 -

15 [Laughter]

16 JOHN RHEA: I'm saying to commit in
17 writing. To commit in writing to whatever we
18 ultimately agree upon.

19 SPEAKER QUINN: I don't understand
20 what you're saying, I'm sorry.

21 [Laughter]

22 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Quiet, please.

23 SPEAKER QUINN: That could be yes
24 and I just don't understand it.

25 JOHN RHEA: So I want to--that's

1 why I want to be very specific. I'm saying we
2 look forward to having a conversation about what
3 information the Council would like to see from
4 NYCHA and how often the Council would like us to
5 provide that information, and once we have that
6 agreement with the Council, NYCHA is prepared to
7 commit to that in writing.

8
9 SPEAKER QUINN: Okay. So I think
10 that actually is a yes.

11 JOHN RHEA: I don't know if it's a
12 yes, but it is what I said.

13 SPEAKER QUINN: I'm much more
14 inclined to think things are a no than a yes in
15 this format, so if you're at yes, just go with it.
16 That was a yes, a commitment. Thank you very
17 much.

18 SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Keep it down,
19 please.

20 [Off mic]

21 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Thank you,
22 Madam Speaker. We are going to have questions
23 from Council Member Nelson, Barron, James, and
24 Koo. But before I turn it over to Council Member
25 Nelson, I just want to get back, this is the

1 testimony from February 2011, and I'll repeat your
2 testimony today on page nine, installing just
3 cameras will require 2 million in investment and a
4 comprehensive layered access control
5 implementation is estimated to cost the Authority
6 more than 500 million. Your testimony in February
7 of 2011, I will read it to you, I'll just give you
8 the backdrop, Council Member Halloran was asking
9 some questions about how many buildings in the
10 development in your portfolio and the fact that 27
11 million was available in capital allotments and
12 how much would it take to do all of the
13 developments. Your answer was, if this is where
14 you were going, our internal estimates so that we
15 really want to implement layered access system-
16 wide in all 2,600 buildings, you're looking at
17 north of 100 million in costs, something like 135
18 million; and to implement CCTV in the way that
19 we've liked to, you're north of 200 million of
20 additional costs. Would you like to see this,
21 would it be helpful--

22 [Crosstalk]

23 JOHN RHEA: [Interposing] No, but
24 I'd be happy to take a look at it, if I think I
25

1
2 heard what you said that the cameras were more
3 than 200 million, is that what it just said? No,
4 I thought the--

5 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: [Interposing]
6 The implement layered access in the way system-
7 wide in all 2,600 buildings, you're looking at
8 north of 100 million in costs; and to implement
9 CCTV in the way that we'd like to, you're north of
10 200 million of additional costs.

11 JOHN RHEA: Okay. So the camera
12 number is pretty much still the same, and
13 obviously, our layered access number has changed.
14 The basic breakdown on the 200 million is, you
15 know, the \$80,000 per building on the cameras in
16 the 2,600 buildings is \$208 million and the
17 layered access is \$192,000 per building, which
18 includes the cameras as part of it, which is \$499
19 million. So if you take out the 200 million for
20 cameras from the 499, layered access is 300
21 million; cameras, 200 million, which is what we
22 said today. I'd have to look at, you know, what
23 was underlying my original testimony when I gave
24 you the over 135 is what I think you said, why
25 it's--

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CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Right.

JOHN RHEA: --gone from 135 to 300, I can easily come back and clarify that in terms of what we did around assumptions of, you know, how many doors, how many would have electronic locks, how many would get the replacement of new intercoms. So we'd have to look at that and make sure that it's apples to apples and we would be happy to do that and give you the detail.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: I'll send you this part of the testimony, 'cause from 200 to 500 million, that's way north of where you were at.

JOHN RHEA: [Interposing] Well the 200 is the same, so the difference is from 135 to 300, that's the 200 for cameras, I think you said is the same in both.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Right, so then it goes from--

JOHN RHEA: [Interposing] Okay. So what we're talking about is layered access from 135 to 300, and we will come back and--

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: [Interposing] One thirty-five to five hundred--

[Crosstalk]

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JOHN RHEA: [Interposing] No, no, no, 500 is the total.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay. Oh, I get you.

JOHN RHEA: Okay?

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay.

JOHN RHEA: All right.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: We've been joined by Council Member Halloran from Queens, whose testimony questions I had summarized from the previous testimony, and we were also joined by Council Member Gale Brewer from Manhattan. Council Member Nelson.

COUNCIL MEMBER NELSON: Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm just going to provincial for a moment, I'm not an absolutist but it seems like over three years the process should have progressed somewhat more quickly. And I heard your testimony and waiting for state-of-the-art or a better system, of course, could make a lot of sense, but time and crime is just marching on like crazy, and I know that people in my particular complex, in Sheepshead/Nostrand, have been just so frustrated, as I have been as well. Now from 2009

1
2 to November of 2011, NYCHA officials announced at
3 a meeting attended by myself and the tenants
4 association that they would contract for the--you
5 would contract for the cameras as early as
6 November of, I think it was two--it would be
7 completed by March 2012. Well, as you know, that
8 did not happen. Then we heard that, okay, by
9 August of 2012 they would be installed, but you
10 needed additional funds. Now I don't know if you
11 know, I did allocate another \$1.3 million in
12 addition to the 5 1/2 million almost that I did.
13 But there's been just one delay after the other,
14 now we're hearing December 2012, so I don't know
15 if you were specific to that in your testimony.
16 Can you tell me why and will it be installed by
17 December 2012, specific--apologize for being so
18 provincial, but December of 2012?

19 JOHN RHEA: Yeah, so first of all,
20 I'll let Ray walk through the details of where we
21 are with Sheepshead/Nostrand. You allocated, and
22 thank you, \$525,000 I think the number was
23 originally and the--

24 COUNCIL MEMBER NELSON: Yes.

25 JOHN RHEA: --additional money that

1
2 you allocated was, again, very appreciated, which
3 we just got allocated to us in July, am I correct?

4 COUNCIL MEMBER NELSON: Yeah.

5 JOHN RHEA: So we just found out
6 that we have that and, obviously, that impact--
7 this July--

8 COUNCIL MEMBER NELSON: A million
9 point--what is it--a million point three.

10 JOHN RHEA: A million point three.
11 So I think this is a great example of what we've
12 been trying to describe. Designing a system for
13 \$525,000 is significantly different than designing
14 a system for \$1.8 million and the kinds of--and,
15 therefore, as Ray was describing, that impacts
16 that conversation with residents, with the NYPD,
17 and obviously with--

18 [Crosstalk]

19 JOHN RHEA: --the agency about what
20 is it exactly that we're doing and what are we
21 going to OMB for sign off and approval on.

22 So I'll let Ray go through the
23 details of where we are with your specific
24 contracted money, but I think this is a great
25 example of why we need clarity, and once we have

1
2 clarity, through the new job contract, we can move
3 to a purchase--not a purchase order, but what am--
4 a task order quickly.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER NELSON: Yeah,
6 'cause, you know, the face of it, the human face
7 of it, the fear, the anguish, and the frustrations
8 of the people living there that are held hostage,
9 if you will, in their own apartments during the
10 night for sure, sometimes during the day, I know
11 you care about this, I know probably everybody at
12 NYCHA does as well. So that's why, to expedite
13 this as soon as we possibly can 'cause, you know,
14 we have the list of crimes, I'm sure my colleagues
15 have for their particular--their components, but
16 it seems that Nostrand has just been having some
17 incredibly difficult times. So really would
18 appreciate--the entire city, I'm thinking, you
19 know, the entire city as well, but I personally
20 have been involved with a lot of the members of
21 the Sheepshead/Nostrand Houses, of course, that
22 affects my heart a lot more.

23 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So with regards
24 to your comments on the schedule for Sheepshead
25 and Nostrand, as I'm sure you know, we began

1 meeting with your office and residents in May and
2 we actually have signed off--I'm sorry, I'm sorry,
3 I'm sorry, in May, we began meeting with residents
4 in Sheepshead and Nostrand and we have sign off,
5 very recently got sign off from the residents and
6 now we are in the process about to submit that to
7 OMB and Comptroller's office for approval and we
8 have projected out that we would be in
9 construction--got to [off mic] here--start
10 construction in January of 2013, and that we would
11 be completed in April of 2013. I do want to point
12 out that the additional funding that you provided
13 in 2013 is not accounted for in here, but it is
14 our desire to be able to continue and just roll
15 that construction, that's one of the benefits of
16 the job contract is that we can now just assign
17 another task order using the additional funding
18 and we can continually--we can in essence, stay
19 there until we expend all of the money that was
20 allocated.
21

22 COUNCIL MEMBER NELSON: Good, that
23 grease the system, which is great to move things
24 forward in a rapid fashion. Well, okay, I'm going
25 to leave it at that, and I thank you for this and

1
2 I really hope so much that it really comes to
3 forbearance.

4 JOHN RHEA: And, again, thank you
5 for the additional allocation funds.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER NELSON: Madam
7 Chair.

8 [Pause]

9 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: So I'm going
10 to redo the order 'cause, unfortunately, it was
11 not brought to my attention that some Council
12 Members had asked to be put on the list for
13 questions. So the next Council Members to ask
14 questions will be Council Member Vacca, followed
15 by Council Member Koo, and then by Council Member
16 Barron. So thank you, Charles, for understanding.
17 Gentlemen?

18 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: Thank you,
19 Chair Mendez. All the conversation so far has
20 been focused on the camera issue, there's one or
21 two things in your testimony, though, that I did
22 want to question. On page one where you indicate
23 that crime has dropped 23% in NYCHA properties
24 over the past ten years? I am sure that most
25 tenants would take exception to that. As someone

JOHN RHEA: Yes.

JOHN RHEA: Well so we have seven--

COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: Okay. Well

JOHN RHEA: Before we leave the

hearing, I will give you the exact answer.

COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: I want it to

1
2 be clear that I expect to have an answer which is
3 inclusive of whether or not a NYCHA development
4 falls under a police precinct or whether or not a
5 NYCHA development falls under a PSA. We have a
6 situation in the city now where some are under a
7 precinct, some are under PSA, I don't know if all
8 the totals are being attributed to NYCHA crime if
9 the NYCHA project is not in a PSA but under the
10 precinct. I think tenants are entitled to
11 transparency when it comes to exactly what is
12 happening and what is on record at NYCHA
13 developments. I take exception, I have
14 developments in my district--

15 [Applause]

16 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: No clapping,
17 please, we need--there's a lot of people here who
18 want to give testimony and if people start doing
19 that, we're never going to get through it all and
20 you're not going to get to give your testimony, so
21 I'm going to ask you not to do that again. I'm
22 sorry.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: I'm sorry,
24 no, no, I'm sorry, Council Member--Chair. No
25 resident of NYCHA that I know will tell me that

1
2 crime is down in the past two years. So I take
3 exception and I want an answer which is inclusive.

4 Page eight--

5 JOHN RHEA: [Interposing] Just
6 repeat again, so you want an answer on crime
7 statistics over the past two years that--I missed
8 what you said, when you said inclusive of the--

9 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA:
10 [Interposing] Of PSA reports and precinct reports
11 that involve--

12 JOHN RHEA: Okay. So, right.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: --that
14 involve what goes on in NYCHA developments.

15 JOHN RHEA: Got it, okay, we will
16 get you that.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: Page eight
18 of your report you indicate that you are
19 continuing successful partnerships with all five
20 district attorneys to optimize lease enforcement.
21 Now I take it from that that when you're talking
22 about lease enforcement here, you're talking about
23 tenants who commit crime and, thereby, violate
24 their lease because we are talking about public
25 safety today. So that being the case, again, my

1
2 complaints come from NYCHA tenants who tell me
3 that people are arrested over and over again and
4 are back in their buildings within days of the
5 arrests. People who they are petrified of, people
6 who, after they are released for the ninth and
7 tenth time, go to tenant association meetings so
8 that people who want to talk about what's going on
9 in their buildings know better and are afraid and
10 leave the meeting. So I would like to know about
11 this successful partnership with all the five DAs
12 that NYCHA has and whether or not you have that
13 successful partnership with all five DAs.

14 JOHN RHEA: So appreciate the
15 question. One of the benefits of creating the
16 safety and security task force was inviting all
17 the stakeholders to the table who ensure long-term
18 improvements in public safety in NYCHA
19 developments. One of those critical partners is
20 the District Attorney's Office. We heard the same
21 things that you just described from residents in
22 terms of concerns, and we expressed that concern
23 to City Hall and to the DAs offices and, working
24 directly with City Hall and the DAs offices, we
25 were able to get additional commitments that NYCHA

1
2 developments and lease enforcement around people
3 who live in NYCHA who have committed crimes, that
4 we would share information faster and that we will
5 prioritize certain cases in order to help NYCHA
6 ensure that people were removed from developments
7 who are creating mayhem. So the safety and
8 security task force got the DAs to the table, and
9 they came to the table with a strong desire to be
10 a good partner and a lot of other partnerships
11 have grown out of that beyond just the lease
12 enforcement effort.

13 And so what we've done is
14 targeting--when I say targeting, meaning
15 understanding which families and apartments are
16 causing the real criminal activity in the
17 developments and ensuring that NYCHA's
18 administrative proceedings can actually be
19 enhanced by what's going on in the criminal cases,
20 and that requires us to share information, without
21 obviously violating anyone's rights or any due
22 process. But in the past there hadn't necessarily
23 been the same level of coordination understanding
24 that information would be critical to NYCHA to
25 move forward expeditiously with this

1 administrative actions as important as what's
2 going on on the criminal side of the case. And so
3 through identifying the families, through the
4 collaboration and the sharing of information,
5 through prioritizing certain cases, and NYCHA
6 prioritizing certain cases on an administrative
7 level, we've had much greater success in removing
8 bad actors.
9

10 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: Do we have
11 bad actors in NYCHA who have been arrested or
12 convicted seven, eight, nine, ten times and keep
13 coming back?

14 JOHN RHEA: Well so, first of all,
15 if someone has been convicted of a felony that
16 doesn't allow them to live in public housing, then
17 we first work hard to preserve the tenancy of the
18 family and so, obviously, not pursuing eviction of
19 the mother or their grandmother or the father
20 because of an act of a child or of the spouse
21 because the act of their spouse, to try to
22 preserve the tenancy. They enter into an
23 agreement of exclusion, that that person is not
24 allowed to live in and, in most cases, even visit
25 the apartment. And they enter into that

1 stipulation and we send out inspectors on a
2 periodic basis to ensure that they are honoring
3 that agreement. There are, you know, the vast
4 majority of cases, people honor those agreements,
5 but we often find people who are violating those
6 agreements. When we find people who are violating
7 those agreements, we move toward termination of
8 tenancy actions.
9

10 Often, through the administrative
11 proceeding, the person adjudicating the case
12 decides that it is an isolated incident or there
13 was some extenuating circumstance why the person
14 who's been excluded was there, and they often put
15 them on probation and still preserve the tenancy
16 with the commitment that, again, that the excluded
17 person will no longer or will not continue to be
18 there. They're required to provide an off
19 project, off development address for that person
20 in order to substantiate that that person has, you
21 know, obviously is living somewhere else. We go
22 through all of those efforts to ensure that.

23 That doesn't stop someone from not
24 complying with their agreement, and we have many
25 cases that the board reviews where, after being

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2 caught twice or three times, or after their first
3 time violating it because there was no good basis
4 for which they could say why they were violating
5 the agreement, that we terminate the tenancy of
6 the resident.

7 But to the extent that people are
8 in a NYCHA apartment illegally, obviously, that
9 takes arms and legs and physical inspections for
10 us to identify and then to bring a case, and we go
11 after those cases aggressively when we have
12 information.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: Okay. I'll
14 conclude. I mean, I just want to state that what
15 you and the DAS do, what NYCHA does directly
16 affects the quality of life and the safety that
17 people in NYCHA have a right to enjoy. I want to
18 say that I challenge anyone who says to me that
19 crime is not up in NYCHA because that means that
20 we have our head in the sand. Crime is definitely
21 up. I represent two of the nicer traditionally
22 long-term NYCHA developments and my tenants are
23 afraid. The gangs, the drugs have a
24 disproportionate influence, it affects the
25 surrounding communities, as well as the NYCHA

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developments and--

JOHN RHEA: [Interposing]

Councilman Vacca, first of all, no one has their head in--

COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: I'm alarmed.

JOHN RHEA: --no one has their head in the sand, we agree with you that crime is at unacceptable levels in public housing communities, I was answering the question originally about crime over the past ten years, you asked about the two years, I thought you were asking was the last two years included in the data, was crime still down 23% based upon including the last two years, in which I answered yes. Then you asked me specifically about crime statistics over the last two years, to which I said we will get you the information.

I will state that we are taking action to continue to drive down crime in public housing communities, we share your concern, I personally share your concern, everyone at NYCHA, including employees who have to work in NYCHA developments, share your concern, and we have implemented programs, as I discussed in here in

1
2 today's testimony, like Operation CLEARS, creating
3 two new Impact Zones, as well as targeting 12
4 developments with the highest crime to do more
5 work there. We recognize that we must take more
6 action.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER VACCA: Thank you,
8 Mr. Chairman.

9 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Council Member
10 Koo?

11 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Thank you,
12 Chairwoman Mendez, and, Chairman Rhea, thank you
13 for coming in to testify. I must have to say I
14 agree with Council Member Vacca that crime is not
15 down in the NYCHA developments. I have two
16 developments in Flushing and because with gangs
17 and we have murders in our developments, that's
18 the reason why I allocated money to purchase
19 security cameras. For the last few budget cycles,
20 with the Speaker's help, we have allocated a total
21 of \$1.2 million for the two developments in
22 Flushing. But somehow we have low date of
23 development. In November 2011, we have a town
24 hall meeting and we all agree that security
25 cameras will be installed at the beginning of the

1
2 year, but now it's August already, you know, we
3 haven't seen anything done. So my question to the
4 chairman is, how soon can we see some work done on
5 the two developments in Flushing?

6 JOHN RHEA: I'm going to ask Mr.
7 Ribeiro to answer that question.

8 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So the two
9 developments that you're referring to, first, I
10 guess I'll refer to Bland Houses, where we have
11 met with residents to begin that scoping process,
12 and we did that at the end of June of this year.
13 And without going through all of the milestones
14 themselves, just cut right to the start of
15 construction for Bland Houses is anticipated for
16 January of 2013.

17 With regards to Latimer Gardens,
18 the other development, Latimer Gardens actually
19 has a combination of state and City Council money,
20 and as a result of that, we have actually been
21 able to begin construction at Latimer Gardens, so
22 that started already in July of this year.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: And my second
24 question is, originally, we all agree to install
25 cameras. When was the decision made to change to

1
2 layered assets? The local resident, actually they
3 didn't want layered assets, they just want
4 security cameras.

5 JOHN RHEA: We're not forcing the
6 design on the residents. If there, as we said,
7 there were 98% of the developments, of the 85
8 developments, we had received repurposing letters,
9 do I have that correct?

10 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: That's correct.

11 JOHN RHEA: That's correct. So
12 there's 2% who've not provided us with those
13 repurposing letters, and to the extent that
14 residents prefer a different security
15 architecture, whether that's cameras with no
16 layered access or that's layered access with no
17 cameras, we will work with the residents to give
18 them what they want in consultation with the NYPD
19 and NYCHA, and we will ultimately--and with the,
20 obviously, with the elected official, we will
21 ultimately move forward with what they want.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Because I was
23 in the meeting because we were told that NYCHA
24 wants all the developments to have layered access.

25 JOHN RHEA: We certainly said that

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2 and I'm not backing away from that, we certainly
3 have a point of view that was based upon all of
4 the work that I described earlier, and it wasn't
5 based upon, again, NYCHA, it was based upon the
6 safety and security task force that included
7 resident leadership at the table, included the
8 NYPD at the table, NYCHA management, and we
9 received substantial input from other subject
10 matter experts. So we came up with a recommended
11 strategy, it is absolutely a recommendation and we
12 stand by our recommendation, but at the end of the
13 day, if the elected official who is providing the
14 funding to support your constituents say they
15 don't want it, we're not going to shove it down
16 their throat.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Good, because
18 right now we don't have enough money to install
19 layered access to all the buildings, so but what
20 we'd prefer if at least we have the cameras there
21 so the residents will feel safe when they go home
22 late at night and, hopefully, it will cut down on
23 crime in the developments.

24 So I will take this message back to
25 them and let the local residents to decide what

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they want. Is that true, right, Mr. Chairman?

JOHN RHEA: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Yeah.

JOHN RHEA: Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: My last questions is, so all this installations, how much money is spent on, like, consulting? Let's say we have \$100 for install camera system, so how much money do you have to spend on the \$100 for consulting?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So the design or the--

COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: [Interposing]
For the design, yeah.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: --the administration of the contracts, the job contracts themselves are paid for as a percentage of the construction and it's a stepped percentage. So for the first, I believe the number is \$6 million, for the first \$6 million worth of construction, the fee is 5% of the construction costs. For any dollar expended after that, up to the \$65 million, would be at 1.95%.

COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: I think the

1 consulting fee is kind of high, you know, because
2 it is almost the same, there's not that much
3 consulting to be done for installing camera, all
4 the parts is--all the [off mic] are really
5 similar. I mean, for a big [off mic] like this,
6 we should request a lower consultation fee because
7 they make money on the cameras and all these
8 things.
9

10 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So of course, we
11 want to keep that fee down as low as we possibly
12 can, but the services that are provided were
13 competitively bid, this was a competitive price,
14 and I will point out that, compared to other
15 services that have been provided in the past for
16 typical design work and the like, these fees are
17 actually quite low.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: Yeah, but we
19 all know cameras, the price of cameras and
20 technology, the pricing come down a lot. I mean
21 ten years ago you buy a camera for \$2,000, you can
22 buy it now for [off mic], the price came down
23 tremendously.

24 And with the wireless WiFi, you
25 don't even need installation of the cable now; and

1
2 with solar energy, you don't need to attach to
3 power at all. So with all this technology
4 improvements, we can do the job with a much
5 cheaper price. [Pause] And the quality of scale,
6 no, no, the economy of scales, we are buying so
7 many cameras at one time, we should demand a lower
8 price.

9 JOHN RHEA: We agree that we should
10 be receiving lower prices, we are receiving lower
11 prices, we stated that in our testimony. We also
12 are separating the cost of hardware from
13 intellectual and design cost, which is a different
14 thing which you asked about, which we publicly
15 procured and we received a highly competitive
16 price that's lower than benchmark similarly bid
17 jobs out there today in the current marketplace,
18 so we're not comparing it to two years ago or five
19 years ago. And so we feel very good that we have
20 a very competitive price for the design and
21 administrative piece of this contract, which is
22 totally separate from your comments around
23 technology and [off mic] and purchase agreements
24 and other things, which we have also benefited
25 from.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER KOO: So I just hope
3 you guys can do the best to do a good buy-in for
4 these. Thank you.

5 JOHN RHEA: Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Council Member
7 Barron, followed by Council Member James.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Well thank
9 you very much. Before I get to NYCHA, I just
10 wanted to bring this home and bring it home real.
11 There are 47% of the NYCHA residents are black;
12 42% of the NYCHA residents are Latino; 90% of the
13 NYCHA residents, the 400,000 plus, are black and
14 Latino. And the Mayor and the Speaker--before we
15 get to NYCHA--the Mayor and the Speaker, the Mayor
16 has a \$10.7 billion capital budget, \$10.7 billion
17 capital budget, that's what the Mayor has, 10.7
18 billion, and we're talking about 500 million would
19 take care of all developments. The Mayor has 10.7
20 billion. The Speaker has \$375 million. She
21 doesn't allocate capital money to Council Members
22 who have the neediest situations. Council Members
23 that go along to get along get more, but the ones
24 that have the neediest communities get less. So
25 the Speaker comes and lectures and talks to the

1
2 NYCHA chairperson when she's sitting there with
3 \$375 million. Look at Dominic Recchia's capital
4 money or Levin or the others that get much more
5 capital money than Darlene Mealy, Tish James, or
6 myself, and the neediest communities where the
7 greater need for cameras are.

8 I have 11 NYCHA developments, 11
9 NYCHA developments. Talking about crime, in the
10 last couple of weeks, three, four people died in
11 the Pink Houses. We go to sleep to bullets every
12 night. Cypress, and we have some of our leaders
13 here, Dwayne Faison was here, Sister Green is here
14 from Pink, and Inez Rodriguez is here from the
15 Boulevard Houses--these are leaders who are going
16 to bed to gunshots every night. We don't care
17 what the statistics say, and I've been to too many
18 funerals and I got the tears of too many mothers
19 on my clothing.

20 The Mayor has money for Yankee
21 Stadium, has money for the Nets to build their
22 arena, has money for NYU, they have money for
23 Columbia, and all of these developers, but they
24 don't have money to put into NYCHA. The Speaker
25 has much more money to give, even than the 40 some

1 odd million we've given over the years, and who
2 gets it? Not the neediest.

3 This is a problem when you have a
4 city, the richest city in the world, and a country
5 is the richest country in the history of the
6 world, and we're talking about we don't have
7 money. New York is not broke, \$68.5 billion
8 budget, New York's not broke. In Tish James'
9 district, they had \$100 million for a white group
10 to build a theater for Shakespeare. Oh, but they
11 broke--
12

13 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: [Interposing]
14 Council Member Barron, I need you to ask a
15 question.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON:
17 [Interposing] I'll get to the point, I am. You
18 didn't interrupt nobody else, they--

19 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: I'm just--

20 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: --all made
21 statements.

22 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: They had some
23 questions early on.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: And I'm
25 making a statement and I'm going to ask a

1 question, but I'm going to get mine in just like
2 everybody else did.

3 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And I'm
4 letting you do it--

5 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON:
6 [Interposing] Without being interrupted.

7 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: --but I need
8 you to ask a question.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Other
10 people didn't ask questions, they made statements
11 and comments, then they asked the questions, and
12 that's what I'm going to proceed and do. Because
13 we're dying, you all are having hearings and
14 citing statistics, I got to go back home to death.
15 So I want people to put this problem in
16 perspective, they all came to beat up NYCHA today,
17 but look what the Mayor's not doing or what the
18 Speaker's not doing, which they could be doing
19 much more for NYCHA.

20 Now for NYCHA. NYCHA has a \$2.4
21 billion capital budget for the next four years,
22 2.4 billion for the next four years. This is 40
23 some odd million of capital money that we're
24 looking at in terms of City Council allocations,
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1
2 but when it comes to NYCHA--and they also have to
3 do repairs, a lot of that money has to go for
4 repairs, and there's a lot of developments that
5 are complaining about that, that they can't get
6 things repaired with the capital money coming from
7 NYCHA.

8 Two thousand nine we sat with you,
9 we had \$500,000 advocated for Pink. While you are
10 waiting to bring costs down, it's costing us
11 lives. Because we have to wait to now, and I
12 notice that we are not even in the scoring meeting
13 stage, and we've been calling and calling and we
14 have the Pink Houses is on the list, but it's not
15 even down for a scoring meeting yet. John
16 Sampson, I'm confused about what happened with his
17 money, we had a press conference at Pink Houses
18 and we had all of the development leaders there,
19 and that was in 2009, 2009, and we haven't seen
20 anything built in any of our developments, not
21 Boulevard, not Linden, not Cypress, not Pinks,
22 Pink Houses since 2009. Bay View Houses was done
23 with state money, and that's a good thing, that's
24 in my district.

25 But I want to know what happened to

1 the \$4 million, I heard it was allocated to the
2 Construction Authority, but what happened to the 4
3 million and what happened to my 500,000, my half a
4 million that we allocated for Pink Houses?

5
6 JOHN RHEA: So on the state money
7 that was allocated in 2009 is actually being held
8 up at the state level. So unfortunately--

9 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON:
10 [Interposing] What is this, I'm hearing mixed
11 things about that, what's the hold up? I'm
12 hearing that it did go to NYCHA, but there's some
13 hold up for--but we've been talking about that for
14 the last--

15 [Pause]

16 JOHN RHEA: Our understanding is
17 the current state majority is reviewing all
18 allocations made by the prior majority leader.
19 And so it's not--it's being held up.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: So what
21 about the 500,000?

22 JOHN RHEA: So the 500,000 for Pink
23 Houses that you reference is just--was just
24 allocated to NYCHA in 2012.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: No, it

wasn't, that's not true, no, no, no, see that's a lie. That's a lie, that's not true, we--

JOHN RHEA: [Interposing] The 2009 that we had again showed up as state money.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: No, we allocated that money a long time ago, that wasn't just allocated in 2012. That was not allocated in 2012.

JOHN RHEA: Our understanding, and we'll sit down with you, and we can, you know, continue this, that the 2009 money was repurposed to a different project.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: It was allocated in '10.

JOHN RHEA: But we repurposed that money to a different project.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Yeah, but no, we had a million and we had half of it going to Unity, we still had 500,000 for Pink in 2010. It wasn't just allocated in '12.

[Long pause]

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Council Member Barron, we're also going to have--

JOHN RHEA: [Interposing] Okay. So

1
2 the money was originally, \$1 million was
3 originally allocated for Unity--

4 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Right.

5 JOHN RHEA: --which we worked with
6 you and your staff to repurpose half of that
7 money--

8 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: To Pink.

9 JOHN RHEA: --to Pink--

10 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Correct.

11 JOHN RHEA: --so we didn't get that
12 repurposing letter until recently, which--

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: We--

14 JOHN RHEA: --I'm not blaming
15 anybody, I'm saying--

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: No, I'm
17 saying we--

18 JOHN RHEA: --so when I say we
19 didn't have that to--

20 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: --why that
21 happened, I don't know, we agreed on that way
22 before 2012, we agreed on that--

23 [Crosstalk]

24 JOHN RHEA: And with all due
25 respect--

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COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: But anyway-

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JOHN RHEA: --we just got the--

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: --here's
another--

JOHN RHEA: --official letter to
repurpose the money in '12.

COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: --here's
another challenge that we have, like even in Tish
James's developments, even if we do have 500,000
and it's \$80,000 per building now, that's not
enough for not even half the development. So how
come NYCHA is not allocating more out of its
budget in the neediest, highest crime rate areas
when you know Pink is on fire, right now, probably
more than anyplace in the city, Pink Houses, and
we've had big problems in Cypress and Boulevard is
starting to heat up now. But I don't understand,
even if we do get this thing rolling, in some
districts, if they're only allocated \$100,000 to a
development, you're talking one building. And is
that--how do we get more money out of NYCHA, out
of the city, and out of the City Council, and out
of the feds to make this realistic and getting to

1 the 500,000--500 million?

2 JOHN RHEA: So we obviously share
3 your concern about the level of crime and,
4 obviously, crime is not even throughout all NYCHA
5 developments, there are clearly some--

6 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Right.

7 JOHN RHEA: --communities that have
8 disproportionate--are disproportionately suffering
9 from criminal activity. We recognize that and
10 that's why we work very closely with Council
11 Members to try and prioritize where the money is
12 being allocated. I stated in my formal testimony
13 that in 2002, HUD, the federal government, cut the
14 \$35 million that NYCHA received for safety and
15 security measures. So we received zero dollars in
16 our budget for safety and security measures from
17 the federal government, where we get more than 90%
18 of our funding at both the capital and the
19 operating level. Therefore, our resources,
20 NYCHA's resources are limited in this area since
21 we don't have a dedicated funding stream. The
22 Council worked with NYCHA very closely to say
23 safety and security would be a priority of the
24 Council and that that would be the stream by which
25

1
2 NYCHA would be able to secure funding for capital
3 investments, because that's where mainly the
4 Council has allocations is on the capital side,
5 for safety and security measures. And that
6 partnership, as I said, has yielded \$75 million
7 over that period.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON:

9 [Interposing] Right, but there are other ways that
10 you can deal with--

11 JOHN RHEA: [Interposing] Okay. I
12 just want--

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: --what
14 about our partnership on the youth center that we
15 were going to build? We had 10 million in it,
16 NYCHA pulled its 10 million out, I have three
17 million sitting in NYCHA doing nothing over the
18 last several years, we've been--

19 [Crosstalk]

20 JOHN RHEA: [Interposing] So,
21 Council Member Barron, you and I have talked about
22 this a lot, I just want to say on the two--

23 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: --talk
24 about a lot--

25 [Crosstalk]

1
2 JOHN RHEA: --on the 2 1/2 you
3 reference, why isn't NYCHA putting more capital
4 dollars into the cameras and the layered access,
5 and I just want to be clear--

6 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON:
7 [Interposing] And you said you don't have it, now
8 I'm going to want to--

9 JOHN RHEA: --but I also want to be
10 clear, we have to date \$6 billion of unmet capital
11 needs for our buildings. Even with the 2 1/2
12 billion that you referred to that's in our plan
13 over the next five years, we will end that five-
14 year period with 16 billion, so it's going to grow
15 in terms of unmet capital needs. We have tough
16 choices to make, obviously it's very difficult
17 given the crime issues that you raise and are
18 concerned about it, that we don't have money in
19 our capital budget for that, but we also know that
20 the long-term preservation of our buildings has to
21 take number one precedent because there won't be
22 buildings to put cameras in if we can't actually
23 secure and preserve buildings.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON:
25 [Interposing] I understand that, but the Pink

1 Houses and some of the high crime has to be
2 prioritized, people are dying.

3 JOHN RHEA: Understood.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: People are
5 dying right now as we speak, people in the last
6 few weeks, they're dying. And I don't know what
7 is more of a priority than a life lost.

8 JOHN RHEA: And we mentioned, just
9 to maybe in my commentary on this, we mentioned,
10 and I think the Speaker responded, that a more
11 programmatic approach potentially that would
12 provide clarity and some consistency to NYCHA on
13 how much money it will receive for cameras and
14 then an ability for us to think through how we
15 prioritize that might be one way to address some
16 of your concerns.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Well I
18 think we need to have a priority within the NYCHA
19 and when you're speaking with the Speaker and
20 those developments where crime is the highest, it
21 should be based on need, not relationship with the
22 City Council Member and the Speaker, but based on
23 need. And anything in NYCHA and where any money
24 is allocated and anyways that we can get to
25

1 security, it should be on needs, on a needs basis,
2 and there's not a greater need than some of the
3 developments in our district--Pink Houses,
4 Cypress, Boulevard--we don't have too many
5 developments in the city that have a greater need
6 than those developments. So whether it's a youth
7 center or cameras, I think NYCHA needs to see this
8 as a state of emergency and provide a greater
9 priority for those developments.
10

11 Thank you, Madam Chair.

12 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Thank you,
13 Council Member Barron. Now I'd like to go back,
14 did we get agreement on the 500,000 that Council
15 Member Barron said he allocated and what year it
16 was allocated in? Mr. Chair?

17 JOHN RHEA: Apologies, Madam
18 Chairwoman.

19 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Yes, did we
20 get an agreement in the 500,000 that Council
21 Member Barron said he allocated and what year it
22 was allocated in?

23 JOHN RHEA: Yes, we have agreement
24 that the money was originally allocated for--well
25 I think we do, I heard, the money was originally

1 allocated for Unity, we worked diligently with the
2 Council Member and his staff to repurpose half of
3 that for Pink Houses, the agreement verbally was
4 arrived at prior to the agreement in writing, but
5 we now have the agreement in writing to repurpose
6 the money to Pink and it is now being--it is part
7 of the schedule.
8

9 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Council Member
10 Barron, I'm going to have the Finance staff look
11 over your allocations for the last couple of
12 years, we'll let you know how much money is there,
13 and then we'll collaborate that number with
14 NYCHA's number, and then you can tell us how much
15 has been repurposed, how much has been utilized,
16 and how much still needs to be repurposed and used
17 in the pipeline, okay? Yes?

18 [Off mic]

19 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Thank you.
20 Council Member James. First, I need to do a
21 little housekeeping, we in the interim have been
22 joined by Council Member Sanders, Levin, and
23 Lappin, all to my left. And now Council Member
24 James.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: We've also

1
2 been joined by my senator, Senator Velmanette
3 Montgomery, who represents most of central
4 Brooklyn, and the senator and I would echo the
5 sentiments of Council Member Barron that over this
6 past summer, which has been a violent summer,
7 Chairman Rhea, you find yourself in a perfect
8 storm. Violence has been increased,
9 unfortunately, in communities of color,
10 particularly in public housing, and there has
11 been, unfortunately, a significant number of
12 vulnerable individuals who have been crying out
13 for help. And you have been subjected to a
14 significant number of attacks by the media, which
15 I would argue has gotten most of it wrong,
16 including the point that they made the other day
17 that I was confused. There's nothing confused
18 about me, if anyone knows anything about me, what
19 I'm confused about is the fact that,
20 unfortunately, since I've been a member of the
21 City Council--and this is my question--has there
22 been any funds from this administration to NYCHA,
23 other than the funds that have been provided by
24 Council Members?

25 JOHN RHEA: We have in our budget--

1
2 and I'll have to get these exact numbers and come
3 back to you--but in our budget, particularly in
4 our capital budget, there's about--yeah, yeah,
5 there's 70 to \$100 million in total money, and
6 there is mayoral money in that budget.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Seventy to a
8 hundred?

9 JOHN RHEA: Of City funds in our
10 capital budget for the next five years, I'll get
11 you the exact number, so I'm being very clear that
12 I will have to get you the exact numbers, but
13 there is City money in our five-year budget, and
14 within that money is mayoral money.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Let me just
16 say that 70 to \$100,000 from the Mayor of the City
17 of New York is de minimis. It's less than 1% of
18 the total amount of your budget, or even less than
19 that, it's infinitesimal given the needs in public
20 housing. And I would argue, similar to what
21 Council Member Barron said, given all of the
22 capital funds that have been provided to the city,
23 to institutions in the city of New York,
24 including, but not limited to, arenas and
25 stadiums, I think where you have over 400,000

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2 individuals, in some cases, equal--they total more
3 than some countries, that the Mayor of the City of
4 New York should really focus on the most
5 vulnerable citizens in the city of New York and
6 should step up to the plate and provide funds for
7 these residents and should do it immediately,
8 given the emergency and given the conditions in
9 public housing.

10 JOHN RHEA: Council Member James, I
11 do just want to say, I know it's not in our
12 current budget, but in 2006, I think the year was,
13 the mayoral contribution to NYCHA was \$100
14 million.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: And that
16 \$100 million, if I'm not mistaken, was as a result
17 of input from the members of the City Council who
18 basically urged the Mayor to provide funds for
19 that purpose. It was as a result of a coalition
20 which was led by Council Member and Chairwoman
21 Rosie Mendez and it was as a result of her
22 efforts, and I give her all of the credit.

23 So let me just get back to
24 questions. My questions is, is there just one
25 contract with one vendor to provide cameras in the

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city of New York?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: No, there is actually six separate contracts.

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: And each time there is funds provided in the budget, do you have to engage in a bidding process?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: No, that's the beauty of entering into a job contract.

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: And so there's no procurement process with respect to cameras, you can basically select from these six vendors?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: We have, under the new system--

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Yeah.

RAY RIBEIRO: --we used to have to procure individually under the former system, but under the new system we have the six vendors, they have been assigned geographic territories and we assign the work via task orders based on those geographic territories.

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES:
[Interposing] And when did this new process come into effect?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: The contracts, as I said before, went out to bid in June of 2011, was awarded or approved by the board in November of 2011, and the award letters were issued to the six contractors in January of 2012.

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: And are any of these contracts to minority businesses?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: I don't believe any of them are M/WBES.

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Okay. And is there any way that we could truncate the--is there--let me ask you this other question, is it not true that there are other vendors out there that can provide the same service for less money?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: These contracts were competitively bid, so at the time that we procure the services, I would say the answer to that is no, these--

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES:
[Interposing] These are the lowest responsible--

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: --were the lowest responsible and responsible bidders.

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Is it possible to truncate the process, including the

sign off process and the Comptroller's sign off?

Is there any way to make that one category?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: To make them one category?

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Yes.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: I think they're two--

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES:

[Interposing] I guess the question is, when Council Members sign off, can we sign off at the same time as Comptroller John Liu?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: No, before we--in essence, we need to sign off from the residents and the electeds so that we can prepare the detailed paperwork that needs to get submitted to the Office of Management and Budget and Comptroller's office. So those two--one needs to happen before the other.

COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: And it's important that everyone understand that the rollout only applies 85 developments, but yet there are 249 developments that right now are slated not to get cameras, is that true?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: The 85

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2 developments represent developments that we
3 currently have funding for, yes.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: So there's
5 an additional 249 developments that will not be
6 covered by this program, yes?

7 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Unless we get
8 additional funding.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: And that's
10 where, hopefully, the Mayor of the City of New
11 York and the Council as a whole would provide
12 funds, because 85 developments as a result of
13 initiatives from the Council Members, and they
14 include all of the developments in my district--
15 Ingersoll, Whitman, Farragut, and Atlantic
16 Terminal--but, again, based on comments from
17 Council Member Barron, the amount of funds that I
18 receive is insufficient to deal with--to meet the
19 needs of each and every building in every
20 development in those development--I don't want to
21 say projects because projects suggest an
22 experiment and these individuals are not an
23 experiment--development houses, doesn't cover
24 every building in those houses, correct?

25 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: The funding

1
2 allocated for those developments does not cover
3 all of the improvements, no.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: And the
5 thought that cameras is a panacea to all of our
6 issues, I think is really a false panacea. Again,
7 I believe that we should provide more expense
8 funds for programs for residents in public
9 housing, including, but not limited to, employment
10 opportunities and youth programs, and so cameras
11 are good, cameras are great, I see Celeste Staton
12 in the audience, she's the soon-to-be president of
13 Atlantic Terminal, as a result of cameras that I
14 installed at Atlantic Terminal early in my tenure,
15 we were able to arrest individuals who were
16 breaking into some apartments in Atlantic
17 Terminal, but that was prior to the change in
18 policy in 2010, if I'm not mistaken. So I think
19 cameras are great, but I would love to see much
20 more programs and I would like to see more police.

21 And so I know that members of the
22 NYCHA pay \$75 million to NYPD and I'm not sure
23 what that is--I'm not sure if all of those funds--
24 I'm not sure what all of those funds are provided
25 for, and NYCHA is the only development in the city

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2 of New York that not only pays police through
3 their taxes, but also through their rent. And if
4 that is the case, you would think that you would
5 see more members of NYPD policing NYCHA, as
6 opposed to just driving up whenever there's an
7 incident happening in NYCHA developments.

8 JOHN RHEA: Council Member James,
9 if I can just comment on--

10 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: Sure.

11 JOHN RHEA: --in working very
12 closely with Commissioner Kelly and with Chief
13 Jaffe of the Housing Bureau, there in my testimony
14 I mentioned in reference new Impact Zones that
15 we're creating and there were specifically
16 additional officers that were assigned to the
17 Housing Bureau this year beyond the normal level
18 that are assigned in each class, in each new class
19 to ensure that we could create two new Impact
20 Zones after conversations in partnership and
21 prioritizing certain high crime areas as we
22 discussed earlier. And also I mentioned the not
23 just project CLEARS, but also that there were 12
24 developments that we were going to target with
25 specific additional vertical patrols. So we

1
2 understand your concern, we have been having
3 conversations very specifically with Chief Jaffe
4 and with Commissioner Kelly, and we've seen a
5 commitment to increase that.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER JAMES: You plan on
7 expanding the Impact Zones to Central Brooklyn
8 where we have seen a major increase in crime,
9 particularly let me shout out and specify because
10 those members are not here. And I represent,
11 again, Ingersoll, Whitman, Farragut, and Atlantic
12 Terminal, but there's also Lafayette Gardens,
13 Tompkins, Marcy, Eleanor Houses, Sumner, the Gates
14 Avenue corridor, and a significant number of
15 public housing in Brownsville. And,
16 unfortunately, if you look at Brooklyn, again, you
17 will see that there is a complete absence of funds
18 going to developments where crime is happening and
19 where two children were shot. And again, there's
20 a number of factors, but again, I believe that
21 this should be at the highest level of priority in
22 the Mayor's office and we should really focus on
23 providing cameras and other support services to
24 residents in Central Brooklyn, which have
25 historically been ignored and, unfortunately, are

now being victimized as a result of crime.

And so I just hope that, since we now have the attention of everyone as a result of the articles from the Daily News, hopefully, it will result in some additional funding and, hopefully, it will result in some attention from individuals in government, including beginning in this building. Thank you.

JOHN RHEA: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Thank you.

We're going to hear from Council Member Sanders, Arroyo, Brewer, and Levin, in that order, and then we'll get started with the public testimony and there's a lot of people who do want to testify. Council Member Sanders.

COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS: Thank you, Madam Chair. Good afternoon, Chairman Rhea. I come before you as a sad case, I must confess. I was a true believer who has lost his faith along the way. I represent the most public housing in Queens, and my case perhaps is not typical to those that you have been describing, sir, because I have put a lot of money into cameras in my district, in fact, I totally funded every project

1 that I put money into. And yet I am here to say
2 that not only do we not have a complete situation-
3 -and I haven't put money in in more than three
4 years ago--not only don't I have a complete
5 situation, my housing developments are awash in
6 guns, crime, and a decaying infrastructure.
7

8 Arguably, I have given the most money of any
9 Councilperson to cameras to try to deal with these
10 situations. To be honest, I kind of feel misled.

11 I, as a Marine Corps veteran, I understood one of
12 the most effective ways of dealing with this issue
13 of crimes is something that I call gun--that is
14 called gunshot technology. And I would come to
15 NYCHA and I would say that we want it and NYCHA
16 would take my money and take my money, and then
17 take some more money, and at the end of this
18 process I was told, oh, by the way, we don't do
19 gunshot technology. And I'm, of course, confused,
20 if we didn't do it at that point, why take my
21 money? And I said, okay, after we had our own
22 conversations and you spoke of a different way of
23 going, I said okay, let's do these things. So I'm
24 trying to figure out--I don't know what I'm trying
25 to figure. I'm just trying to get some cameras

1
2 and some safety for my residents and my
3 communities, so the money is there and has been
4 there and from my district for more than three
5 years. So it's not a question of I gave
6 insufficient 'cause I would question you guys and
7 say how much do you need. If you told me 1.5, I
8 gave you 2; if you told me 500, I gave you 700. I
9 would purposely give because I understood
10 inflation.

11 And while you're digging there, if
12 we can also say why aren't we enforcing Section 3,
13 putting folk back to work? Because we're doing
14 all of these and I don't hear any effort to really
15 do something around the issue of M/WBE. At least
16 with this money of the people of New York, enforce
17 Section 3, which of course is a federal mandate--a
18 requirement, I'll get rid of the word mandate,
19 that says hire local people to do these jobs
20 whenever possible. I'll stop there and let you
21 gentlemen respond.

22 JOHN RHEA: Council Member Sanders,
23 I understand your frustration and I appreciate
24 that you've worked very hard to allocate
25 substantial funds for safety and security measures

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Most recently you made a decision to take the money that had been allocated to multiple developments and combine it into one allocation for Hammel Houses, I believe, and we received just in July that request to repurpose it to Hammel from the other developments. We have, obviously, that in our schedule to now move, as Mr. Ribeiro was describing, with all due speed to ensure that we get that million dollars worth of cameras and other layered access installed at

Hammel.

In terms of, you know, Section 3, we remain committed to having all of our capital projects have a substantial amount of public housing residents employed as a result of it. We made tremendous progress the past three years in improving employment for public housing residents through our Section 3 effort and through the NYCHA Robin Hood training academy and other methods and initiatives as well. This contract, just like all of our contracts, have requirements for public housing resident employment, and so we commit that this will meet its Section 3 requirements. I think over 20 proposed jobs and that they're in different types of categories as part of this contract for public housing residents. So we remain steadfastly committed to our Section 3 mandate and goals. So, you know, we just want to make that very clear.

COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS: I thank you for that, I just want to--well I'm going to assume, sir, that the 20 jobs that approximately, I'll be kind, 20 jobs that you're speaking about is just the beginning because the money that I'm

1
2 talking about is around \$7 million. And if we
3 could, God willing, there will be more than 20
4 jobs that will come from those \$7 million or
5 several, I'll be kind, several million dollars
6 that we have put in there.

7 I'm too far away from the charts
8 over there, can I receive a letter from your
9 office giving me a status report on project by
10 project when will I see a completion date of all
11 of the monies that we have put in? I could name
12 the housing developments, if you wish, but I
13 suspect you know them.

14 JOHN RHEA: Yes, we will get that
15 to you.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER SANDERS: Okay. I
17 have a million more things to say, but I'm going
18 to be kind, you've heard from many, and I'm going
19 to be kind. I'm trying to become a believer
20 again, help me by helping my bosses, my
21 constituents.

22 JOHN RHEA: Understood.

23 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Thank you,
24 Council Member. Arroyo, Brewer, and Levin.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Thank you,

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I have 13, 14 developments in my district and I have put money into only 6 because the tenant leaders in those developments have brought it to my attention. That leaves seven or eight that I know nothing about, that I have not heard from the resident leaders. And I need your help, that of your staff to make sure that, despite the activity on the resident leader front,

1 that every single development in my district is on
2 a list, that I and the one who follows me in the
3 City Council understands the need and works with
4 those developments to get the funding into the
5 development. And hope--and I think this was the
6 point that Council Member James and Council Member
7 Barron are making--that we look at the need and
8 understand that some of us will not be able to
9 fully fund every development alone, that it is
10 absolutely necessary that the Authority, the
11 administration work in tandem to make sure that
12 every single development in your portfolio is
13 fully funded. Because I could not do it, even if
14 I dedicated every single dollar I get in capital
15 for the next six years, I'm not going to be able
16 to fund every single development. That's not
17 fair, and it is grossly inconsistent with what I
18 think we all need to be focusing our attention to.
19 So that's one point.

21 And please don't respond, just
22 promise me that I'm going to get a full list, a
23 scope of every single development and their needs
24 and how much that's going to cost in short order--

25 JOHN RHEA: [Interposing] We commit

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to that.

COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: --so I can begin to plan how we're going to do that.

JOHN RHEA: We commit to that.

COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: The installation of--you know, I appreciate the work that you are working--that you're doing, I have a real serious concern, and I have a pilot in my district, and everybody's throwing up Mott Haven as the model, the pilot that apparently is going to become the norm, right? So the pilot's going to get installed on everybody else after, regardless of what happens with that installation. Patterson Houses is across the street from Mott Haven and if we fully implement this in Mott Haven, whatever crime we're going to deter in Mott Haven is going to walk across the street into Patterson, and the minute we install a camera in Patterson, it's going to go down the block down into Mitchel Houses. We have to be mindful of these installation timetables and that they take into account that while we address the needs of one development, we don't create greater issues and concerns in others. So please, when doing

1
2 these timelines, that you take into consideration
3 that those nuances for certain communities in our
4 city--Jackson and Melrose is another good example,
5 they're right across the street from each other,
6 and we have to be mindful of in solving one
7 problem, not creating a more serious one somewhere
8 else. So I want to see Patterson and Mott Haven
9 done together at the same time. I want to see
10 Melrose and Jackson done simultaneously so that we
11 don't have to worry about the negativity that is
12 going on in our communities. Where in between
13 Jackson and Melrose we saw 29 shootings in a
14 matter of six months over the last year.

15 Now you're going to monitor six
16 contracts over the course of the next apparent
17 year and a half or so, give or take. How do we
18 ensure that Vendor A and B and C are proceeding,
19 doing quality work, making sure that what we end
20 up with is not a system that's not going to work,
21 that we're going to be able to monitor its
22 efficiency and its quality, how do we do that?

23 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So the program as
24 a whole has project management staff at NYCHA that
25 are managing the program, but each one of the

1 projects, each task order, there will be
2 construction inspectors assigned to the work that
3 will monitor the contractors' quality of work, the
4 schedule, the overall workmanship associated with
5 the work. So there will be an inspector on each
6 and every one of these projects.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: And we're
9 comparing apples and apples, I hope.

10 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Compare--

11 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO:
12 [Interposing] The six contracts, six different
13 vendors, how are we going to make sure that each
14 one is giving you quality work?

15 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Each of the
16 contracts have the same contractual terms
17 associated with them, they have the same
18 specifications, and our inspection staff is there
19 to ensure that the contractor conforms to those
20 contractual requirements. So, yes, there is a
21 standard baseline, if you will, that will get
22 applied to all of them.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: And given
24 that these tenant leaders have worked so hard to
25 make sure that we're even engaged in this

1 conversation, and the fact that we're having it
2 is, I think, a testament to the work that they've
3 done locally in the community. Any input or
4 feedback or involvement of the resident leaders in
5 the developments where this work is going to
6 happen around the issue of quality.

8 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So as with all of
9 our capital projects, a big part of how we move
10 forward successfully with the delivery of these
11 construction projects is communication with the
12 local residents. So it's part of the process,
13 it's part of the field staff's day-to-day
14 responsibilities to not only ensure that the
15 residents know what's going on, but to take that
16 feedback and correct anything that the residents
17 may be seeing.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Did you
19 hear that, John? You heard that, right? Okay.

20 I think when Council Member James
21 referenced the panacea, cameras are not the end-
22 all to some of the issues that are happening, one
23 of the things that I learned over this last few
24 days visiting Mitchel Houses and then Patterson,
25 Melrose is that the OST funded providers are not

1 providing services to all age groups, Mitchel is
2 providing OST services to only elementary school,
3 no middle school children, Melrose is the reverse.
4 And I have asked the chair for us to have a
5 conversation about looking at the after school
6 programs that are funded through other city
7 dollars in the developments and the populations
8 that they're providing services for because we are
9 going to enter a school year where a significant
10 segment of our young people are going to be left
11 without after school programs, and if we don't
12 join forces to, kind of, balance that funding out
13 so that the middle school and elementary school
14 children are all receiving services in all of the
15 developments that have OST programs, we're
16 creating a real serious problem for our families.
17 And this is something that I just learned this
18 week, and we don't have a lot of time to deal with
19 this and figure out how NYCHA can help us bridge a
20 gap that allows us time to talk about how this is
21 done next fiscal year.

22
23 JOHN RHEA: Okay.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Okay?

25 Thank you, Madam Chair.

1
2 JOHN RHEA: So if I just get--just
3 the only thing I would do on a--I'd be remiss if I
4 didn't say, Council Member Arroyo, is that we are
5 highly indebted to John Johnson for all of his
6 hard work, not only in ensuring--we wouldn't have
7 the pilot program at Mott Haven if it weren't for
8 his efforts and, obviously, your financial support
9 as well and the HUD grant. But in addition to
10 that, he co-chaired the subcommittee that came up
11 with the recommendations for layered access to
12 complement cameras and to drive down the cost of
13 cameras, and so we want to express our
14 appreciation to his partnership and his
15 leadership. And we also understand the need for
16 greater clarity around the plans and sharing that
17 information with the Council on a regular basis.

18 And as the Speaker asked earlier
19 about entering into some form of an MOU and which
20 we could provide you with clear information and
21 report on a periodic basis, NYCHA is committed to
22 doing that, and so we look forward to that.

23 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Council Member
24 Brewer.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Thank you

1 very much. I have a, first of all, I want to
2 thank the West Side leaders. I see Ms. Kelly, I
3 see Polly Spain, I see Maria. And thank you very
4 much, Wise Towers is in the house, so thank you.

5 Wireless, if you put in this
6 system, does that leave any possibility for
7 capacity for nonpublic safety uses or is it not
8 possible 'cause there's not enough of a firewall?
9

10 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So none of the
11 improvements that are being implemented contain
12 wireless, all of the developments will be
13 connected via fiber optic cable so that the
14 wireless issue is not--

15 [Crosstalk]

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:
17 [Interposing] Okay. And is there anything
18 available that would benefit the residents in
19 terms of capacity of any of this? In other words,
20 you're obviously putting in cables or anything
21 that the residents can get out of it in addition
22 to public safety?

23 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Well I think it
24 should be pointed out that the cable--much of the
25 cable, not all of it, but in many instances the

1
2 cable that's being installed at the developments
3 is being installed by Verizon and its--

4 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:

5 [Interposing] My favorite company.

6 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: --and it's being
7 done in an effort to be able to provide access to
8 things like FiOS--

9 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Right.

10 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: --at each of our-

11 -

12 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:

13 [Interposing] And then we can't see Errol Louis.
14 Go ahead.

15 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So I was just
16 pointing out that, you know, that would be an area
17 where residents could potentially benefit from
18 some of the communication mechanisms that are
19 being put into place.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay. I
21 mean, I think it's pluses and minuses, is that
22 something that will come up later on, has nothing
23 to do with public safety.

24 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: No, that has
25 nothing to do with--

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[Crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:

[Interposing] I know, but I'm just saying that would be something to have further discussions about, okay.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: 'Cause there's more than FiOS that you could get off of that, just FYI.

Number two is, when we went to Newark, we saw a very nice system with a person sitting at a front desk and very fancy. How do you do--I mean, that system seemed to work in that particular development, it was gorgeous, but we don't have anybody sitting at a front desk. Is that the same system without the front desk that we're getting?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: So, no, at this point, the system in Newark--

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Yes.

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: --is too expensive in terms of the cost to operate a system like that and manning a central system like that is not something that we--

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COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:

[Interposing] So that's not a CCTV system, what we saw in Newark.

JOHN RHEA: Well you saw more than CCTV, right--

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Yes, we--

JOHN RHEA: --it also included the desk person also provided passes--

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Yes.

JOHN RHEA: --to visitors--

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Very nice.

JOHN RHEA: --and those passes actually, once they went past 24 hours--

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:

[Interposing] They're smart cards, too, smart cards.

JOHN RHEA: --they actually changed colors--

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Yes.

JOHN RHEA: --and it's a very high-tech and wonderful--

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:

[Interposing] How do they pay for it?

JOHN RHEA: I don't have exact

1
2 answer to that, we'll get you an answer.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Just a
4 question, I have some new shelters in my district-
5 -that's another story--but one of the issues is
6 they put in cameras--this is Department of
7 Homeless Services--in four weeks, and they're so
8 good that there was a robbery on the block that
9 had nothing to do--thank God--with the shelters,
10 but these cameras, which were put in last week,
11 caught the person quickly. Apparently very high
12 resolution, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. I'm
13 just saying DHS put them in a month now, it's a
14 small building, it doesn't have thick walls, but I
15 don't know who they're--I just throw that out as
16 something that DHS is very proud of it, is done
17 with taxpayer money--your money, my money--and I'm
18 just curious, if you want to check with them as to
19 what kind of system. It is not obviously attached
20 to anything else, it's a standalone, but it seems
21 incredibly high resolution and something that the
22 former DHS Commissioner was raving about last
23 night at a meeting.

24 JOHN RHEA: We will look into the
25 DHS system, we can--

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COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Thank you.

JOHN RHEA: --always learn things
from--

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay.

JOHN RHEA: --looking at--

[Crosstalk]

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:

[Interposing] How long does this new system last
in terms of what's projected? In other words,
when you--I'm only used to the standalone cameras.
So how long is this system expected to last and
what's the guarantee of it all?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: I would say that
the expected life of the equipment that's being
installed varies, right? The highly technical
stuff, cameras and the like, would have expected
lives of in the span of years. Some of the
infrastructure like the doors, the hardening,
those have life cycles that are much longer than
that and--

COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:

[Interposing] So the doors are longer than the
cameras?

RAYMOND RIBEIRO: Some of the door

1 hardware and the like could be longer than the
2 cameras, yes. Remember, all of the equipment
3 that's being installed is hardened, so, yes, we
4 would expect some of that to last longer.
5

6 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I'm sorry,
7 what's long though? I don't even know, like
8 years, 10 years, 20 years, when do we...?

9 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: No, I would say
10 for a door, you could potentially, some of the
11 door hardware, you could probably get in some
12 cases, 15, 20 years out of some of that--

13 [Crosstalk]

14 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:
15 [Interposing] Okay. 'Cause most doors don't last
16 too long 'cause they're kept open and so...

17 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: That's part of
18 the benefit of the system, right, so--

19 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:
20 [Interposing] No, I understand, I'm just wondering
21 if it's--and how long do you think the cameras are
22 going to last?

23 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: The cameras,
24 because of, you know, they're more technical in
25 nature, I would say that the expected life of a

1
2 camera is probably somewhere between five and ten
3 years.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay. And
5 I should know this, but this system, I know Urban
6 Technologies--we love Stuart--has been working in
7 some of Council Member Arroyo's district and in
8 Staten Island, it's a small firm, minority-based
9 enterprise, and when you use their systems, which
10 I have, it has a screen in the resident's
11 apartment, it has the door technology, and the
12 camera, so that's not what we're getting. In
13 other words, it doesn't have the screen in the
14 resident's apartment to see who's coming in?

15 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: The intercom
16 system does not include video, no.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Does not
18 have a video.

19 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: No.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay. And
21 is that something that's desired or just doesn't
22 have enough money for that?

23 RAYMOND RIBEIRO: I would say that
24 that was not something that came out of the safety
25 and security task force as a recommendation.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay. And
3 then just finally picking up on non-hardware
4 issues, but this task force that you're talking
5 about, in addition to the camera issues, are there
6 other safety recommendations that are coming out
7 of it, different policing strategies, et cetera,
8 et cetera? I just don't know, I'm just curious.

9 JOHN RHEA: There were many that
10 came out of it as a result of the safety and
11 security's task force work, as well as the
12 security--safety and security survey that was
13 done. Some of what you see happening with the
14 NYPD Housing Bureau is a direct result of that, as
15 their participation was consistent and engaged,
16 and one of the co-partners of the three residents,
17 NYCHA, and the NYPD. So much of what I discuss
18 today reflects that. A lot of the work that I
19 discussed earlier with the District Attorney's
20 Office came out of that--

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER:
22 [Interposing] I read it, okay.

23 JOHN RHEA: --as well as many of
24 the activities that we are doing now with the
25 SNUGs and others came out of that in terms of

1 funding them, identifying them as critical
2 partners in the process. And there was specific
3 work that was done, as I mentioned, between the
4 NYPD and resident relations that worked very
5 closely with Commissioner Kelly and Chief Jaffe to
6 make--to update and make adjustments to the patrol
7 guide and retraining of officers as part of that
8 process. So there were--

10 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay.

11 JOHN RHEA: --many, many
12 initiatives and many are still ongoing.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I mean, the
14 issue for me, of course, is I think it's best when
15 there's a police presence that's continual and
16 knowledgeable, as we all know. In my situation,
17 some are PSA, some are the local precinct,
18 sometimes the local precinct decides they're going
19 to do it instead of the PSA. And I like both, you
20 know, but I can just say the local precinct has
21 people there all the time and it makes all the
22 difference in the world. So that was the old way
23 of doing stuff, I'm not so sure we shouldn't go
24 back to it.

25 And then just finally, I'm hoping--

1
2 I want to congratulate you, Mr. Chair, on the work
3 that you've been doing with Amsterdam and Lincoln
4 Center and the job issues. And I also want to say
5 that we had a great meeting with Carlos Laboy from
6 your agency and the local resident leaders on
7 just, you know, if you have good maintenance, then
8 you're going to--also it helps with security, the
9 two go together.

10 JOHN RHEA: Absolutely.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Thank you
12 very much.

13 JOHN RHEA: Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Council Member
15 Levin, and then we're going to hear from the
16 public and we're going to start with the great
17 senator from Brooklyn, Velmanette Montgomery.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Thank you,
19 Madam Chair. Thank you, Chair Rhea. So I did
20 want to be here today, you know, reading the
21 recent articles and going back to the NYCHA
22 developments that I represent, I represent seven
23 New York City Housing Authority developments. In
24 the three years that I've--three budgets that I've
25 been a Council Member, I have allocated \$1.35

1 million to security in addition to other NYCHA
2 programs--capital--community center allocations,
3 1.35 in security to those developments. And I
4 have had ongoing discussions with the residents,
5 tenant association leaders at those developments,
6 and I did go with the Housing Authority to Newark
7 back in 2010. And I do want to say that I think
8 that the path that you have taken in reevaluating
9 how we allocate security resources that come to
10 the Housing Authority, regardless of how we're
11 getting--regardless of whether the Council's
12 getting those resources to the Housing Authority
13 or where they're coming from, that that was an
14 appropriate decision on your part. I think that
15 was the right thing to do to take a look at how we
16 can be more effective, and that it not just be
17 video cameras that don't necessarily provide
18 optimal security. So I want to have faith that,
19 with the implementation of the programs that you
20 have put into place now, that those measures will
21 have the impact that we want to see happen.

22
23 And the concern that I get then
24 from my tenant association leaders, I mean, I just
25 met with the tenant association president, a new

1 board from one of my developments last night and I
2 sat with them for two hours. They had--their
3 playground was torched a couple of weeks ago by
4 two young people. And I'm wondering, I mean, if
5 we get a full system in place with cameras, key
6 fob, layered access, could maybe give me an
7 explanation or a hypothetical maybe of how--would
8 that help us, would that likely--'cause these kids
9 are still out, I mean, I think the community knows
10 who the kids are apparently, but they weren't
11 caught on tape, there's no--and they're still
12 walking around. So can you maybe explain to me
13 how we think that this is going to really improve
14 the security situation? I mean, and also, just
15 another example, I mean, they asked me about
16 urinating in the elevator. Is this going to
17 dissuade that from happening?

18
19 JOHN RHEA: Well we don't obviously
20 think that cameras, layered access, or any capital
21 or technological investment is the answer alone.
22 Obviously, the participation of resident leaders
23 is going to go a long way to helping address some
24 of the other things you described in terms of
25 nuisance crimes and vandalism and things like

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1 including residents in the discussion about where
2 to install the cameras and where to point them in
3 the hotspots will potentially allow us to have
4 cameras in areas, you know, if it's a playground
5 or somewhere where they see the activity, where
6 there's drug activity or vandalism taking place on
7 a regular basis, that that information that only
8 residents really know, actually could be taken
9 into consideration as we design the location of
10 the cameras. So we believe both the process and
11 the technology that we're proposing will have a
12 benefit. It's not, you know, a silver bullet
13 solution, but we believe it will have a
14 substantial benefit of the issues you described.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: Just a
17 couple of other points. I think first with regard
18 to what we were talking about with Newark and the
19 scale by which that has--would require to be
20 replicated in New York City, I mean, there are 27
21 buildings in the city of Newark, 27 buildings in
22 the Housing Authority in the city of Newark, so
23 while that system was unbelievably positive and
24 impressive and it felt like it was something out
25 of the future and we said how on earth could they

1
2 get the resources to do this, I mean, how many
3 buildings in the New York City Housing Authority,
4 I don't know the answers.

5 JOHN RHEA: Well a hundred times
6 the number you said, 2,600.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER LEVIN: All right,
8 all right, so it's, I mean, it's a significant
9 difference in terms of the resources that would be
10 required. So I think duplicating exactly what
11 happened in Newark on that scale would be
12 impossible.

13 But one thing, I just wanted to add
14 is that, you know, I do appreciate that this
15 process has now started. Just this week, your
16 staff met with myself and tenant association
17 leaders in the development that's first in line in
18 my district to receive a full security upgrade,
19 and that was the exact conversation, it was in-
20 depth, it went on for over an hour, and we agreed
21 to, kind of, work through all this. I'm telling
22 all of my developments that have received
23 allocations and are ready to get ramped up that
24 that's the thing that we should be working
25 towards. And so I do appreciate that and I expect

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1 capital funding in the three years I've been in
2 the City Council, I haven't seen a single capital
3 project in any department completed yet. So it's
4 not as if the Housing Authority is alone, that
5 goes across city agencies far and wide. Thank
6 you, Mr. Chairman; thank you, Madam Chair.

7
8 JOHN RHEA: Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Thank you.

10 Mr. Chairman, in the past you've always kept some
11 staff here to listen to the public testimony and
12 we're getting ready to move to that. I want to
13 thank you for being here and answering our
14 questions. And I also wanted to say that Council
15 Member Chin had left on vacation, she had a list
16 of questions, I think we've gotten through most of
17 her questions, and I don't want you to answer this
18 now, but I will get back to you. She just, and
19 I'm going to reiterate this 'cause it's important,
20 is it possible to expedite getting the cameras in
21 those NYCHA buildings where maybe violent
22 incidents have occurred or expediting the
23 comptroller process. And if there's any way of
24 doing that, if you can please communicate that to
25 us so we can try to do that. Thank you for your

1 testimony.

2 State Senator Velmanette
3 Montgomery, and I'd like to call up to sit down
4 'cause we have like five panels of about four
5 people, and the next panel after the state Senator
6 will be Nancy Ortiz from Vladeck Houses, Reverend
7 Getulio Cruz Jr. from Manhattan Together, Reverend
8 Frank Skelly from South Bronx Churches, and Erik
9 Crawford from Davidson Site 166 Resident
10 Association, you'll be going up on the panel next
11 after the state senator.
12

13 And so there's going to be about
14 five panels after the state senator and they'll be
15 four to five people on a panel. And if you have
16 not signed up to speak, this is the last
17 opportunity to do so, you can go to the Sergeant.
18 I want to make sure anyone who is here who wants
19 to put their comments on the record, that we get
20 your comments and I will stay here as long as we
21 need so that we can do that.

22 State Senator, it is wonderful to
23 see you again.

24 SENATOR MONTGOMERY: Thank you,
25 Madam Chair, and thank you so much for allowing me

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a few minutes, I will take just very few minutes.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Excuse me one second, state Senator. Can we have some quiet, please?

SERGEANT-AT-ARMS: Quiet down, please.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Thank you.

SENATOR MONTGOMERY: I want to start by thanking you for the attention that you've paid to this issue and your persistence and consistent focus on it. And, certainly, I think this past week I've seen you in action, along with my colleagues, my sister, my own Councilwoman, Councilwoman Tish James. And so this really is an opportunity that I've never taken before and that, because of what has been happening, especially vis-à-vis the press, we are, I think, forced to talk to each other in a very different way and I'm happy about that.

I have written statements, but I just wanted to--

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: [Interposing]
I'm sorry, Senator, again, I'm going to ask for quiet, and if someone, if you're outside, can

1
2 someone tell them to please keep it quiet in the
3 background? The Senator is speaking and when the
4 public speaks, I want to make sure that all their
5 testimony is captured. Thank you very much. I'm
6 so sorry.

7 SENATOR MONTGOMERY: Yes. Madam
8 Chair, I want to--I recognize that this hearing is
9 specifically about the cameras and the lack of
10 them or just where they are in the progress that
11 we've made, but I would like to at least put on
12 your agenda, and, hopefully, we can talk about
13 this more at another point more appropriately, and
14 that is prior to 1994 NYCHA residents had a full
15 dedicated police force for each of the
16 developments. Since that time, we have seen
17 basically a loss of more than 50% of police
18 protection in the developments throughout the
19 city, certainly in my district. At one point,
20 there was a distance of a few miles between one of
21 the largest public housing developments in my
22 district, Red Hook East and West, and the PSA that
23 covers that particular community, all the way to
24 Coney Island, miles away. So the fact that, as
25 you indicated in your testimony, Brooklyn has

1
2 three police service areas, 1,2, and 3. We have
3 100 developments, so that there is a very major
4 lack of community--consistent community policing
5 that takes place.

6 So in addition to the whole
7 question of cameras and how efficient and
8 effective they are going to be, I think it is
9 important for us to revisit the whole issue of
10 police protection for residents in the NYCHA
11 developments. It's far too little and, therefore,
12 we do not have in these very, very high density
13 communities enough immediate access and on the
14 ground community-based policing that would, many
15 of us believe, make a major difference in the
16 safety and security.

17 So with that, I again want to
18 compliment you for taking this opportunity to talk
19 specifically about cameras, but I also look
20 forward to working more closely with you as the
21 state representative. And when I say I, I mean
22 we, I want to say we as a state legislature, want
23 to work more closely with you as the City Council,
24 as well as the federal reps, to make sure we're
25 paying more attention because, after all, NYCHA

1
2 represents, and my City Councilwoman indicated to
3 us yesterday, that NYCHA represents, I believe,
4 about 15% of the population of the City of New
5 York.

6 So we're not paying more attention
7 specifically to making sure that resources are
8 going into NYCHA from all levels, we are missing a
9 very, very large constituency in our city, and I
10 think that is a real problem for us.

11 So thank you, again, and I look
12 forward to working with you.

13 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Thank you,
14 Senator Montgomery, and you have always shown
15 leadership on this issue, and I know every time
16 I've gone to meetings, you or your staff have
17 always been there, and including yesterday,
18 showing leadership by holding a meeting in your
19 district with your leaders and your residents and
20 NYCHA. And as a former daughter of Brooklyn, I'm
21 certainly proud of all the work you do. So thank
22 you, Senator.

23 And now we will go to the first
24 panel, again, that is Nancy Ortiz, Reverend
25 Getulio Cruz, Reverend Frank Skelly, and Erik

1 Crawford, you are on this panel. And the next
2 panel after that, so if you want to come to the
3 batting circle or the seating circle, is Lucy
4 Newman from Legal Aid Society, Luther
5 Stubblefield, Barbara G. Barber from Drew
6 Hamilton, Mary, I believe it says Riddick
7 [phonetic] from--

8 MARY RIDDICK: Pink Houses.

9 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: --Pink Houses
10 it says board member and Resident Watch from Pink
11 Houses. And, Inez Rodriguez, from Boulevard
12 Houses, you'll be on the second panel. Whenever
13 you're ready, if you can please grab the
14 microphone and you can start your testimony.

15 ERIK CRAWFORD: Good afternoon, my
16 name is Erik Crawford, I am the president of
17 Davidson Site 166 Resident Association, vice chair
18 of the Bronx South Council of Presidents, as well
19 as a member of the Citywide Resident Advisory
20 Board, representing residents of public housing
21 here in New York City. I'd like to thank you, the
22 chair, for holding this conference, as well as the
23 Committee here.

24 It is fair to say and good to
25

1 mention that every year since 2009 Congress has
2 appropriated allocations for public housing
3 authorities to be able to access funds for what
4 they consider emergency disasters or safety
5 measures in public housing. Two thousand and
6 nine, the New York City Housing Authority was the
7 recipient of this funds, receiving the max funds
8 of \$250,000 in order to execute a safety and
9 security measure within public housing.
10

11 In addition, as we heard, the City
12 Council Members across the board across the city
13 have also allocated funding in order to help their
14 perspective developments in their district to
15 maintain and enhance security measures in their
16 developments. Unfortunately, despite the
17 availability of these funds, the New York City
18 Housing Authority have failed to move forward in
19 executing a process that will go ahead and make
20 this a reality for many residents across the city.
21 We have heard what I will call excuses given
22 today, from everything from communication with
23 City Council to resident leadership not moving
24 forward with a project, to whatever. I will say
25 that that is some of those are false.

1 see crime prevalence in our development. Alluding
2 to the MOU that was mentioned, \$73 million for
3 above and beyond baseline service, since 1994
4 since this MOA been executed, our developments
5 have not seen that above and beyond baseline
6 services. Why can't we have a police officer in
7 every development for 73 additional millions of
8 dollars of public housing limited money?
9

10 What I will ask though for today
11 that we can move forward with this process. I
12 will ask that the City Council work collectively
13 and closely with New York City Housing Authority
14 and the resident councils to ensure that those
15 dollars that you all give us for our safety and
16 security are met. I will also ask that, just as
17 the stimulus dollar had a timeline commitment,
18 that you all should commit a timeline on any
19 dollars that you all execute to the Housing
20 Authority to ensure they meet those deadlines. I
21 would also ensure that a regular communication
22 between the City Council, the resident leaders,
23 and NYCHA takes place. Unfortunately, we don't
24 have the resources as a resident council to keep
25 up with NYCHA's intelligent words or legal

processes that they may tell us about at times.

The bigger ask will be that the City Council can continue to commit for a long-term goal of providing financial support to help ensure the safety and security our development to New York City. As the largest public housing in the city of New York, if we come together, we have enough residents to elect our next mayor in the City of New York. We hope that we don't have to utilize this power, but it looks like this is what we're going to need to do to ensure that we get the ears and the attention of every elected official that represent us here in the city of New York.

Thank you.

NANCY ORTIZ: Very well said.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Next.

NANCY ORTIZ: Good afternoon, my name is Nancy Ortiz and I represent Vladeck Houses. I would like to thank my Councilwoman and chair of this Committee, Councilwoman Rosie Mendez, and Councilwoman Margaret Chin, who allocated funding for my development to be able to obtain cameras and layered access.

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2 Throughout this process, in order
3 for us to be able to make it flawless, what we did
4 was we--I obtained surveys from the residents, I
5 had numerous meetings with the residents, however,
6 the safety task force never brought forth to the
7 membership the options of being able to have a
8 camera to watch who was coming and going into our
9 developments by the intercom system, similar to
10 Co-op City and Southbridge Towers, that was never
11 mentioned. Our development would have liked it,
12 it was not an option.

13 Secondly, crime is down in public
14 housing because people just stopped reporting it.
15 People are tired of calling the police and no one
16 is ever coming. This is why crime is down. What
17 they need to do is ask Public Safety to split
18 their CompStat numbers as opposed to placing all
19 of the numbers under one precinct jurisdiction and
20 splitting it up between Transit, Housing, and the
21 precinct itself. That will show you what the true
22 numbers are. As an ex-statistics person, I
23 believe that that will show you and give you a
24 clear definition of what the exact crime within
25 the New York City public housing developments are.

1
2 Secondly, my main concern is the
3 leaderships are unaware that they can, and should,
4 write to their elected officials requesting
5 cameras. Many leaders do not know this, they
6 believe that the cameras come from New York City
7 Housing Authority and not from their elected
8 officials. So I believe that if they are
9 properly--if they have a workshop--if NYCHA
10 conducts a workshop with all of the leadership and
11 expresses to them and explains to them in detail
12 what it is that they need to do, you will get a
13 higher concentration of numbers of leaders in
14 developments that are requesting cameras. They
15 just don't know, I hear this constantly.

16 Lastly, the process with OMB is the
17 longest process in getting the cameras. OMB sits
18 on the contracts, sometimes for four to six
19 months, which delays the contracts and it
20 increases the amount of dollar. Where if I would
21 start--it had started with 200 cameras at the
22 beginning of the walk-through, now I'm down by 20
23 cameras because the price just went up on the
24 equipment.

25 That is my testimony, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Next.

REV. GETULIO CRUZ JR.: Good

afternoon, I am Rev. Getulio Cruz Jr., I'm pastor of Monte Sion Christian Church, which is located at 297 East 3rd Street between Avenue C and D in Alphabet City, Lower East Side. We are a bilingual Pentecostal congregation with close to half of the members and constituents living in the local public housing developments. Many reside in the Baruch and Vladeck developments, where the need for security cameras has already been well documented. We are also founding members of Manhattan Together and actively involved as leaders with the Metro IAF since 1997. The New York City Metro IAF is four broad-based, nonpartisan, multi-issue, power organizations consisting of churches, synagogues, mosques, tenant and homeowner groups, housing organizations, and schools. Manhattan Together, simultaneously with our sister organizations in the South Bronx and East Brooklyn, have worked in NYCHA developments for close to 15 years.

Over those years, I have personally met with residents, documented serious repair and

1 security concerns, and observed how NYCHA
2 disrespects their clients by forcing them to miss
3 work when their workers don't show up as scheduled
4 and keeping families with six children or elderly
5 parents living in conditions that the Mayor
6 himself would condemn if a private sector landlord
7 were causing it. I enter apartments and see the
8 valiant effort tenants make to create a decent
9 living environment in the midst of unpainted
10 plastered walls and moldy and leaky ceilings,
11 which are unacceptable. I often find that the
12 entrance of most of those buildings are broken--
13 have broken intercoms and unlockable doors.

14
15 In our dealings with NYCHA over the
16 years, I have been reminded of Jesus' encounter
17 with the religious leaders of his day, as recorded
18 in Matthew 23, where our Jewish Messiah chastised
19 the people in power of his day rather harshly for
20 focusing on the appearance of doing good in order
21 to receive the praise of men, but ignoring the
22 fundamental things that really matter to God:
23 Justice, mercy, and faith. When we look at the
24 NYCHA promotional material and website, it appears
25 to be doing very well, receiving the praise of its

1 residents and others, but when we observe it in
2 the field out of the public eye, we find that it
3 is failing in the areas that matter most to its
4 tenants. It takes unjustifiably long to resolve
5 serious repair issues that impact residents'
6 health. It communicates without mercy in
7 confusing ways that frighten their reliable
8 renters, particularly the Spanish-speaking seniors
9 who don't understand what the memos mean, and it
10 robs the diligent dwellers of faith in NYCHA by
11 ignoring their valid and incessant security
12 concerns.
13

14 Thank God for organizations like
15 the New York Daily News that continues to shine
16 the spotlight on the uncomfortable truth and
17 unpleasant reality of the failure of our present
18 NYCHA structure and leadership, especially now
19 that it brought to light the existence of a \$10
20 million study that shows just how dysfunctional
21 NYCHA really is. We joined with them and also
22 with City Council Speaker Christine Quinn in
23 demanding that NYCHA end the cover up and, as we
24 heard today, they have, and we know that Chairman
25 Rhea just agreed to put out that report.

As we said in the recent August 6 op-ed piece in the New York Daily News, broken NYCHA can be repaired, we have clear ideas of how NYCHA can be repaired. For example, they need to create a new entity to take over and professionally organize and manage all of NYCHA's repair and construction, something akin to the School Construction Authority. We need leadership that can hold their staff accountable and produce results that can be measured by issues resolved and not by complaints handled. We need a structure that is led by experts and capable leaders who can channel the proper resources to respond to the needs of their NYCHA residents, that can identify a need and then gather together the resources to fund that need and then expediently use the funds to resolve the issue as quickly as possible. That for instance, sees the need for moving NYCHA tenants from larger apartments to smaller units, and then seeks locations within the areas where those senior residents live to build or reallocate new senior housing. That uses the data they collect to focus the attention of their staff to organize their

1 labor and equipment to expedite repairs and not to
2 justify why they cannot get the job done.

3 We believe in public housing. We
4 have been fighting to preserve public and
5 affordable housing that is healthy and safe for
6 our community for over 15 years. We are creative
7 and persistent, and our people are never giving
8 up. We were here before NYCHA Chairman John B.
9 Rhea arrived and we will be here when he is gone.
10 This fight is not over, there is more to come. We
11 are tired of seeing makeshift shrines erected
12 outside of NYCHA developments like Baruch Houses
13 and Jackson Houses where, at the very least,
14 security cameras would have helped the police
15 identify and capture the perpetrators.

16 Honorable City Council leaders,
17 don't be fooled by the appearances. Hold NYCHA
18 accountable for results; tell NYCHA to change
19 their structure to better respond to the
20 operational needs of their hard-working residents;
21 tell them to put in place creative and resourceful
22 leaders who are excellent at getting things done
23 and not at making excuses. If not, our worthy
24 public housing residents might wind up with a
25

1
2 plethora of security cameras, but a shortage of
3 competent and effective personnel to monitor them.

4 Thank you.

5 FATHER FRANK SKELLY: Good
6 afternoon, my name is Father Frank Skelly, I am
7 pastor of Immaculate Conception Church on 150th
8 Street and Melrose in the South Bronx. Twenty-six
9 years of my priesthood have been spent between
10 East Harlem and the South Bronx.

11 Many of my parishioners in both
12 places live in public housing, now in the Bronx,
13 Patterson, Melrose, Jackson, Mott Haven. So I've
14 climbed the stairs many times in these buildings.
15 I say climb the stairs because the elevators are
16 not too reliable and I don't want a half-hour
17 visit taking an hour and a half as I wait to be
18 rescued from a stuck elevator.

19 Whenever I leave an apartment and
20 my parishioners see me heading for the stairs,
21 they warn me about how dangerous that is, and
22 they're very concerned that I'm going down that
23 flight of stairs and all the things I'm going to
24 meet there. I was happy to hear now, because it
25 wasn't on the list before, that we're talking

1
2 about Melrose Houses, we're talking about doing
3 something there. Before only Patterson, as I
4 understood it, was talking about cameras.

5 But my difficulty in seeing
6 Chairman Rhea's scheme up here and the program is
7 we've been working--I've been working personally
8 in the South Bronx Churches for a longer time for
9 12 years with NYCHA. This is the same kind of
10 chart we've seen about repairs, so I'm used to
11 them rolling out this chart and then they say
12 well, you have a leak in May 2010, here's your
13 ticket and the ticket is June 2012. And that's
14 the exact same thing I'm seeing again--that
15 slowness of process. And it was not acceptable
16 when we're talking about repairs, which we've been
17 doing a lot with, and it's not acceptable now,
18 watching the same charts come out and the process
19 is just so low--so slow.

20 Our church has been a member of the
21 Industrial Areas Foundations, as Reverend Cruz's,
22 for 20 years, and in the last 12 years we've been
23 more involved than ever in the terrible conditions
24 in NYCHA. What the Daily News has revealed in the
25 past few weeks were known by many of us in South

1
2 Bronx Churches and Manhattan Together, but not to
3 the extent that the Daily News has uncovered with
4 good investigative reporting. I stated in the
5 Daily News, a job well done.

6 Last year we thought NYCHA was
7 sitting on 600 million, we didn't know it had
8 grown to a billion. Last year we just wondered
9 where all the materials for repairs were, we
10 didn't know they were stockpiled around the city
11 collecting dust and rust. Last year we eagerly
12 awaited cameras for our buildings, but of course,
13 there was no money, and we didn't know there was
14 this a stash of 42 million. We thank the Daily
15 News for making our worst suspicions an even worse
16 reality, at least we know what we're dealing with.

17 I heard today that crime is down.
18 That's surprising to me because the captain of the
19 40th precinct has informed us that gun violence in
20 the 40th precinct is back to the level of 1995, he
21 said this at a meeting with South Bronx Churches.
22 So it's very surprising to hear that crime is
23 down. And it's very surprising to hear that when
24 you have to go visit Melrose and Jackson Houses,
25 to hear that crime is down. No one in my parish

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would say that crime is down.

NYCHA is the elephant in the room. New York has addressed education, transportation, public safety. New York is now waging war on obesity, and NYCHA sits there untouched. When there's an elephant in the room, the tendency is to cover it up with a nice throw cloth, much like NYCHA's way of dealing with deadly mold--they just paint over it, that's what they do. The elephant is not going to go away until it is dealt with, and we the members of South Bronx Churches, Upper Manhattan, are not going to go away until we are heard and the residents in NYCHA have their living conditions improved.

Maybe it's because the people who live in NYCHA are the working poor, maybe that's why they're ignored. Their voices are not ignored in our organization and they should not be ignored here in the City Council. Very often when people come to South Bronx Churches they get attention because we make noise, but the problem that I see is many people don't know where to go and so they're not taken care of, they're just left out there. So one of my parishioners, because we make

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2 noise, in 6C gets taken care of, but the lady in 6
3 D doesn't because no one is advocating. Someone
4 has to advocate for all the people and I think
5 that's what the City Council is about.

6 There's a big elephant sitting in
7 the middle of this room, don't just paint over it.

8 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: I want to
9 thank this panel for their testimony. And I just
10 want to remind everyone, I didn't want to
11 interrupt, but I want to remind everyone this
12 hearing is about cameras. So I know there's a lot
13 of repair problems, that's another hearing for
14 another day. I still have like 16 to 20 people
15 who want to testify and I want to get to all of
16 your testimony.

17 I just want to mention Nancy Ortiz,
18 you are president in a development in my district
19 and you are stepping down, much needed rest, but
20 you started this process to get the cameras six
21 years ago, shortly after I got into office. And
22 you were the one who called me two years ago when
23 they froze the money, I didn't hear it from NYCHA,
24 I heard it from you, and you were upset and I was
25 upset. And up until recently, through this

1
2 process that you and the rest of your board have
3 engaged in getting all of the resident
4 participation, I think we are in a better place.
5 Under the old method, we would have gotten maybe
6 two-thirds of development with cameras, and now
7 we're going to be able to put cameras in the
8 entire development, and \$3 million later, as
9 opposed to \$5 million later, but we're going to
10 get there. So I want to thank you for all your
11 hard work.

12 My colleagues, do you have any
13 questions of this panel?

14 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I have a
15 quick one.

16 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Yes.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: So I also
18 know the two individuals whom the resident leader
19 mentioned from the Bronx in terms of, I call Urban
20 Technologies, but I know that they have a
21 different name now. Mr. Stuart, I know in
22 particular. So my question is that particular way
23 of approaching this important issue, do you think
24 it makes more sense? I think you indicated that
25 in your testimony than what NYCHA is suggesting,

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and I wanted to know what you thought of it.

ERIK CRAWFORD: Well I share the same position as my district chair, Mr. Johnson, do, we believe not only is this a good security measure, it takes our residents out of harm way with the resident watch sitting out there and have to interact possibly with the crime and action. You're in the comfort of your home, no one sees you, everyone have access to it that can access this website, you can be on your phone, your laptop and see live feed of what's going on in addition to the recording. So we think from the system as it is now in our development seems to work fine, it have other enhancements that he did not put in because this is free to us through a grant he got, but we believe it's a much more effective.

And we just worrying about the wear and tear on the--at least I am, worried about the wear and tear on the current system that NYCHA have. Like we have this new intercom system that worked fine in a private development, but with public housing, with a lot of in and out, we notice it's a big hardship. If you don't have

1
2 Verizon, you can't access the intercom system. So
3 these things we look at, and this is some of the
4 stuff that we have taken away from what Mr. Fraser
5 is providing us in the Bronx.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay. I
7 love Mr. Fraser and his colleague also. Thank you
8 very much for that input.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Not a
10 question, just to say thank you for being here and
11 sharing your thoughts with us because it's usually
12 from the public portion of the hearings that we
13 gain the greatest insight on the--so I want to
14 thank you both of you from my district for being
15 here. And yes or no, are we asking NYCHA to stop
16 its process around the cameras and include this
17 tenant access portion to the systems?

18 ERIK CRAWFORD: Well I wouldn't
19 want to speak for the city or residents across the
20 board, but I think the feeling is across-the-board
21 would be let's get the security in place, whatever
22 that is. If it's option for people to have, at
23 least let them dig get into options rather than
24 being forced one direction. And I believe that's
25 where we at and why it's somewhat of a delay

1
2 because I believe we are being preached one
3 message rather than given an opportunity to
4 choose.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay. I want
7 to thank this panel for their testimony. Lucy
8 Newman, Luther Stubblefield, Barbara G. Barber,
9 Mary Riddick, Inez Rodriguez, you are on. And the
10 panel immediately to follow will be Dwayne Faison,
11 Lewis--Louise Green, Keith Ramsey, and Alan
12 Feinblum [phonetic], you will be the next panel,
13 okay? You could have a seat up here, get ready.

14 And Lucy Newman is there, Luther
15 Stubblefield, making your way there, Barbara G.
16 Barber? Mary Riddick? Okay. And Inez Rodriguez.
17 [Pause] What? [Pause] Inez Rodriguez left?
18 Okay.

19 Let me just say, a little
20 housekeeping here, we've received testimony from
21 Senator Daniel Squadron and his testimony has been
22 submitted into the record, and we've received
23 testimony from Reverend Marilyn Oliver, who is
24 also the TA President at Middletown Plaza, a
25 senior housing in the Bronx, and that has been

submitted into the record.

Okay. Whoever is ready, you can start.

LUCY NEWMAN: Hi, Rosie. I wanted to thank Chair Rosie Mendez on her leadership of the Public Housing Committee. I'll be very, very brief, the Legal Aid Society just wanted to comment on a couple of issues surrounding the security systems.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Can I have some quiet here, please? Thank you.

LUCY NEWMAN: And I know that there are tenants here who want to talk more specifically about security issues in their developments.

Currently, homeless families in New York City who have either friends or family that are residing in NYCHA apartments are forced by the Department of Homeless Services to make a very tough decision about whether they're going to sleep and spend the night with their young children on a park bench or whether they're going to risk making their NYCHA tenant friend or family homeless. The reason for this is because NYCHA,

as you know, has--

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: [Interposing]
I'm sorry, Ms. Newman, I'm going to ask one more
time for quiet in the chambers, thank you.

LUCY NEWMAN: This is because, as
you know, NYCHA has restrictions on who may occupy
its apartments, and a tenant who violates those
restrictions could be evicted from the apartment.

DHS, a sister agency, a sister city agency of
NYCHA, ignores these occupancy restrictions when
they make eligibility determinations for emergency
shelter and they frequently find that if a person
or family has a friend or family with a NYCHA
apartment, that is available housing for them,
even though it is technically not available to
them.

The reason this is an issue for
Legal Aid Society is because, as you know, one of
the aspects of the new layered access control
security system is the issuance of electronic key
tags, which we absolutely fully support any
actions taken by NYCHA that would improve the
safety and security of NYCHA residents and their
guests, however, we do have concerns that

1
2 legitimate guests of NYCHA residents may be denied
3 access to NYCHA apartments based on the ability of
4 NYCHA to activate and deactivate these electronic
5 key tags, and that is something that the chairman
6 had mentioned earlier. And, of course, that could
7 be devastating for these homeless families who
8 have been turned away by DHS and being told that
9 they should go and stay at these NYCHA apartments.

10 So if there is any NYCHA employees
11 left in the room, we would call on NYCHA to meet
12 with the Department of Homeless Services to
13 explain to DHS about their occupancy restrictions,
14 and press DHS to end this policy of denying
15 emergency shelter to families, and require DHS to
16 abide by the rules and restrictions that NYCHA has
17 for occupancy in rendering these eligibility
18 determinations.

19 And then I just wanted to follow up
20 a little bit about what Senator Montgomery had
21 raised and Erik Crawford had raised, which is
22 these \$78 million a year payments to NYPD that
23 NYCHA makes. As you know, NYCHA is paying \$78
24 million a year for policing services that NYPD
25 gives to private landlords and residents

1 throughout the city for free. This comes at a
2 time when NYCHA has stated they have a \$61 million
3 public housing fund operating deficit and it
4 doesn't have money to make repairs to people's
5 apartments. This \$78 million is paid to the NYPD
6 when residents are living in fear of crime in
7 apartments that have chronic disrepairs and where
8 people are waiting until 2014 to get repairs made
9 to their apartments. So we urge NYCHA to stop
10 paying the \$78 million annually to the NYPD and
11 terminate its MOU. This \$78 million could be
12 spent on providing real safety and security to
13 residents or making necessary repairs in their
14 apartments.
15

16 Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Next.

18 MARY RIDDICK: Hi, my name is Mary-

19 -

20 [Crosstalk]

21 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: [Interposing]

22 Grab the microphone, pull it close.

23 MARY RIDDICK: My name is Mary
24 Riddick, and I'm from the Pink Houses in Brooklyn,
25 New York. And I'm from there, I'm on the board,

1
2 and I'm also a resident watch, I'm the captain of
3 the Resident Watch of the Pink Houses, and we
4 have, like, people breaking out doors, glasses, so
5 we need them cameras. And, you know, that's all
6 I'm going to say, that we need them cameras.

7 And then we have urine in the
8 elevators. And our back door, we got two
9 entrances and when they go out, they go out the
10 back door and I'm sitting in the front, so I have
11 to get up every 10 or 15 minutes to close that
12 back door because they keep it open. And, you
13 know, it's for my safety and we need them cameras.
14 That's all I could say right now, we need it,
15 okay. You next.

16 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Thank you.

17 Next.

18 LUTHER STUBBLEFIELD: My name is
19 Luther Tory Stubblefield and I have been a
20 community advocate and a volunteer for the New
21 York Lower East Side community for more than 14
22 years. I have served as vice president on the
23 board of the TA of the Baruch Houses, and I have
24 worked with no pay, not even a stipend, for my
25 expenses. As a volunteer, I have worked for the

1
2 Baruch Houses and I am thankful to be able to do
3 that, however, the Baruch residents have expressed
4 a need for cameras for the safety of the
5 community.

6 I rallied for people to collect the
7 petitions--I'm having trouble with my glasses.

8 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Take your
9 time, I know you were working--

10 LUTHER STUBBLEFIELD: And my
11 glasses--

12 [Crosstalk]

13 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: --on that 'til
14 late, I saw you when I was parking my car.

15 [Laughter]

16 LUTHER STUBBLEFIELD: I rallied the
17 people to collect and require petition signatures
18 of 1,000 people, and a generous grant of \$400,000
19 from our Borough President, Scott Stringer, was to
20 start the campaign. That was three years ago and,
21 as of today, there's more than \$800,000 has been
22 collected. Why the hold up? We received the
23 approval to start the work, yet nothing has begun.
24 Three years ago, the hold up was to wait for new
25 doors and intercoms. The tenants have been

1
2 robbed, mugged, and two police officers have even
3 been shot. September 2009, a tenant, Mr. Glenn
4 Wright, a student of Manhattan College, was
5 murdered; February 2011, another resident, Ms.
6 Jomali Morales, an aspiring model, was brutally
7 stabbed to death in the elevator of 555 FDR Drive;
8 December the 2011, which was last year, from my
9 single floor, a senior neighbor was robbed by two
10 men while she was in her wheelchair. The past
11 year, two police officers at different times were
12 shot and only one of the assailants was arrested.
13 Our TA President, Roberta Napoleon, was a victim
14 and threatened to be shot also. What else must
15 happen before security is offered?

16 Baruch is the largest development
17 in Manhattan, and without security cameras, I
18 wonder why. There are 18 buildings which--with
19 double entrances. The budget for 36 entrances is
20 great, and NYCHA has come to the table with no
21 money. The same no money when we renovated our
22 community center in 2001. I am working with the
23 local politicians and other agencies to secure
24 funds. It is planned to outreach to private
25 foundations for the assistance and the promise,

1
2 however, the question remains when will the work
3 begin.

4 I also question at this time with
5 the large budget that's needed for our development
6 that the requirements for new doors and intercoms,
7 does that expense also run onto the Council or
8 will NYCHA be able to bring those funds together,
9 would that make our budget even larger? We
10 understand that our project is going to take more
11 than three to five years to be able to raise the
12 funds and to put the cameras in, and if we don't
13 sign soon, then when will it be done?

14 I am in the process of apartment
15 downsizing and relocating to another development,
16 however, I am committed to this project and I am
17 committed to the job is done, cannot NYCHA be more
18 committed to the needs of the Baruch residents?
19 Thank you for this opportunity to speak to you.

20 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Thank you.
21 And are you going to be reading testimony for...?

22 LOUISE GREEN: Ad lib, I'm going to
23 be just five minutes, this is just my notes.

24 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay. But you
25 didn't--you are?

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LOUISE GREEN: Louise Green.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Louise.

LOUISE GREEN: Yeah, and I took Ms. Rodriguez' position because--

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay.

LOUISE GREEN: --she left.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Louise Green.

LOUISE GREEN: Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: I got you here, okay, 'cause I just need one of these to be filled out.

LOUISE GREEN: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: So okay, you were in the next panel I had you, but you can give testimony now, I just want to make sure I got the right people there, okay. Go ahead.

LOUISE GREEN: Okay. Good afternoon, my name is--

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: [Interposing]
But you need to pull it a little closer, I don't--

LUTHER STUBBLEFIELD: Oh, here, I--

LOUISE GREEN: This?

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay.

LOUISE GREEN: Good afternoon, my

1
2 name is Louise Green, I'm the vice president of
3 the Pink Houses Tenant Association. Also, I've
4 been a residence of Pink Houses about 30 plus
5 years, I've raised my son in the development.

6 Just to give you a little bit of
7 background, Commissioner Rhea says that he's
8 committed to quality of life for the residents of
9 the developments and that crime has declined.

10 Well I'm here to tell you that as far from the
11 truth it can be. Crime has not declined, if
12 anything it has increased. And quality of life,
13 what's better quality of life that you can't sit
14 on a bench outside without ducking for shots being
15 fired, is that quality of life? Is it quality of
16 life when our kids are being dismissed from
17 school, which is located, PS 224 and it's right
18 across the street, it's about dismissal time, say
19 about 10 to 3, the kids are getting out of school,
20 we have a young man shot right in Building 20,
21 total, total chaos. The parents are screaming,
22 the kids are screaming and crying. Is that our
23 quality of life for our kids? You know what the
24 first thing that we teach our kids in these
25 housing development? When you hear shots fired,

1
2 you're to duck and go down to the ground so you
3 won't be shot. Is that something we have to teach
4 our little kids in elementary school? This is how
5 we have to survive in housing developments? I
6 think there's a problem with that.

7 In the fiscal year of 2009-2010
8 your Councilman Charles Barron allocated \$500,000
9 for Pink Houses for the cameras. Also that same
10 year, Senator John Sampson allocated \$4 million
11 for the cameras. That's a total of \$4.5 million
12 for Pink Houses, Linden Boulevard and Cypress,
13 what's the hold up? Why we do not have the
14 cameras?

15 In the year 2011, myself and my
16 board and Mr. Charles Barron and some of the
17 officials from New York City Housing Authority
18 assured us that we would be at the top of the
19 list, that they had the contract who was going to
20 do the cameras, and we should be getting cameras
21 in April of this year. If I'm correct, we're not
22 even on the first cut until 2013. There's a
23 problem with that.

24 It seems like to me and when you
25 look at the shootings and the crime rates, these

1
2 are the minority neighborhoods, you have East New
3 York, Brownsville, Harlem, Mott Haven, these are
4 the neighborhoods that gets the least, these are
5 the neighborhood that the City Council give the
6 least for fundings. For example, Pink Houses, we
7 have had four shootings since May. Do you know
8 what time our community center close in the
9 summertime for the youth? At 6 p.m. You tell me
10 what development would close a center at 6 p.m.
11 when you've had about four or five homicide and
12 shooting? Something is wrong with this, and it
13 really needs to be addressed.

14 And, you know, I've always said
15 that when I retired that I was going to do a
16 little leisure life 'cause I've worked all my
17 life. Now instead of living a leisure life, I
18 have to fight with my community so the next person
19 can maybe sit on the bench. There's something
20 wrong with that. We definitely, definitely need
21 cameras, but cameras is not the only solution.

22 There's other programs that you
23 need to bring in these neighborhoods to instill
24 these youth that violence is not the way; there's
25 got to be hope and a belief that tomorrow is going

1
2 to be better because if there is no hope, what's
3 going to happen to the next generation? Thank you
4 very much. I didn't mean to go that way.

5 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Thank you.

6 Ms. Newman, you bring up a very important point,
7 and we have been debating that point with DHS of
8 how they're steering everyone as a viable housing
9 option to be doubled and tripled up in public
10 housing, so that is a conversation we will take up
11 when they're doing that. If they're steering them
12 there, if DHS is steering them there and if NYCHA
13 has no choice because it's a so-called viable
14 housing option, then all of these individuals need
15 to have key fobs if, indeed, that layered access
16 door is put in.

17 From the ladies from Pink Houses,
18 we will be looking into how much money Council
19 Member Barron said he has allocated and we are
20 going to make sure that NYCHA meets with you and
21 the residents, the rest of the residents, and
22 Council Member Barron. What they have done with
23 me, and I've been going after them, Ms. Ortiz, who
24 testified in the earlier panel, they were ready to
25 start the work in, like, two weeks when they froze

1
2 the money, and so they provided me with pages that
3 said how much money we had, how much money we
4 would need to do the entire development, and what
5 we could do with the money we had. So that's
6 where we came up with the plan and Ms. Ortiz went
7 door to door to figure out--we just used a little
8 bit less cameras in certain places and more
9 cameras in others, but we got the cameras
10 throughout the whole development. And this is the
11 plan they need to come forward to you. I don't
12 know how many buildings there are in Pink Houses--
13 22 buildings, ooh.

14 [Off mic]

15 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay, you're
16 going to need like, you know, somewhere between \$4
17 to \$8 million just to have your development with
18 some level of layered access and cameras, that's
19 what you're going to need. Just off the top of my
20 head from my experience. But we will make sure
21 that those meetings happen with Council Member
22 Barron, and hopefully you will be getting all your
23 answers.

24 Mr. Stubblefield, thank you for
25 working so late on your testimony and coming here

1 today. You are the leader in your development who
2 went out and got the signatures. Just for people
3 to know, I have 14 developments in my district,
4 everybody wants cameras and I told the tenant
5 presidents, you need to bring me petitions because
6 that's the only way I'm going to be able to
7 prioritize this. And Mr. Stubblefield, as the
8 vice president, went out and finally got the
9 petitions and brought them to me, and we've
10 started to put the money in there. It'll take
11 close to \$6 million to fully load Baruch Houses,
12 we have 800,000 right now. So we will be having
13 the meeting as to what we start doing with the
14 800,000, which is probably setting up the system
15 and maybe some cameras on the development grounds,
16 but you guys will decide. And my commitment has
17 been and will continue to be that in the next
18 coming years while I'm in office, I'm going to
19 keep putting the rest of the money in so we can
20 get it at a level that is more secure for
21 everyone, whether you live there or not. I hope
22 you stay there, but I know you want to leave. I'm
23 just going to have to deal.

24
25 So does anybody else, my

colleagues, have any questions? No, okay, I want to thank this panel for your testimony.

The next panel Dwayne Faison from Cypress Hills Houses, Keith Ramsey from Eastchester Garden, and Alan Feinblum from Rights for Incarcerated People With Psychiatric Disabilities, you are the next panel up. And John Johnson from NYCHA Residents.

And the next panel will be Jenora [phonetic] Johnson from Douglas Houses, Madeline Innocent [phonetic] from Douglas Houses, Gloria Wilson from Carolyn Webb Houses. And then the-- okay--then there's another panel after that, some people have left, but thank you very much.

If you're ready, Dwayne Faison? Are you here, Dwayne Faison? No? Keith Ramsey? Hold on one second, I just want to get this panel. Alan Feinblum, you there? John Johnson? John Johnson here? No? Okay. I want to bring to this panel--Gloria Wilson? No? Jenora? Jenora, come up to this panel.

JENORA JOHNSON: In this panel?

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Yes, 'cause you were on the next panel.

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FEMALE VOICE: Madeline Innocent.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And Madeline Innocent, join up this panel.

[Pause]

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Mr. Ramsey, you can start. Thank you. [Pause] We still got another panel after this so you could sit down, okay?

KEITH RAMSEY: Okay. You ready?

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Yes.

KEITH RAMSEY: All right, good afternoon, Council Members, my name is Keith Ramsey, I'm the resident council president of Eastchester Gardens.

My state senator, Ruth Hassell-Thompson, allocated a sum of money for cameras in all of her NYCHA developments in her district. However, the New York City Housing Authority will not allow the cameras to be installed. We have had rallies, press conferences, and even my vice president, Sandra Day Jesus and Melissa Rodriguez, with the rest of my board and my residents, we have a petition, and I have some here that I can give you, originals. We have an active petition

1 campaign for these cameras.

2 State Senator Ruth Hassell-Thompson
3 has had talks with a vendor and also put a
4 component in this process whereas the residents
5 would be trained to install the cameras to employ
6 some of the residents. So she should be commended
7 for such actions 'cause I've never heard of such a
8 process.
9

10 But the Authority has a problem
11 with our state senator's proposal. I now know
12 that the New York City Housing Authority wants
13 something called layered access. I am sure that
14 the Authority has the residents' best interests at
15 heart--in mind when they came up with this,
16 however, any information that is discussed at that
17 safety and security task force is not shared with
18 the rest of the district. I can't speak for the
19 rest of the city, but I can speak for Bronx North,
20 I do not know anything that happens that funnels
21 down from that thing, from that committee,
22 whatever it is. If we knew that little bit of
23 information maybe we could have relayed to our
24 state senator and maybe she could have allocated
25 more funds for that particular system, but

1
2 important resident information sometimes is
3 blacked out in many instances and privy to only a
4 few tokens in the district.

5 You know, these citywide councils
6 and these cop chairs [phonetic], some of them are
7 the worst of the worst, and they claim to
8 represent us? That's the laugh of the year. No
9 cop chair represents me, none. What it is is,
10 members, you must understand, if you must have a
11 citywide hearing, have a hearing on the Citywide
12 Council of Presidents in the structure, you will
13 see that there are certain access of information
14 that the little ones, the little people, that's
15 what we call, we don't get it, you have to be in a
16 clique, and then you get all the information you
17 want, but if anybody else, you don't get.

18 Respectfully, I understand why the
19 NYCHA, New York City Housing Authority will not
20 install the cameras in state Senator Ruth Hassell-
21 Thompson's proposal. I don't like it, but I
22 respect it. They want it a certain way, but at
23 what cost? Residents are being killed and
24 victimized constantly. Eastchester Gardens are
25 being vandalized every day, yet we must be put on

1 hold because the Authority wants it a certain way.
2 Residents live in fear and the security camera
3 system must be installed, not now, but, you know,
4 right now.
5

6 I come here to ask the City Council
7 to speak with my state Senator, Ruth Hassell-
8 Thompson, and speak with the Authority and try to
9 get this thing moving because the money is there,
10 it's just that they want it a certain way. And
11 like I said, I understand now, you know, years
12 later that they wanted this layered access and
13 that's why they denied it. So if the City Council
14 can sit down with my state Senator, Ruth Hassell-
15 Thompson, and the Authority--and it's not only my
16 development, it's all this, all the housing
17 complexes in the state Senator Ruth Hassell-
18 Thompson's district, she had like 11 of them.
19 Plus, when they did their redistricting, she got
20 like four or something like that now. And what it
21 is is I ask you to do that if you can because the
22 safety and the security of our homes and our
23 families are at stake there.

24 Thank you. I appreciate that.

25 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Next.

1
2 MADELINE INNOCENT: Good afternoon,
3 my name is Madeline Innocent and I have lived in
4 Douglas Houses for 54 years. I'm also a member of
5 and leader of Community Voices Heard. And I'm
6 here to tell you of the concerns of many of our
7 residents regarding security and cameras.

8 Councilwoman Melissa Mark-Viverito
9 has given us in the past three years 900,000 to
10 Douglas Houses for security cameras, but it feels
11 like NYCHA is holding that money hostage. Most
12 recently, we won additional monies from the recent
13 participatory budgeting community voting and our
14 hopes are that the money we receive will not just
15 sit, but be used to secure our developments. We
16 earned that money, as well as we need those things
17 that the money was allocated for. This is our
18 money, it's time for it to get spent. Eventually,
19 Councilwoman Melissa Mark-Viverito is not going to
20 give us any money for anything because NYCHA won't
21 release the funds. Participatory budgeting
22 enables NYCHA and the surrounding community to get
23 to know one another, to live together
24 harmoniously, but when you hold money back from
25 NYCHA residents and exclude us from the process,

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We are tired of being looked out as ignorant, poor, and uneducated. We should be looked at as human beings and not like animals. And NYCHA should be held responsible, accountable, and respectful of our needs and the monies allocated for our developments.

Chairman Rhea stated that they are looking at layered access for the developments and residents believe that will help in securing our building. But when will this happen? Also, can the Council assist NYCHA with cutting through various red tape to make sure this happens quickly?

The last concern I would like to ask the Council to assist with--to assist us in pushing for more funding on the city and state level. This Mayor seems to find funding for so many other things like various stadiums, but can't seem to funds with plans to support what he states is very important to New York--public housing. It is time for the Mayor to put the money where his mouth is, and I ask that the Council make sure that happens.

Thank you.

ALAN FEINBLUM: I'm sorry. Hello, my name is Alan Feinblum, I'm married 50 years, I have a wife, I have two children, two grown children, and four grandchildren. The reason I come here today is to voice my opinion about the security and safety of people in housing projects.

Most of these people are not white, they're Afro Americans or Puerto Ricans or Asian-Americans. And this society feels that those people somehow don't deserve the same benefits as Jewish people like myself or white people live in other areas, Park Slope, for example. Everybody is a human being, even people that are in prison deserve to be treated with respect and kindness.

I've written to 51 Council Members for my organization, maybe four or five of them responded. I had a meeting yesterday with the Council lady Arroyo, and I also met with a staff member from Councilwoman Chin's office. The other ones just completely ignored us.

Now I've come to the conclusion that it's the Councilman's job to express the opinions to the public by they put out like a

1 poll, a thing like this, every month you send
2 something to your constituents. That's where you
3 should express solid ideas and other ways to talk
4 about the--people are in prison, solitary
5 confinement, they're there 23 out of 24 hours a
6 day. Those are the things you should express, not
7 that he was able to get us a light in the street
8 or a crossing guard, or you got money for this or
9 blah, blah, blah. Try to educate your
10 constituents, let them know what's going on. Just
11 as an example, I got this from a state senator, he
12 said this, it says do not place unsolicited
13 advertise materials on this property, and then he
14 says if you have suggestions and things like that,
15 call me. Now is this something that a Councilman
16 or--I know this is off-topic, but--

18 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: [Interposing]
19 Yeah, I need you to get back on topic.

20 ALAN FEINBLUM: Okay. Here's--

21 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: I still have
22 more people who want to testify--

23 [Crosstalk]

24 ALAN FEINBLUM: [Interposing] Okay.
25 I'll finish this up by my prepared statement. I

1 would like to bring to the attention of the
2 Council stop-and-frisk tactics employed in our
3 projects. Vertical patrols allows the police to
4 stop, search, and question anyone they deem to be
5 suspicious. When officers conduct a vertical
6 patrol they walk through and do a sweep of the
7 hallways, stairwells, rooftops, and landings.
8 Residents can be charged with trespass if they
9 enter prohibited parts of the building, such as
10 the rooftop or the basement, or if they cannot
11 provide identification or proof of residence.
12 Nonresidents can be charged if they are uninvited
13 or if the person they are visiting is not there to
14 confirm they were in fact guests. Both people's
15 rights are being violated. Here, the person who
16 is getting arrested, but also the person who is
17 the resident of the apartment.

18
19 They should have the right to a
20 normal life in public housing and that is not the
21 situation when visitors are getting arrested when
22 they come to see you. Could you imagine police
23 officers roaming the halls of an apartment
24 building on the Upper East Side questioning
25 everybody who they see and arresting people when

1
2 they cannot prove they are legitimately in the
3 building?

4 An article in the December 2nd
5 issue of The Villager project residents for
6 questioning if the security cameras were being
7 monitored. We're talking today about cameras, are
8 they being monitored or they're just going to be
9 there so when somebody gets raped or robbed,
10 they'll say, oh, this guy looks pretty familiar,
11 let's set the police them and arrest them. Are
12 they being monitored, does anybody know? If
13 there's like 384, I think, buildings, is anybody's
14 being actually monitored? Are policemen standing
15 there like they do right now?

16 There's an article in the newspaper
17 the other day that Mayor Bloomberg and the police
18 commissioner, they have 3,000 cameras all along
19 Wall Street and Midtown Manhattan. Somebody
20 sitting there monitoring everything and collating
21 everything so they know exactly what's going on?
22 Is that being done in the projects? Are these
23 cameras almost like false cameras where people
24 know that's all a joke? I mean, that's the
25 testimony today by Mr. Nelson's my Councilman and

1
2 other people.

3 And Councilman Barron really hit
4 the topic, he was the one person that actually
5 expressed emotion, that actually got excited, that
6 was able to get the audience actually, if they
7 could there was applause and scream. The other
8 people just read a little statement, then they
9 walk out. Councilman Nelson, my Councilman, after
10 he finished, he has a little soda, and he walked
11 out. And I'll thank you very much.

12 JENORA JOHNSON: Hello--

13 [Pause]

14 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Can you pull
15 it a little bit closer? We want to make sure that
16 it's captured?

17 [Pause]

18 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: I think it's
19 off.

20 JENORA JOHNSON: Oh, oh, it's on,
21 okay.

22 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Sergeant, can
23 you help? Thank you.

24 JENORA JOHNSON: My name is Jenora
25 Johnson and I'm a resident of Douglas Houses in

1
2 Manhattan, as well as a member and leader of
3 Community Voices Heard, and also the chairperson
4 of the grievance committee in Douglas.

5 In 2009, residents leaders
6 initiated effort to work with NYCHA management in
7 creating a safety and security task force. Public
8 housing residents and leadership realized we
9 needed a plan to build a cost effective system.
10 NYCHA says that the rent increases are crucial to
11 closing these budget gaps and that's a better way
12 for them to maintain our homes and services. We
13 believe security is the key.

14 My question is, the chairman
15 recently stated that NYCHA is paying 40--I mean,
16 \$70 million to NYPD for services and that they're
17 a special public housing, yet we still don't see
18 foot patrols, why is that? Also, will the Council
19 please pressure the Mayor's office to end the MOU
20 to have the fund paid to NYPD, instead use for
21 cameras?

22 NYCHA used to have housing police
23 that knew the community, they were friends with
24 residents; now we have new recruits who don't know
25 us and don't care to. When will they stop using

1
2 NYCHA as a training ground? The City Council was
3 granted full power over the municipal budgeting
4 and under 1990 chapter--charter revision, the
5 Council acquired the power to review land use,
6 approve zoning changes in Housing and Urban
7 Development plans--a power that gives the City
8 Council the most significant voice in the growth
9 and development of our city. I call on the
10 Members of the City Council to address my
11 questions and make sure that they give residents
12 what they are owed.

13 And also I'm listening to John Rhea
14 today, I didn't put this inside, but we're not
15 really knowing what's going on with the cameras,
16 you know, the residents should know more. We
17 don't have an option, we've never heard of one.
18 Now that I've been involved and listening to
19 what's going on, we need more, you know, power in
20 our resident association to give us this knowledge
21 and give us the right to--to everybody to decide
22 what we need.

23 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Thank you.
24 Mr. Ramsey, do you know who your Council Member
25 is?

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KEITH RAMSEY: I know who it was.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Who--oh. Oh,
so you don't have a Council Member right now.

KEITH RAMSEY: No.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay. We will
reach out, I will reach out to Ruth Hassell-
Thompson, I've met her before, and I will reach
out to the Speaker because you have no Council
Member and we will figure out what money is
allocated in your district and we will work with
the state senator. As you heard earlier today,
there is--well if you were here from the
beginning, there is one less hurdle in the state
money that it does not have to go through OMB,
which is the Office of Management and Budget, on
the Mayor's side and it does not have to go
through Comptroller's office. So those charts
that NYCHA had, the ones that were in construction
and finished or just about finished was where
there was state money. So--

[Off mic]

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Yes, so the
one with the greener line, there was state money
involved there. So we should be able to make some

1 headway in your district, okay? And then I will
2 reach out to you and we will follow up on that.

3 Ms. Innocent and Ms. Johnson,
4 you're both from Douglas Houses. NYCHA has a
5 representative in the audience--say hello Migna,
6 thank you--Migna Taveras, and you will get a call
7 from NYCHA tomorrow?

8 FEMALE VOICE: Okay.

9 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Tomorrow, and
10 they will follow up on your matter. And, Mr.
11 Feinblum, thank you for your testimony. And I
12 want to say thank you to my--one of my members and
13 my colleague from the Bronx who is still here.
14 Often, as Council Members we have a lot to do and
15 people run off, your Council Member ran off, I'm
16 sure he had something else to do. But I'm here
17 listening and Council Member Arroyo is here
18 listening, and so we thank you for staying here
19 this long to give your testimony.

20 ALAN FEINBLUM: Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay. Thank
22 you. The next and last panel will be Gloria
23 Wilson from Carolyn Webb Houses, Stuart Reid from
24 Digital Divide Partners, Desmond Smith from Secure
25

1
2 Watch 24, and Mr. X. So if you're still here,
3 please come up to the table, you are the last
4 panel for this hearing.

5 [Off mic]

6 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And so anyone
7 else who has not testified who wants to, you can
8 join this panel, I'm just going to have to have
9 you fill out one of these. Anyone want to join us
10 on the panel? Yes, ma'am, come on up, join here,
11 we'll get you--the Sergeant will get you a white
12 sheet and we'll have you fill it out, come and
13 join us.

14 I want to thank NYCHA for being
15 here.

16 [Off mic]

17 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: So if you're
18 ready, if someone's ready, you can start, just
19 grab the microphone and start giving testimony.

20 MALE VOICE: Should press the
21 button?

22 MR. X: Mr. X. I just got a
23 question, is this City Hall or is it the bingo
24 hall, which is formerly home to ECW? 'Cause, you
25 know, I was here last Wednesday, I'm back here

1
2 today, and as I told Gale Brewer last Wednesday,
3 this forum reminds me of two things--both forums
4 remind me of two things, A, they remind me of the
5 [off mic] which featured a deuce, it had [off mic]
6 and, B, they remind me of the Survivor series,
7 teams of five just try to survive. Okay.

8 I don't know what's gotten into
9 John Rhea, okay? He's a chairman, he's a board
10 member, he's a non-employee, okay? Why doesn't
11 NYCHA have an executive direct--or commissioner?
12 Okay?

13 And also, I read a story about the
14 NYCHA earlier this month, it indicated all four
15 board members, including your predecessor, failed
16 to install cameras in these buildings. There's
17 something wrong with that picture, especially with
18 your predecessor, Rosie, I don't get that. Why
19 didn't they install cameras? I wish I had the
20 article with me, it was, it was earlier this
21 month, it was posted [off mic] earlier this month
22 and it indicated they failed to use the money for
23 everything--repairs, cameras, et cetera. I don't
24 get that, and now they want more money. They
25 didn't even use the money they already received.

1
2 Okay? And I think it's sad that
3 there are no cameras in these buildings, they
4 should be in the hallways, in the elevators,
5 stairways to provide safety.

6 So I have this, and you see this
7 here? You know what this is here. But I used to
8 be a NYCHA resident, that was years ago, but I was
9 at the Marble Hill projects, which lies her
10 borough, and I rarely saw any crimes there, I
11 rarely saw an incident of developments, there were
12 crimes, people were getting shot and killed, I
13 just don't get that. Otherwise, when I lived in
14 the Marble Hill projects between 1973 and 19--
15 between 1974 and 1987, I rarely saw any incidents,
16 I felt safe. Only person who is still living
17 there now is one of my sisters, but that's another
18 story.

19 But I just think it's sad that, you
20 know, you had a discussion with them, as I recall,
21 approximately 18 months ago and now it's exactly
22 approximately 18 months later and you're still
23 having the same discussion with them, the same
24 discussion you had with them then, I don't get
25 that.

1
2 And John Rhea, he's got a bad
3 attitude, he needs to change his attitude, he
4 really does. He refused to speak to you and your
5 colleagues, this is what I saw last Wednesday,
6 only you weren't down with the NYCHA, you were
7 down with Elections Board. You know, what's with
8 the attitude? You have to--

9 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: [Interposing]
10 Can we stick to the topic, please?

11 MR. X: Okay. All right, but I'm
12 just saying that there's no excuse for that and
13 there's no reason why the surveillance cameras
14 can't be installed in all NYCHA developments in
15 all five boroughs. They have the money from what
16 I read, there's no reason why they haven't been
17 installed--no, some of them were installed, but
18 when I saw those charts, only a few were highlight
19 in green. How many, 20 out of 300? That's
20 outrageous, that's way under half. There's no
21 excuse for that.

22 What does John intend to do? Does
23 he intend to install these cameras, or does he
24 intend to make excuses?

25 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay. So if

1
2 it's just going to be more questions I can deal
3 with that later and then we can get on to the rest
4 of the testimony.

5 MR. X: Okay. Not a problem, I'm
6 just saying that--

7 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Yes.

8 MR. X: --he needs to get it
9 together or throw in the towel, let it go [off
10 mic]. Sorry.

11 GLORIA WILSON: Okay. Thank you.
12 Oh, I'm Gloria Wilson, I'm here to represent
13 Carolyn Webb of UPACA 5, she's the TA president
14 for UPACA 5. She had a family crisis and she
15 couldn't make it so I'm here to speak for her.

16 I'm a member of CBH and a leader,
17 senior advocate, and Ms. Webb states in her
18 testimony here that she's been asking for cameras
19 for a while, at least three or four years that I
20 know of. I live in UPACA 6 and which is also
21 exclusively an exclusively senior development.
22 And Ms. Web has a lot of problems in her building
23 with vandalism and people coming in and sleeping
24 on the roof and desecrating the elevators and
25 whatnot, and a few people have been robbed.

1
2 Now, when I tell Ms. Webb that the
3 chairman stated that crime has been down, I know
4 she's going to scream because she's the secretary
5 of PSA 5, and they have a list of her complaints
6 about crime in the building on the seniors. So I
7 guess she'll take care of that. And so when she
8 goes back to their meeting and speak to the
9 captain and whatnot.

10 But I live in UPACA 6, and our
11 Councilwoman Mark-Viverito, she allocated money
12 for our cameras, it was, I guess it's about three
13 years ago, maybe, three, maybe four, because we
14 went to her and we said we needed security, we
15 were beginning to have a problem too, and the
16 police weren't responding. We were right around
17 the corner from the 25th precinct, but they had
18 the nerve to tell us that we have the number for
19 PSA 5, so that's our, you know, that's who we
20 should call for any protection. So we raised a
21 lot of Cain about that and began to go to the 25
22 precinct community meetings, which is right around
23 the corner. So we live right around the corner
24 and when we call, you need to come, you know, you
25 need to come and see about us, so they started

3 PSA 5 started doing verticals, but
4 for some reason, UPACA 5 is having a problem. And
5 when I meet my seniors and they say, I say what's
6 the matter, oh, you know, I'm afraid to go and
7 empty my garbage, because the way that building is
8 built, there is a lot of curves and you can step
9 off the elevator and there's a--anybody could be
10 behind there, you can't see. You know, that's the
11 way their building is built, it's bigger than
12 ours, bigger than UPACA 6, we only have 150
13 apartments, they have 2, 250 so it's built bigger.

23 They still use the key. In my
24 building, I have the digital thing, what you call
25 it, we don't have a key. And they have a back

1 door where the lock can be picked or pushed in and
2 people come in during the night. Now they have
3 security up until, I don't know what time they
4 have their security, but the way the security is
5 they still don't know who's coming in the back.
6 So there's security there in the front, but people
7 can still enter the building, you know, sneak into
8 the building, prop the door open, whatever.

9
10 And so that's Ms. Webb's complaint,
11 this is her testimony here. And I don't know why
12 they're having such a problem with the cameras, I
13 don't know why our cameras are taking so long
14 because our Councilwoman put money in a few years
15 ago. They came and looked to see how they wanted
16 to place it and whatnot, but that's it. You know,
17 nothing is happening.

18 And I think that it's time that
19 NYCHA start doing something and make, you know,
20 make a stand for this, especially with the senior
21 housing, we're exclusively senior housing, you
22 know.

23 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Thank you.

24 Next?

25 STUART REID: Good afternoon, my

1
2 name is Stuart Reid, I want to thank Council
3 Member Mendez and Council Member Arroyo for this
4 opportunity to speak. I'm the co-chairman of
5 Digital Divide Partnership, which is a consortium
6 of community businesses and concerned citizens and
7 advocates for bringing broadband technology to
8 underserved communities.

9 One of the companies involved in
10 that consortium is Urban Communications, of which
11 I am also a co-founder. We're the only citywide
12 minority broadband franchisee and we bring
13 broadband services to underserved communities
14 through that mechanism.

15 What I'd like to talk about today
16 is our work with John Johnson, the chairman of the
17 Bronx South District Council of Presidents. We've
18 been working with him for about six years now. He
19 initially asked us to put several cameras in his
20 development in Mott Haven, which we did. Along
21 the way, he kind of decided, came up with an idea
22 of something that he called the Virtual Tenant
23 Patrol. We essentially put the images of the
24 camera on the Internet and made them available to
25 the residents in his building. It became--it kind

1
2 of caught on by fire, he asked us to do several
3 more cameras in several more of his developments.

4 Recently, I guess probably about
5 six or nine months ago now, there was a shooting
6 in Moore Houses, a young guy got killed in an
7 elevator. The president of the TA there, Lew
8 Torres, called me on a Saturday night about
9 midnight and said, Stu, is there anything you can
10 do, I called NYCHA, they said there's no money for
11 cameras. Well we were there on Monday and had a
12 camera put in. And now he, as well as all of the
13 residents in his building, can monitor several of
14 the common areas at Moore Houses.

15 One of the things that we've
16 discovered in working with Mr. Johnson is that,
17 unlike the traditional cameras that are put in
18 that are monitored by the police, when the
19 residents are able to monitor the cameras, they
20 have a whole another effect, they have more of a
21 preventive effect when people know that their
22 mother, their grandmother, members of their family
23 are looking and are watching. So rather than
24 being a reactive, let's go catch the bad guy that
25 did something, they have more of a preventive

1 effect. This is what I hear from John Johnson and
2 some of the other TA presidents.

3 We have our cameras through Mr.
4 Johnson--it's really Mr. Johnson's cameras--in
5 nine of his developments and folks are telling us,
6 bring more. We're a small company, we got a grant
7 from New York State Office of Technology a couple
8 of years ago that allowed us to do some of this
9 work. But I'm here today to ask the City Council,
10 if they can't consider allocating some of their
11 funding to John Johnson's organization. He's
12 putting together a resident-owned business to do
13 this technology stuff. We're helping him with the
14 technology, we're also involved SoBro, the South
15 Bronx Overall Community Development Corp, to help
16 develop jobs.

17 One of the things that--one of the
18 advantages of this program is that it's not just
19 putting in cameras, it's a program. It involves
20 hiring--training and hiring local residents from
21 the developments to put in the cameras, to
22 maintain the cameras, and to begin to actually
23 monitor as well.

24 And one other point, one of the
25

1 features that we bring with the cameras is WiFi.
2 So we bring wireless broadband to each of the
3 developments where Mr. Johnson puts these cameras
4 in, so the residents are able to--for free, at no
5 cost to them--log onto their computer, to their
6 smartphone, to their tablet, and see what's going
7 on in their lobbies, in their playgrounds, in the
8 common areas of their developments.
9

10 So I just wanted to kind of
11 summarize that. I know there have been a number
12 of comments, Mr. Crawford from Davidson housing
13 spoke about how much value and utility he was
14 getting from his system. A gentleman here just
15 recently in the last panel was asking, well who's
16 watching all these cameras, NYCHA's going to have
17 tens of thousands of cameras, who's watching?
18 Well I would submit that the best folks to watch
19 the cameras are the people that live in the
20 community. There's a lot of lip service even from
21 Commissioner Kelly about how we can't solve all
22 the crime problems without the community, we need
23 the community. Well this is a way to involve the
24 community with Mr. Johnson's Virtual Tenant
25 Patrol, to involve them in monitoring and giving a

stake in their own security.

Thank you.

GLORIA WILSON: Give me your card.

STUART REID: Yeah, okay.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay. Just grab the microphone, yes.

HERMA WILLIAMS: Yeah. Good afternoon City Council Members of the Committee on Public Housing. My name is Ms. Herma Williams [phonetic], I am an original resident born and raised in Pelham Parkway Houses more than 55 years ago. From 1992 to present, I have voluntarily served as president of Pelham Parkway Resident Council, Inc., the duly elected resident-based organization recognized as the official entity representing all residents of Pelham Parkway Houses by the New York City Housing Authority. For the record, I serve as one of the nine district chairs representing the Bronx North Association of Resident Councils Inc., and as the first vice president for the Citywide Council of Presidents, Inc.

I appear before the Committee today on behalf of the residents I represent--

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CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: [Interposing]

Ms. Williams?

HERMA WILLIAMS: Yes, ma'am.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: I'm just
glancing and you got a six-page testimony, so can
I ask--

HERMA WILLIAMS: [Interposing]
That's just some of the attachments that go with
it.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: No, no, no,
the written--

HERMA WILLIAMS: Oh.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: --part is six
pages, the attachments is additional.

HERMA WILLIAMS: Yeah.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: So I just want
to ask you if you could summarize?

HERMA WILLIAMS: I certainly will.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay. Thank
you.

HERMA WILLIAMS: I represent not
only the residents of Pelham Parkway Houses, but
Citywide as well. I could not stand here before
you to address resident safety and security

1
2 measures for just one public housing development
3 when I fully acknowledge and understand that what
4 happens in one development has already happened in
5 others across the city. As residents of public
6 housing, we, unfortunately, share this common bond
7 in our NYCHA communities.

8 The part that I do not want to
9 skip, ladies, is crucial to what I believe this
10 hearing is all about. During the past seven
11 years, Pelham Parkway Houses has seen an increase
12 in criminal activity and crime from drug-related
13 shootings, gang activity, robberies, and
14 vandalism, to the still unsolved home invasion and
15 brutal murder of my neighbor Ms. Evelyn Shapiro,
16 the 88-year-old senior resident who lived alone
17 less than 60 days ago. In light of this most
18 recent tragic events, residents, elected
19 officials, police, various community groups, and
20 even the victim's family themselves have all asked
21 the same questions: Which security cameras have
22 made a difference in Pelham Parkway Houses?

23 I've had the opportunity to meet
24 Mr. Fraser, Mr. Stuart, and to actually, maybe
25 four years ago, walk through my complex. In light

1 of what was going on then. Being a product of
2 public housing, what I see now did not occur back
3 then. There are some of us who have tenure in
4 public housing that we choose to stay. We see the
5 undesirables that are being allowed to come in, we
6 have no voice and no choice in who the Authority
7 rents their apartments to. With the understanding
8 that NYCHA does not provide funding for cameras, I
9 am thankful to my City Council Member Jimmy Vacca
10 for the recent, and I mean recent, it's very
11 recent that we received this allocation of money.
12 Even though one of the attachments you see a
13 letter from over two or three years ago.

14
15 Maybe what the Council is not aware
16 of is that in 2008 I initiated the Bronx borough
17 president to establish a NYCHA task force for
18 developments in the Bronx. We all were asked to
19 submit a wish list. What is not attached to my
20 document are the various developments that
21 attached wish lists and didn't receive any money
22 over the last four or five years for cameras. I
23 believe the only development that received any
24 funding from the borough president's office was
25 Edenwald Houses, and that is under construction

1
2 now.

3 I understand a lot of the concerns
4 I hear from the resident leaders and the residents
5 of public housing that spoke today. Some of their
6 anger needs to be redirected because through the
7 NYCHA safety and security task force, which was
8 implemented when Chairman Rhea came on board, what
9 I don't understand and maybe what others like
10 myself, why is he the one who's being victimized?
11 Our problems in public housing didn't start when
12 Chairman Rhea came on board, they started with his
13 predecessors and the former Mayor. Yes, we have
14 been asked as residents to go as high as the
15 federal Supreme Court to get the MOA that was
16 signed off by then-Mayor Giuliani and NYPD
17 rescinded. That \$73 million would go a very long
18 way in possibly putting cameras in our
19 developments or taking care of some of the other
20 matters that we've heard about with repairs and
21 what have you.

22 There's been changes to NYCHA's
23 Resident Watch program. I say that because I was
24 the co-chair for one of those subcommittees
25 established under the safety and security task

1
2 force, as my colleague Mr. Johnson was, when it
3 came to dealing with the security cameras and the
4 layered access system. When we hear resident
5 leaders say nobody told them to contact an elected
6 official, it's disheartening because I've been
7 doing this for so long and I have established that
8 rapport with the elected officials, each and every
9 one of them that come to public housing and lets
10 you know what their roles are and what they do.

11 So in closing, I would just ask
12 that the various crimes that are going on, that
13 the Council do take a look at the relationship
14 between NYPD and the New York City Housing
15 Authority and let's reevaluate how that money
16 could best be served. As we say in public
17 housing, somebody's double dipping, and as
18 taxpayers, as voters, and as residents who do pay
19 rent, something needs to be done about that
20 immediately. I thank you for your time and have a
21 blessed evening.

22 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Thank you.

23 GLORIA WILSON: That's good.

24 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: So I have some
25 statements and some questions. Ms. Wilson, just

1
2 to let you know, Council Member Melissa Mark-
3 Viverito is on vacation, otherwise she would have
4 been here at this hearing. And I understand from
5 the Housing Authority that they recently had a
6 meeting with UPACA 6--

7 GLORIA WILSON: Yeah.

8 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: --and so they
9 are moving forward in the process--

10 GLORIA WILSON: Oh my God.

11 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: --with the
12 green line.

13 GLORIA WILSON: Yeah, yeah.

14 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: I am sure your
15 Councilwoman is on top of this and she will also
16 make sure that for UPACA 5 and the money and where
17 she's allocated funding, that those meetings are
18 happening and the sign off by the resident
19 association is taking place.

20 I just want to say that I was very
21 angry several years ago when the money was frozen,
22 and now I feel that this delay, while not
23 convenient, was actually helpful and useful
24 because, as you heard, in one of my developments
25 I'm going to be able to put cameras throughout the

1
2 entire development instead of trying to get
3 another \$1 million, which would've taken me a
4 couple of more budgets. And that the cameras--and
5 I have put close to 10 million already in cameras
6 in my district--the cameras in the developments
7 where I do have cameras, we have a problem there
8 because those cameras--

9 MALE VOICE: Don't work.

10 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: --aren't--no
11 one is watching them, there are some cameras that
12 are being watched and some cameras that are not,
13 the Viper [phonetic] cameras are being watched,
14 the CCTV is being recorded and those recordings
15 get erased after a certain amount of time. So if
16 you find out about a crime way after the fact, the
17 police are not going to have access to those
18 tapes.

19 I have developments that I
20 allocated funding when I first got into office,
21 they have their cameras and I can tell you crime
22 is still a problem. In one of my developments
23 last week I had three stabbings and I do have
24 cameras there. So the cameras caught it on film,
25 we weren't able to stop the stabbings. With this

1
2 layered access, maybe we'll be able to prevent
3 some of this where people can't get access into
4 the building as easily. If someone loses a key
5 and someone finds it, they can't get access into
6 the building because with a key fob, it gets
7 deactivated. And all of this, you know, will mean
8 more money, 'cause as I started going through
9 this, some developments, you can make the door
10 modernized for layered access, and in some
11 developments, you know, I have first houses that's
12 78 years old, it's not as easy and it's going to
13 take even more money. So to this board and their
14 credit, they stopped the process, but I think it
15 will have more meaningful results for all of the
16 residents.

17 As you heard, we still need a lot
18 more funding to get the rest of the developments
19 covered, and it's a responsibility that we've been
20 taking on here at the City Council, along with
21 some of your state legislators. So it's a work in
22 progress. And as it's taking me and some of my
23 bigger developments sometimes three fiscal years
24 and three budgets to get the funding in, but it's
25 something that many of us are committed to doing.

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2 Mr. Reid, can you explain to me,
3 you said John Johnson is putting cameras into the
4 development? He's putting into public housing?
5 Is that correct?

6 STUART REID: That's correct.

7 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: And he has the
8 authority from the Housing Authority to put the
9 cameras in?

10 STUART REID: I believe so, I mean,
11 you have to check with Mr. Johnson about under
12 what auspices he's doing that, but, yes, he's
13 doing it. The first several cameras were tenant--
14 what are the tenant, it was tenant funds, tenant
15 TIP--

16 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: [Interposing]
17 Participation funds?

18 STUART REID: TIP, TIP--

19 [Crosstalk]

20 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay.

21 STUART REID: --TIP, TIP.

22 GLORIA WILSON: Yeah, TPA.

23 STUART REID: TPA.

24 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay.

25 STUART REID: So, yes, he has put

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cameras--

GLORIA WILSON: No--

STUART REID: --in several of his developments and he has the Virtual Tenant Patrol operating in a number of his developments, that's correct.

COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Madam, Chair, I'd--

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Yes.

COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: --like to correct, he's not physically putting the cameras in himself, I think through a process of--

STUART REID: Yeah, well--

COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: --engaging Digital Divide and Urban--

STUART REID: [Interposing] We're doing it for him.

COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: -- Communications, the cameras are being--and the technology is being installed by Urban Communication--

STUART REID: Correct.

COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: --Digital Divide partners and the residents are engaging the

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2 provider in obtaining the service, but John is
3 not--

4 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: [Interposing]
5 And they're using TPA funds?

6 FEMALE VOICE: No.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: --John is
8 not physically himself--

9 STUART REID: No.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: --
11 installing cameras.

12 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay. But
13 they're using TPA funds? Because this is the
14 first time I'm hearing that--

15 GLORIA WILSON: No.

16 STUART REID: No, no.

17 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: --TPA funds
18 can be used.

19 STUART REID: I misspoke, the six
20 years ago, we put in a camera for John in his
21 office that was TPA funds, that was--

22 GLORIA WILSON: Oh--

23 [Crosstalk]

24 STUART REID: --six years ago, but-

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CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay.

STUART REID: --subsequently our company, Digital Divide Partners and Urban, has absorbed the cost through our various--

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: I see.

STUART REID: --grants.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay.

STUART REID: So, no, he's--

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay.

STUART REID: --no.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay. Because at the end of the day--

GLORIA WILSON: They froze TPA.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: --there is a problem with us giving money to for-profits, we usually have to give them to the city or not-for-profits--

[Crosstalk]

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: --and then it gets engaged in the same procurement process that was described earlier where everything has to be filed with OMB and with the comptroller. And there's a lot of projects that I've proposed in my district for capital money that doesn't get

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2 approved because it's not in a city-owned building
3 and there is all these different things that
4 trigger the money getting processed, but it takes
5 just as long, which is standard has been two to
6 three years. So--

7 STUART REID: [Interposing] Let me
8 just state if I could that we're working with Mr.
9 Johnson's non-profit, he's working to put together
10 a technology component of his 501 3(c) to actually
11 implement what we have been helping him do. So
12 what I'm asking is that the City Council support
13 Mr. Johnson and his nonprofit and his resident-
14 owned business, we're just kind of a consultant to
15 him--

16 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Okay. All
17 right.

18 STUART REID: --so I'm not looking
19 for funding for us, I'm just proposing--

20 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: [Interposing]
21 I was trying to understand--

22 [Crosstalk]

23 STUART REID: Yeah, I'm proposing--

24 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: --I didn't
25 know it was a not-for-profit, it was unclear.

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STUART REID: No, I'm proposing--

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: So, okay.

STUART REID: --Mr. Johnson's
nonprofit--

GLORIA WILSON: No, he's a non-for-
profit.

STUART REID: --be mobilized, if
you will, to expand an already successful program
that we've piloted in a number of his
developments.

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Thank you.

COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: If I may,
Madam Chair?

CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Council Member
Arroyo.

COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Yes.
Stuart, the procurement process was one of the
things that was kind of put out there as part of
the explanation for why it's taken so long.

STUART REID: Right.

COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: I think
central to where we're at today is the fact that
NYCHA did stop and reevaluate what it intended to
do. Has Digital Divide Partners or Urban

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2 Communications submitted formal proposals for the
3 work that NYCHA has--is going to be doing with the
4 70 plus--what is it, 42 million that we have?

5 STUART REID: We have not recently,
6 but we did about three years ago, before the
7 funding was frozen.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Were you
9 aware that these solicitations were happening?
10 Did you know to apply for them?

11 STUART REID: No, no, and in fact,
12 if I could just say for the record, about three
13 years ago when we did apply to an RFP, we were
14 told midway through the process that the RFP was
15 on hold because--

16 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO:
17 [Interposing] Was rescinded, yeah.

18 STUART REID: Was rescinded, and
19 then subsequently it was apparently put back in
20 place and we were never informed, it was--

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Okay.

22 STUART REID: --a year later we
23 were in a meeting on another issue and were
24 informed--

25 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Okay.

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2 STUART REID: --oh, by the way,
3 that RFP got funded, blah, blah, blah, we were
4 never informed, no, we were not.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: That's
6 unfortunate.

7 STUART REID: Yeah. But as I said,
8 I don't want to sit here as a vendor crying about
9 not getting a contract, we have since--

10 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO:
11 [Interposing] I'm not suggesting you are.

12 STUART REID: Okay. Okay. 'Cause-
13 -

14 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Not at all,
15 I'm--

16 STUART REID: Right.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: --asking
18 the question 'cause I know that over the last, at
19 least, four years, we've had opportunity to visit
20 some of the developments and preview some of the
21 work that you've done through other funding
22 streams and the technology you've made possible
23 for some of the developments. So I was just
24 curious to, you know, are you one of the six
25 vendors that the Authority has indicated has been

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2 contracted to perform the work that we're hoping
3 can happen within the next year.

4 STUART REID: [Interposing] No, no,
5 no, we are not, nor were we ever invited to
6 participate in the bidding process.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: You were
8 not solicited--

9 STUART REID: No.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: --for a
11 bid. And in your opinion, you bring a little bit
12 more to the table than everybody else?

13 STUART REID: Well I think so in
14 that, you know, our focus is a resident focus and,
15 you know, we involve residents totally in the
16 actual implementation of our project and it's also
17 more than just the cameras, it's the Internet. We
18 bring the wireless broadband to each of the
19 developments where we put in the cameras with Mr.
20 Johnson. So it's more comprehensive and, as I
21 said, resident focused and focused on resident
22 empowerment.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER ARROYO: Okay. Well
24 thank you, it's important for me to understand
25 that because I know that John and the folks and

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2 certainly in my district have been very supportive
3 of the work that you're doing in their
4 developments. And there's been a little bit of a
5 debate about whether tenants should have access or
6 not have access, and I think I support what my
7 tenants want, they want access, so we should work
8 on getting them access. And how we do that I
9 think is a function of how we move this process
10 forward without delaying, which is why I asked
11 Erik, are you asking us to have NYCHA stop what
12 progress has already been made. And I think he
13 said no, but we need to embed a couple of other
14 conversations in the process moving forward.
15 Thank you, Madam Chair.

16 CHAIRPERSON MENDEZ: Thank you very
17 much. And with that, we are coming to the end of
18 this hearing. I want to thank NYCHA for staying
19 here to the end of the hearing, those in the
20 public who stayed to the very end. And I want to,
21 while not no longer here, do a couple of thank
22 yous to my staff that was here earlier and left
23 and my staff that's still here, thank you. And to
24 Baaba Halm, who used to be the attorney for this
25 Committee and is now the deputy director of

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2 Infrastructure Division, she was here earlier.
3 And to Laura Rogers, to my right, the attorney for
4 this Committee who has served me for several
5 years, she will now be moving on to work with
6 Housing and Buildings, she'll still be, I think,
7 doing some work with my Committee, as we always
8 keep them involved. But thank you for your years
9 of service to this Committee and the people of
10 public housing.

11 This hearing has come to a close,
12 thank you.

13 FEMALE VOICE: Thank you.

C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Tammy Wittman, certify that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. I further certify that I am not related to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of this matter.

Signature 

Date August 25, 2012