



THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

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January 13, 2020

COUNCIL MEMBERS REYNOSO AND ESPINAL RESPONSE TO THE CITY'S DECISION TO NOT IMPLEMENT THE BUSHWICK COMMUNITY PLAN.

"Mayor de Blasio and Deputy Mayor Been have informed us that after working with us for the past five years on the Bushwick Community Plan, they are not interested in implementing the community's vision for the neighborhood. This past week displayed perhaps the most incongruous moment of the de Blasio administration, in which the Mayor simultaneously released a report purporting his commitment to affirmatively furthering fair housing, while leaving a neighborhood that suffered years of disinvestment followed by ruthless gentrification to be swallowed by irresponsible development. The Mayor's decision to walk away from Bushwick, continuing the cycle of government neglect the neighborhood has suffered under for the past 50 years, is shameful as it ignores the voice and will of a community. When we began the process of developing a community-based plan for Bushwick, we could have never imagined that Bushwick would receive a level of apathy from our local government reminiscent of the policies that left Bushwick to burn in the 1970's. We remain committed to our community's vision as outlined in the BCP - nothing that affects Bushwick will be determined without Bushwick.

The process to develop the BCP was catalyzed by a near universal recognition that Bushwick was facing severe development and displacement pressures and warranted planning attention to ensure that these forces were mitigated to the greatest extent possible, that people who had struggled for years to build up the community from decades of neglect reaped the benefits. In 2016, NYU's Furman Center identified Bushwick as the 4th most rapidly gentrifying neighborhood in the City, while the Mayor's own Where We Live report identifies Bushwick as having some of the highest rates of market rate-rental housing and new housing construction in the City, while suffering from some of the lowest numbers of rent-regulated and owner-occupied housing units. We entered this process with full knowledge that no matter how objective the evidence was that Bushwick warranted intentional planning study and investment, the history of community planning was littered with failed efforts and broken promises. This was a risk we accepted for two reasons, the status quo in Bushwick was already leading to mass displacement and urgently needed to be addressed and the de Blasio administration committed to partnering with the community to craft a plan. The status quo remains the same, our community continues to be displaced, but now the Mayor has rubber stamped his approval on this crisis.

The BCP is in no way radical. The plan increases the overall housing capacity of the neighborhood, allowing all the market-rate development potential that exists today, while mapping mandatory inclusionary housing to ensure that increased density results in affordable housing, and identifying areas where density makes sense, primarily along transit corridors, characteristics that are completely in line with the de Blasio housing agenda. We fundamentally reject Deputy Mayor Been's assertion that this is a downzoning, moving density from narrow side streets to wide transit corridors, while creating opportunities for affordable housing is sound planning rationale. We will not be extorted into taking more density simply to receive what we already deserve. Bushwick has already contributed thousands of units to our City's housing supply over the past 10 years and will contribute thousands more under the BCP, while other neighborhoods have developed almost no new housing at all. The de Blasio administration's decision to walk away from the BCP is merely a continuation of the discriminatory housing policies that have been inflicted on Bushwick for decades, actions that are all the more dangerous today as the Trump administration works to roll back fair housing protections across the country. Bushwick will continue to fight for the resources it deserves, it's what we've always had to do."

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