



**BROOKLYN COMMUNITY BOARD 14**  
**FLATBUSH–MIDWOOD COMMUNITY DISTRICT**  
810 East 16<sup>th</sup> Street  
Brooklyn, New York 11230

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September 13, 2023

Daniel Garodnick  
Director, Department of City Planning  
Chair, City Planning Commission  
120 Broadway  
31st Floor  
New York, NY 10271

Dear Chair Garodnick,

New York City is a city of neighborhoods. The housing in our neighborhoods vary from densely packed high-rises to sprawling Victorian houses, from brownstones and limestones to public housing campuses. There are homes on the shores, above stores and increasingly in neighborhoods that used to be manufacturing hubs. These neighborhoods are inhabited a diverse populace in terms of race and ethnicity, countries and states of origin, first languages, socio-economic stratification and more. Some neighborhoods are occupied by people who have lived there for decades; others are populated by new arrivals due to recent zoning changes, immigration influxes or gentrification tipping points. The neighborhoods also have a range of topographies – some are along the waterfront, others high up on the hills. Two boroughs are located on a large island, two are islands of their own and one is on the mainland.

There's more that can be said about the types and ranges and diversity of New York City's neighborhoods, but the point has been made. This is not a one-size-fits-all city. Different neighborhoods have different needs. City policies have distinct impacts on various neighborhoods. The perspectives, insights, lived experiences and voices of local community members are key to shaping policies that work best for diverse populations in diverse neighborhoods.

The agency empowered by the New York City Charter to ensure that these hyper-local insights are considered in the formulation of programs and policies are Community Boards. One has to wonder why they are not better known, understood, resourced and utilized. Under-resourcing, undervaluing and underutilizing Community Boards result in outcomes that have more unintended consequences, are less efficient and frankly, less democratic.

Case in point: late last week we discovered that the City Planning Commission (CPC) planned to move the vote on the City of Yes for Carbon Neutrality from the established date of September 13th to September 11th. We only became aware of this date change upon careful review of the CPC calendar. There was no direct notification informing Community Boards that a publicly noticed vote was going to

occur earlier on the calendar. We appreciate the previous outreach actions taken in advance of the COYCN vote. CB14 members, staff and fellows participated in information sessions, meetings, and hearings. This makes it all the more disturbing that you would move up a publicly announced vote in the calendar without making a public announcement. You've undermined your own efforts to gather the local insight that could only serve to make the proposal stronger.

As you will note in our comments, CB 14 believes that there needs to be an emphasis that the City of Yes initiative is an enormous undertaking for the City of NY to take on as the sole enforcer. Community Boards need greater agency in making determinations of appropriateness on a case-by-case basis. The broadness of this initiative as it stands is not conducive to effective enforcement.

The Planning Commission overwhelmingly passed the recommendation on Monday, September 11th. Nevertheless, CB14 will forward to DCP and the CPC the comments that our board and community members worked diligently to develop in response to a broad and complex proposal. We retain some hope that they will be seriously considered. We will also forward our comments to the City Council Land Use Committee. We understand that they were also not made aware of the switch of the date of the vote.

As we prepare for the next zoning text amendment, we implore you to be more conscious and considerate of the people of the City of New York, whose voices are represented at the most local level by Community Boards. As Dan Doctoroff noted at the Commission's 9/11 meeting, when it comes to city planning, execution is most important! We look forward to assisting in a process that was off to a great start. We trust DCP can see it through as we consider the City of Yes Zoning for Economic Opportunity.

Sincerely,



Shawn Alyse Campbell  
District Manager

cc: Hon. Farah Louis, NYC Council, 45<sup>th</sup> CD  
Hon. Rita Josphe, NYC Council, 40<sup>th</sup> CD  
Hon. Kalman Yeger, NYC Council, 44<sup>th</sup> CD  
Hon. Inna Vernikov, NYC Council, 48<sup>th</sup> CD