

LABOR, WORKFORCE AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMITTEE

OF THE

SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE

Minutes

A regular meeting of the Labor, Workforce and Affordable Housing Committee of the Suffolk County Legislature was held in the Rose Y. Caracappa Legislative Auditorium of the William H. Rogers Legislature Building, 725 Veterans Memorial Highway, Smithtown, New York on February 26, 2007.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Leg. Kate M. Browning, Chairperson
Leg. Ricardo Montano, Vice-Chairman
Leg. Vivian Vilorio-Fisher
Leg. John M. Kennedy, Jr.
Leg. Daniel Losquadro (Not Present)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

George Nolan, Counsel to the Legislature
Ian Barry, Assistant Counsel to the Legislature
Renee Ortiz, Chief Deputy Clerk
Ben Zwirn, Assistant Deputy County Executive
Jim Morgo, Commissioner of Economic Development and Workforce Housing
Ginny Suhr, Aide to Leg. Vilorio-Fisher
Bob Martinez, Aide to Leg. Montano
Linda Bay, Aide to Minority Leader
Paul Perillie, Aide to Majority Leader
Richard Koubek, Chairman of the Welfare to Work Commission
Kathy Ligouri, Vice Chair, Tutor Time
All other interested parties

MINUTES TAKEN BY:

Diana Kraus, Court Stenographer

(THE MEETING COMMENCED AT 11:47 AM)

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Good morning. We'll start the Labor, Workforce and Affordable Housing Committee. Today is Wednesday, February 21st. We'll start with the Pledge of Allegiance with Legislator Kennedy.

(SALUTATION)

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

I don't believe we have any cards, correct? Okay. We'll start with the presentation. We have Richard Koubek, Chairman of the Welfare to Work Commission.

DR. KUBEK:

I'll be joined by some others.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Yes, I was going to say if you want to bring everybody else up. He's going to do a presentation for us. Are we ready? First of all, I'd like to say thank you to everyone on that commission for the time and energy that you have spent on preparing this presentation. If you would like to begin and introduce everybody that's here. Thank you.

DR. KUBEK:

Good morning. My name is Richard Koubek and I am Chair of the Welfare to Work Commission of this Suffolk County Legislature. So I'll let my colleagues introduce themselves. We have two of the commissioners and one of the consultants who has helped us with this project.

MS. LIGOURI:

My name is Kathy Ligouri. I'm the Vice Chair of the Welfare to Work Commission.

MS. BOYD:

My name is Peggy Boyd. I'm with Family Service League and I'm a commission member also.

MR. BARNETT:

Peter Barnett, from Wyandanch Homes and Property Development Corporation, and I'm a consultant to the commission.

DR. KUBEK:

So thank you for this time, Legislator Browning. We did report to you in October that we were planning to hold these hearings, which we did hold on November 6th -- November 2nd and November 6th of last year. The focus of our commission, Welfare to Work Commission, is on people leaving welfare and we have special concern for those who have left welfare, typically earning ten dollars an hour, and who are trying to make ends meet in a very high cost part of the United States. So in a meeting with Commissioner DeMarzo last May, she pointed out the terrible shortage of affordable housing that you're aware of, we were aware of, and that is what prompted us to hold the hearings that we did.

The report that you've received is titled, as you can see, "Affordable For Whom? Creating Housing for Low and Moderate Income People in Suffolk County". In keeping with our concern we were especially attentive to the needs of folks who are earning under 80% of the areas median, which is roughly \$91,000 a year. So we're talking about our focus on folks, families of four, earning under \$71,000 a year. We were especially concerned, and these numbers are significant, about the 129,000 households in Suffolk who are earning under \$40,000 a year and the 54,000 households earning under \$20,000 a year, where are they going to live.

So we held the hearings on the two dates I indicated. We were really pleased at the turnout. One

hundred and forty people came to the two hearings. We had 47 researchers, government officials, representatives of non-governmental agencies and members of the public who provided nine hours of testimony. And out of that you have received this report that has three parts; an overview of the shortage that I know each of you is aware of; examples of innovative programs that I believe you are aware of; and then we have 15 recommendations for action by the County or the County prompting the towns and villages, and that's where we'll spent most of our time today.

Let me begin with the severity of the shortage. Again, this committee, we commend you for all that you have done in the area of calling attention to the shortage of affordable housing, so you're probably familiar with what I'm about to say. Our hearings opened with two specialists, Dr. Pearl Kamer, who is the Chief Economist of the Long Island Association, and Dr. David Muchnick of Sustainable Enterprises who authored the AFFLCIO study in 2003.

A couple of things they pointed out. Again, I think you know this. The median price of homes in Suffolk County doubled between 2000 and 2005. That, with the median price of homes as high as it is, roughly around \$400,000, you need an income of about \$125,000 dollars in order to afford a home in Suffolk County, a median home. And Dr. Kamer pointed out that 75% of Suffolk's households can't afford housing using that formula, 75%. That's shocking.

Even more shocking, I haven't had a chance to digest it, but the Long Island Index Report that came out three weeks ago indicated that only 2% of the housing on Long Island is affordable. I haven't really had a chance to digest that yet, but we'll work with Dr. Kamer's numbers and I want to repeat them. Seventy-five percent of the households on Long Island -- you know, using the standard, one-third of your income should go for housing. Seventy-five percent of the people in Suffolk households could not afford a median priced home.

The interesting thing in the hearings was that Dr. Kamer and Dr. Muchnick did not speak with one another before the hearings. They followed each other, they were the first two speakers, and each of them gave an estimate of the number of houses, ownership and rental, that they believe should be created in the next ten years. And Dr. Kamer recommended the need for 65,000 units and Dr. Muchnick recommended 69,500. And they had complex formulae they used to come up with those numbers, but they were very close. So that's kind of telling.

We were particularly concerned, as you can see in our report, about the plight of low wage workers, as I said in my opening remarks, who rely on rental units and we only have between 18 and 20% of our housing stock that's rental. And here again, I'll go to something that was pointed out by Dr. Muchnick. If you are earning under \$40,000 a year, using the formula one-third of your income, you shouldn't be paying any more than \$945 a month in rent. He came to the conclusion that there were only 48,000 apartments with rents below 945 a month. But the number of people who need them, households, are 129,000. These numbers are mind numbing but important. So you can see that enormous gap.

And the other thing that we -- I want to report from our hearing, which I know you are aware of, is that all of the experts talked about the brain drain, that we spend about \$15,000 a year in our public schools educating our kids and they are leaving. They are leaving in tremendous numbers. Between 2000 and 2005 the number of persons aged 25 to 34 dropped by 65,000. And Dr. Muchnick reported that in 2000 more than half of Suffolk County's young adults were still living with their parents -- much higher than other parts of the State. So we have a serious issue here. Our businesses, as Dr. Kamer said, can no longer find workers they need to grow their jobs. It explains why in the 12 months ending September, 2006, Long Island gained only 3,000 jobs. This is serious.

So what we did was particularly pay attention to those under 40,000 and here again we relied on two experts. We brought in the folks who had drafted the Vital Sign Study from Adelphi University, Dr. Eichberg and Dr. Suzanne Michael. They spoke very movingly with statistics about the awful choices that people have to make when you're earning under 40,000 the rent is so high and you have to choose between feeding your kids or paying the rent. And they called attention to what I

think you already know, a Long Island Care study last year found a quarter of a million Long Islanders hungry every day. It's hard to believe. Two-hundred and fifty-nine thousand people hungry every day, Long Island Cares. Catholic Charities study, which is not in the report, we just finished it last month, our parish outreach centers, we surveyed 67 of our parish outreach centers -- 11,000 to 12,000 requests for food per month. And when we ask our parish outreach people what's causing the request for food, it's the housing shortage.

So we have a serious crisis. It's hurting all income groups. And one of the people who testified was a parish outreach coordinator. Her name is Sister Ann Kathleen. She runs the St. John the Evangelist Outreach Center in Center Moriches. She said we just can't take this crisis to the talking stage that has been going on for five years. We have to have some action.

So I'd like to move quickly now into the part of the report we titled "Talk Into Action". And we did look at some government programs that are working, and I think we can as a County be proud of the fact, for example, that the Department of Social Services is virtually eliminated the use of motels for homeless people. I think we can take special pride, and we took a lot of time to look at the work of the Suffolk County Department of Economic Department and Workforce Housing, which we've outlined here and I'm sure you've heard, their fast tracking of affordable housing units in many creative programs that they have undertaken to resolve this crisis.

I think we can be proud of the Town of Huntington and its Take Back the Blocks Program. The Town of Islip, which is leading the pack on Long Island -- 3,000 units of housing they've created. They can be proud of that. In East Hampton, that's experimenting with a land trust, fascinating. And the Village of Patchogue that's creating a mixed income project for downtown revitalization.

What still needs to be done. Let's get to the recommendation. We did a little guesstimate of how many units have been created since the 1960's. We did the best we could because there is no Countywide inventory of affordable housing. But based up what we were able to ascertain from people who testified to us, before us and also websites and conversations, we came up with the shocking statistic that only about 10,000 units of affordable housing had been created in last 40 years. And we still need, again, between 65 and 69,000 units.

So with that, we have some recommendations and I would like to slow down the presentation now and these are recommendations for you. These are for the Legislature. We're hoping to present this report separately to the Health and Human Service Committee and we hope that you will find these recommendations useful. So let me now begin with the recommendations.

We divided the recommendations into three barriers that are standing in the way of affordable housing. Local opposition to affordable housing is one, the second one is the resistance to low income housing -- I'm sorry, the second one is cumbersome approval processes and the third is community opposition.

Let me begin with the first of these, local opposition. We have ten townships, we have 34 villages, and they control the zoning power, we know that. So what can the County do? Well, Dr. Kemer said it very well. She's understanding that there is resistance at the town and village level for mixed use for greater density, for apartments above stores, there is a lot of NIMBY opposition. Understanding this she said the following. She said I think there is the political will, your will, the government's will, to do this. What need to do is convince the public. So we have a series of recommendations for you to help to convince the public and, you know, I mean, this is the charge of your committee. You know that the poll's show 70% of Long Islanders recognize the need for affordable housing, but then when you ask them do you want it in your neighborhood, two-thirds say no, it's going to cause problems.

So how do we get over that sort of split screen thinking in the minds of most Long Islanders. We need the housing, but I don't want it near me. Well, one of the things we need to do is public education. So we're recommending that you provide some local funding and perhaps some State

funding or not-for-profit funding, but some funding to pick up two very good ad campaigns that have run already but they ran out of money. One is the LICAR Can You Afford to Live Without Them campaign. Terrific media. There was a television commercial as well as five or six print media ads. The other is the Long Island Association Next Generation Housing Campaign. Both very good. People saw them, people reacted to them. Both campaigns ran out of money. We're suggesting that perhaps the County could help to finance a revival of both of those campaigns.

Next recommendation. We heard this several times. Would somebody please call a bi-county summit of all the key players, sit down in one room for one day and address the barriers and how we can have a regional approach to this. So we're asking you, however you chose to do this, to call upon the two County Executive's, perhaps through the Long Island Planning Board, to have a one day summit that would challenge the misperceptions about affordable housing and foster the kinds of steps that need to be taken at the town and village and County level like inclusionary zoning, mandatory affordable housing, set asides, mixed use, density land use, accessory apartments, apartments above stores and smart grown downtown revitalization. You know what needs to be done. We need to get folks into the room to talk about how we do it and I think the Suffolk County Legislature is positioned to begin that process.

We would ask you to perhaps adopt a memorializing resolution to breathe life back into the Workforce Housing Incentive Act. It's been stalled for two years primarily by the Senate and we would like to see you do something to bring that back.

A very creative idea came out of Vision Long Island in their testimony. Why not create a Long Island Council of Governments, an advisory council that would provide nothing but communication among the ten supervisors and the 34 mayors and other interested parties, advisory role on how we can just communicate what needs to be done and how we do it.

And lastly, my piece, I'm looking sort of at the mega issues. Elaine Gross and Janet Hanson from the Long Island Housing Services, Elaine Gross from Erase Racism, both talked about one of the most significant barriers to affordable housing, and that's racism. And so we're asking you in any way that you can to call upon the Regional Planning Board to encourage the adoption of what are called analysis of impediments. To get Federal CDBG money you are required to do these analyses and basically the municipalities are asked to identify what's standing in the way of affordable housing and overcoming racism in your township. Anything you could do to encourage those analyses of impediments would be wonderful.

And lastly, Miss Gross was very, very passionate about the need to adequately fund the Human Rights Commission to enforce the newly adopted Fair Housing Law that you voted for last year.

So those are some of the mega issues. I'm going to now pass the baton over to Kathy who will talk about some additional issues under this barrier.

MS. LIGOURI:

We also ask that we have additional State education aid. There's a widespread misconception that affordable housing, particularly rental units, generates many additional children into the school districts. And the Rutgers University Center of Urban Policy reported that a four bedroom home generates 1.12 children, while the 1,171 Avalon rental units on Long Island generate .18 children and the 1,198 other Nassau/ Suffolk affordable units generate .25 children.

We ask that the Legislature call upon New York State Government officials to adopt a Massachusetts statute that provides additional State education. This would make the school districts whole that accept affordable housing units. This kind of legislation has been introduced by Assemblyman Marc Alessi.

We also ask that there be an affordable housing inventory. We would want to conduct an accurate inventory of the actual number of owner occupied rental affordable housing units that have been

created and that remain affordable in each of the County's ten towns and the 34 incorporated villages.

We would like a needs assessment created. We ask that you urge the Long Island Regional Planning Board to conduct an affordable housing needs assessment in all of the towns and villages with specific target markets for each community. And to continue to make the affordability permanent we ask that you encourage caps on the values of homes for the consumer price index and a requirement that the owner return excess profits into an affordable housing fund with deeds, covenants and restrictions and resale stipulations that remain affordability -- that maintain affordability.

DR. KOUBEK:

So we will now go the next barrier and Peter Barnett will talk about cumbersome approval processes and what we're recommending here.

MR. BARNETT:

We're on page sixteen. What I would like to do is just tack on a few very quickly. The fast tracking and the expedited approval process from the County Department of Health, Public Works and the Division of Real Estate. This should be kept in place, it should be expanded, they should be encouraged to continue working together. When they work together it moves the housing quickly. People get the houses up, it saves cost. We recommend that very strongly.

The towns and villages, it goes back to the idea of this summit. Bring these people together to share information and creative approaches to housing. Islip has done some very creative things, out in the Hamptons they have done some very creative things. We should get these towns together, let them start sharing what they have done and come up with the ideas on how they are going to do it.

The next point is about each Legislator should identify sites in his or her district that could take denser rental and ownership. I think you Legislators, you're in touch with your districts the best. You should be looking around and saying where do we have room to do some more of this housing, either rental or home ownership. I think that should be brought to the title of the County and let's move on that.

The next part is about land trust. That has happened out in East Hampton and was just touched on lightly, but we need to make sure affordable housing stays affordable. It should either done by land trust or permanent affordable housing with deed restrictions. These things have to be looked at to make sure that the housing doesn't come back into the affordable -- unaffordable process.

And the next part I'd like to bring up is something you're about to touch on, that is 72-h. 72-h is how the County transfers land to non-profits for building of affordable housing. I have done 20 houses under 72-h. I have gotten land from the County, I have gotten the State to give me the money to put up the housing, and we have 27 houses now where we take in women and children from the shelters. We help them get educated, get a good job, and get out and be on their own. The 72-h program is crucial.

There's a proposal to increase the median from 80 to 120. I have to say I would be totally against that. If anything, the medium should be going to 60, 50 and 40% of affordable. In other words, when the housing people, the non-profit takes the free County housing, they are saying they need to charge even more money to make it work. I don't think that's necessary. I am running my housing program based upon SSP. That's \$1,120 I get per month from the Department of Social Services for a mother and three children and I can make that housing work. I don't think you have to increase it. If anything, I'd like to see ways of bringing that housing down so that more people who are making less money could get into this.

DR. KOUBEK:

Just before we go on, I just want to call attention to one piece in this section that needs to be re-emphasized. A lot of the testimony came from the Department of Economic Development and Workforce Housing. They are doing a great job and so we're urging you to continue to support everything they are doing with the transfer of development rights, sanitary flow credits, the creation of sewage treatment facilities and funding and support for the acquisition of new properties. It's an exciting department and, you know, they are up against the same barriers the rest of us are facing, but they live it every day and they really have made in what, the three years they've been around, progress. Let's go now to the third barrier which is resistance to housing for low income people which is the crux of our report.

MS. BOYD:

Thank you very much for having us come in this morning. Dick sent out a letter a couple of months ago to our town supervisors and the first line that he used was that we understand there's probably no greater challenge being a town supervisor than to back affordable housing projects.

That said, we nearly have 130,000 households earning less than \$40,000 of income. That's tremendous. That's said, what we would like this County Legislature to do is call upon our State officials and work towards the creation of a 421 tax credit program whereby developers who develop rental units are able to take advantage of those tax credits. You know, for that opportunity, 20% set aside would be set aside for affordable rental units. That's critical and crucial at this point that our developers recognize that there is a way in the way of going about that is like the 72 program or for the 421 tax credit program.

In addition, you could call upon the State, and this is the key time, during the budget process, and ask our State Legislators to support things such as neighborhood preservation funds. That's critical to communities in Suffolk County.

One of the things we ask that we can continue to maintain is any time there's a utilization of Federal or State dollars to support the creation of affordable owner occupied housing, we believe there should be a mandated accessory apartment for low income renters with the guarantee of permanent affordable for the rental unit as recommended by, as just reported before, Wyandanch Homes and Properties and places like Property Development Corporation.

Our task force came up with many ways to look at much what you're dealing with every day. And that said, we would like to continue task force work. Some of that would be, and I think it's an extremely important piece, when a family of four, a mother and three kids, earns more than \$24,000 in Suffolk County, she's cut off from all assistance. That's food stamps right down to any kind of assistance and the rental subsidy, which is key. That said, the creation of a rental subsidy program similar to that of Section 8, you know, programs in Suffolk County and -- under HUD -- needs to be created for people transitioning from welfare to work. That's critical. Again, there's 130,000 families earning less than \$40,000. The incentive to go to work really becomes a disincentive when they earn \$24,000 and they can't afford to make it in Suffolk County.

We also ask that you provide and create a task force to provide additional funding, and the task force to explore whether or not additional funding through the Department of Social Services for supportive case management programs for the very low income families. You hear it all the time. You know, Kate, I know in particular we have our fair share of low income renters. Those families need immediate support. They need the support not only to maintain their permanent housing but so that they can be successful and continue to grow. So that happens through case management.

We urge you to urge Suffolk County Department of Social Services to continue to look at ways to provide case management services and supportive services. So many agencies do it throughout Suffolk County -- Wyandanch Homes and Properties, Community Development Corporation, Family Service League and Community Housing Innovations are just some of the programs that provide aftercare to our lower -- to families in particular who were once in our shelter system costing too

much and now in a community and we need them to continue to be successful and not recycle back into poverty.

Another piece of a task force would be to create -- that we would create some kind of look and see at a rent control law to stabilize rent. When you look at the market rents in Suffolk County and what a low income family gets, we wouldn't be able to rehouse the homeless without SSP. Even with SSP there is too far and too few rental units available to families, so we urge that we look at some kind of rent stabilization program for low income and moderate incomes as was recommended by Community Housing Innovations.

DR. KOUBEK:

So that's a summary of the 461 pages of transcript from the testimony and many, many hours of the commission meeting with consultants, reviewing the test of the report, and then last week voting the report that you've received. With two final points. You're in a position to literally have a bully pulpit on this -- on the County Legislature, and we urge you to use it to keep this issue going. And most importantly, do whatever you can working with the County Economic Development and Workforce Housing Department to expedite the process. So at this point that concludes our formal testimony we would take some questions.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Stick around, we have a couple of questions. I'd like to ask you one. You are talking about the Town of Huntington and the Take Back the Blocks Program. Can you explain that a little bit more? It says the town purchases homes from absentee landlords?

DR. KOUBEK:

Well, I live in Huntington and I'm somewhat familiar with it. I wish I could give you the kind of detail you need. I would suggest, Legislator Browning, you speak with Doug Aloise, who is one of the presenters and his name is in here. But I will tell you what I know. They're using funding from -- partly from an affordable housing -- they have a creative, my town has created a fund and they require that builders who ask for density provide x percent of affordable units or contribute to this fund. There is about two-and-a-half million dollars now in the fund. So some of that is being used, as well as County funds, to, in the case of one building, purchase the building and then rehab it. But there are number of places. Then they have a committee that is overseeing this.

MS. BOYD:

Actually, I sit on the committee, Dick.

DR. KOUBEK:

Oh, I defer. Go ahead.

MS. BOYD:

What happened was the Town of Huntington identified anywhere from 10 to 15 properties that were not in good shape and were really community concerns. And looking at that, the hope would be that we could find a way to develop a rental and home ownership initiative for about 10 to 15 properties in Huntington. The funding, as Dick was saying, is -- a lot of it is coming from our -- I think we have 2.5 million --

DR. KOUBEK:

Roughly.

MS. BOYD:

-- in a housing trust fund along with some County dollars. And the Take Back the Block, again, was bringing all sorts of community residents together looking at those properties, finding a way to improve the quality of life in that community because oftentimes those properties are, you know, an eyesore, and create rental/home ownership opportunity.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. Currently I have a list of properties in North Bellport that the landlords still own them, they are boarded up, and so we're trying to figure out a way to take care of that problem. And I know what you were saying about when -- like in the Mastic/Shirley area. People have had it. The neighborhood road, they are trying to revitalize and the community are strongly opposed to apartments because of the fact that I have had to deal with so many code enforcement problems, overcrowded homes, houses that are divided into illegal apartments, that, you know, when you are talking about trying to convince people the need for affordable housing, it is hard to convince them when they see what they are seeing on a daily basis with problem homes.

MS. BOYD:

And that's what's really wonderful about the Take Back the Block. The mix between an owner and a rental, there is that extra piece of it is not an absentee landlord, it's somebody right on site there. So those houses that you're concerned about in your community could be a very similar model that we're moving towards and have already identified -- I think now six properties now in Huntington that we're looking to move forward on.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

I believe, Vivian, you have some questions.

DR. KOUBEK:

If I could just make one other response, Legislator Browning. There was a great moment in the hearing when Doug Aliose had just concluded his testimony and it became clear that there wasn't communication among the town Planning Directors. We suggested, and I understand that the Department of Economic Development and Workforce Housing is doing this, that something as simple as that, getting the Planning Directors to get together to share these kinds of ideas is part of what we are talking about in terms of a regional approach and encouraging communication. And it was just an unbelievable moment when, for example, Eugene Murphy, who has done so much in Islip, he is so busy doing what he is doing in Islip, he doesn't really communicate with Doug Aloise. I know that at the time Marion Zucker had reported that they were beginning to set up breakfast meetings, I think, or lunch meetings, but that's the kind of thing we need to do, so that your town knows what our town is doing. Sorry.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Go ahead, Vivian.

LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:

I'm really proud of you guys.

DR. KOUBEK:

That you. You helped create us.

LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:

I had put this group together, and, you know, sometimes when the initiating Legislator is no longer the Chair of that committee or part of the group it falls apart, but your leadership has really kept it together and you continue to do good things.

And as I heard you speaking I really have to commend our Commissioner of Economic Development and Workforce Housing, Mr. Morgo, Jim Morgo, who during our activities as the Workforce Housing Commission, Jim had informed us of many of the things that you're talking about and educated us as to the statistics regarding the fear of school districts having apartments or affordable housing units. And Jim had shown us time after time, but what you're doing is continuing to educate the public and educate school districts. You know, Harbor Hills had such a big problem with the Millennium -- am I right, Jim, that was the one?

COMMISSIONER MORGO:

Half Hollow.

LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:

I had a real back and forth with a member of that Board of Education regarding this, or not the board, maybe it was just a parents group that had gotten together. And thanks goodness I was armed with the information that Jim Morgo had given us regarding the low impact on school districts. That's really important so thank you for continuing to get that message out.

Peter, I had a question for you regarding the 72-h. Actually not a question but thank you for your testimony regarding the 72-h's because Marion Zucker came and spoke to this community last month and asked us not to support that particular bill, that we don't need to use County funds and County land and go up that high, that we need to keep it for the people who need it the most. So thank you for that.

Dick, regarding educating the public. Last week I met with Kate {Poe} and some of the other people from the LION group and I think that we're putting together groups that, and you know you talked about parish outreach groups, etcetera. I think what LION is trying to do is get all of those churches, synagogues, you know, fellowships, whatever, get them together to really have a concerted effort with the affordable housing. And they come from different communities, they come from different villages and towns and so I think that LION's model is a very powerful model and I hope that we follow-up on that.

Kathy, you spoke about Marc Alessi's bill. Do you know if there's a companion bill in the Senate?

MS. LIGOURI:

I don't. I don't know.

LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:

Okay. Because I'll tell you, I missed my friends DiNapoli and Balboni. You know, they had the wonderful bill on inclusionary zoning and it didn't go anywhere because of our Senators responding to NIMBYism in the towns. And -- well, the towns were calling it home rule, but it was NIMBYism in the towns, and so it hasn't moved. When you talk about Marc Alessi's bill, is it following -- Marc Alessi's bill is on the Massachusetts model, isn't it?

DR. KOUBEK:

Yes, it is.

LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:

Which is what Jim had educated us about quite a while ago. If we're going to ask districts to do this than we need State incentives or State monies to help them out. But you don't know if there is a Senate companion?

DR. KOUBEK:

We don't, now. And ironically the statistics suggest that they probably won't need the help, but we don't -- it's that --

LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:

Jim is shaking his head no, that there's not.

DR. KOUBEK:

There is no Senate version, okay.

LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:

Okay. You know, I think that there was a needs assessment done by a bill that was introduced by Legislator Schneiderman. I think Rutgers did a needs assessment and I haven't seen that report yet. I'm not sure -- it's out but I haven't read it yet, I haven't seen it. Some people are still sending

things to my old office and somehow I'm not getting them in my office yet.

By the way, we have to continue to advocate for our different not-for-profit agencies. You talked about parish outreach and people going to food pantries and there has recently been another, I think, draconian rule by the Health Department about managers in each food pantry and having to go for training. And I'm telling you, I'm ready to go and help run one of the food pantries in my district now because their volunteers have to put in so many hours for this new training. You know, Meals on Wheels went through this with the Health Department so we're going to have to advocate there. We're going to have to advocate with grants. One of my food pantries decided not to take my grant anymore because it was such an onerous task for the \$500 I was giving them, or 1,000, whatever it was.

I think we have to look at all of those transitional services. I think young people aren't leaving here only because of affordable housing. I think it's because it's affordable housing and the ownership of a car because we don't have an infrastructure for transportation and not having downtowns that are vital enough. Young people want to be someplace where there is some kind of action where they don't roll up the sidewalks, or lack of sidewalks, you know. They want to be someplace where there is vitality.

So I think, you know, you continue to do great work and we need to look at all the transitional services. I don't know if any of you -- this is WNPR in the Morning, but I heard a story this morning because the Congress is going to be looking on the expansion of health -- health benefits for children, and Georgia has run out of money already for the health benefits for children. I'm forgetting the name of the term, I'm sorry. But in Colorado there was a heartbreaking story of a woman who was working her way up but she just reached the point that was the cutoff point of her income, so her children now don't have health insurance. We see that -- I mean, that was one of the biggest issues we faced when I was part of the Welfare to Work Committee, is that people try to do better in their lives, and as they do better, they lose services. We have to find a way to transition and I think you were talking about that, too, helping them to create that transition.

Thank you very much for the work you continue to do.

DR. KOUBEK:

Thank you. On the Kate {Poe} reference, LION, I'm very pleased to learn, I'm putting my Catholic Charities hat on, we do a lot of advocacy through my public policy office of Catholic Charities regarding affordable housing because this is what our outreach people are telling us is the core of the problem for the working poor. And LION began as an east end, as a North Fork effort.

LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:

I went to their Riverhead meeting.

DR. KOUBEK:

Yeah, it was great. They are now going Island wide and charities will be meeting with them in March to see what we can do to bring in Nassau and Suffolk efforts so that this can be an Island wide effort which is very good. They've done really good stuff.

LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:

That's what they try to do, yeah.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

When you're talking about Catholic Charities, that was a question I had for because I know there's a housing development with Catholic Charities in my district. What's the waiting list right now for seniors?

DR. KOUBEK:

Two to three years. For the affordable senior units two to three years, yeah.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

So it's gone down. Last time I heard it was five. I believe Rick has a question.

LEG. MONTANO:

Good afternoon to all of you. Thank you for coming. I'll try and be brief. I read while you were making the presentation. I read the recommendations in the report. A lot of what's in here I think, you know, has been the subject in the last three years that I have been in the Legislature, this is -- we have been talking about this here in the Legislature and other entities. I don't think you can talk about it enough because I do agree that it's the number one problem facing the Long Island economy.

I just had a couple of technical questions, though, with respect to some of the recommendations. The first one you highlight that Suffolk County, unlike counties in Montgomery, Maryland or Fairfax County, which I'm familiar with, they have been able to make great strides in creating affordable housing; we haven't. And I'm just wondering do you know anything about what gives the county over there the ability to influence housing legislatively and what are we lacking here and how could we somehow look at the County being able to assert itself more in terms of acquiring the kinds of power that these -- and when I say power I mean the ability to influence something in a positive way, either through legislation or something of that mode. What's the difference between here and Fairfax? Because Fairfax, I understand, has a population similar to Suffolk. It has demographics similar to Suffolk, yet it's been able to do things that apparently we're not doing. Can anyone speak to that?

MR. BARNETT:

Density becomes a big issue and the use of what the land is. Like when you're -- some of the towns, if you have by 40 by 100, they won't let you building anything on it. You know, if you have a 50 by 100 they are very restrictive in what size of house and stuff you can put on it. So if we could increase the density, you can increase the amount of affordable housing.

LEG. MONTANO:

We have that debate just about every week at the Ways and Means when we talk about adjacent properties that are 50 by 100 that people are buying. We're told that the reason that this property is being sold to adjacent owner is because it can't be built on.

MR. BARNETT:

Right.

LEG. MONTANO:

And, you know, I have some problems with that in terms of not all of them, but some of the size of the parcels. Now in Fairfax, for instance, who controls the density? Is it done by the town, is it done by the county?

MR. KOUBEK:

I will tell you, it was 20 year battle. I'll refer more to Montgomery. I'm more familiar with Montgomery. They are very similar, both counties, to us and to each other. They have built much more affordable housing, maybe ten times as much as we have. They are growing economically faster than we are. They are racially integrated at much higher levels than we are. And here is the key -- certainly in Montgomery, which I'm familiar with. It took 20 years for the County to acquire County wide zoning powers and that's how they did it.

LEG. MONTANO:

And that's really the answer in a nutshell.

DR. KOUBEK:

Yes.

LEG. MONTANO:

Okay. In terms of a lot of the recommendations are based on our ability to use the bully pulpit, so to speak, and I think you used that term in there, and I see that a lot. I think we have tried to do that. I think it's not only us but you and the advocacy groups. And you also urge us to, you know, urge our elected State Legislators and I'm like well, I've been three years, I'm pretty much in contact with our State Legislators. Aren't they -- the implication, and I'm sure it's not meant this way, is that well, maybe they are not doing enough and I don't think that's the case. I mean, unless there's anyone out there or, you know, I'll ask you. Who's not advocating properly for the kinds of reforms that we need to make Long Island a more sustainable economy, to make sure that, you know, the kids aren't leaving, that we don't have the brain drain, the housing market is not going through the roof, and, you know, bringing these problems. Because I'm one that feels that, yes, property values have moved up, but when you factor in the young people that are leaving, at some point that trend is going to reverse. We're going to have great housing stock but no one wants to buy it.

Let's talk frankly. You want us to urge our Legislators. We've passed numerous memorializing resolutions. We had Sense of Legislature resolutions when I first came on board. The DiNapoli/Balboni bill, I think we addressed that through a memorializing resolution. Neither of them are there at the moment, but someone will pick that up. But you keep asking us to urge our Legislators. Well, who are we urging that -- who needs more urging than someone else? If you are prepared to, you know, address that. Go ahead, name names. I could care less.

DR. KOUBEK:

Well, I'll start and anyone else can jump in. I would suggest that in the area of housing -- let's case study DiNapoli/Balboni or we'll have to rename it because they are both now in other jobs, but the Workforce Housing Incentive Act. I think all of the members of the Assembly from Long Island voted for that and it passed the Assembly.

LEG. MONTANO:

That's what I understand.

DR. KOUBEK:

And three of the Senators on Long Island supported it.

LEG. MONTANO:

In Suffolk or in --

DR. KOUBEK:

Senator Trunzo in Suffolk and Senator Fuschillo in Nassau and of course Senator Balboni. The other Senators really dug in on the issue of home rule and as Senator Balboni told me two years ago, the village mayors, they have some sort of an umbrella --

LEG. MONTANO:

The Association of Mayors?

DR. KOUBEK:

Association of Mayors. They became quite distraught about it even though there were many, many appeals and attempts to explain that there would still be home rule. But those six Senators really were able to block it in the Senate. And, you know, we're not sure if it has any feet left, but it's the kind of public education that we need to keep raising, you know. You need to have a required -- I was at a meeting recently and somebody said you can do all of these things but in the end if you don't require an affordable set aside, nothing's going to get done. It's got to be done by law. Somebody has got to say this is what is required. And that's what Balboni did. It was a small little piece. It may not have built thousands of units, but it was a step in the direction that other states have taken of saying at the State level this is required by law, you must do it.

LEG. MONTANO:

So, again, if I'm hearing you correctly, and certainly from where I'm coming from I think it comes down to jurisdiction. That entity that has the jurisdiction and has the political courage to make the decisions to increase the density, to maybe look at the issue from a different perspective in terms of, yeah, we understand that we represent the communities, we understand that there is community opposition. Anytime everybody agrees -- I think you said 70% of the people agree that we need housing until it is on their block and then nobody agrees.

DR. KOUBEK:

Well, two-thirds don't. Two-thirds say not near me.

LEG. MONTANO:

Not near me, okay.

MR. BARNETT:

Could I just jump in for a second? The Department of Health has a tremendous -- Suffolk County Department of Health has a tremendous impact upon building, and that might be a way of trying to get the County -- the towns and the villages to come on board. Because if the Health Department says you can't build here or you need other things, then they are stymied.

LEG. MONTANO:

Correct.

MR. BARNETT:

So, I mean, it is a bit of a trade-off on, you know, what the Health Department says on the sewage and what the town or the County or anybody wants to build. So, I mean, that might be another way of backing in to --

LEG. MONTANO:

Right, use the back door approach with the power that we have over the granting of permits to try and get a little more flexibility in terms of what the developers are doing.

MR. BARNETT:

That's right.

LEG. MONTANO:

I agree with you. Go ahead, I'm sorry. Did you want to?

MR. BARNETT:

That was all.

LEG. MONTANO:

No, I think your partner there wanted to say anything.

MS. BOYD:

In terms of, you know, housing, it's always a town issue. It always comes down to the local. We're oftentimes told when we go to Legislators you have to go back to the town. Or we go to the State, you have to go back to the town. I think what's key is really stand behind the Legislators and, you know, the Legislators standing behind the towns that are doing some creative stuff, whether that's cross endorsing, you know, with both parties standing behind the town supervisor that says yes, we'll do something -- even if it's small and whatever we can do to support those town supervisors.

LEG. MONTANO:

I think you said my town, Islip, has been in the forefront of --

MS. BOYD:

Absolutely.

LEG. MONTANO:

-- of building affordable housing and other towns have not even made a dent, and I'm not going to name names on that but I think we know who they are.

Another issue you mention is each Legislator should identify sites, you know, and that's great. But is there, and maybe this is something more for the Commissioner of Economic Development and Housing. My understanding was that we were developing or we have developed an inventory of affordable -- of available properties that can be used for affordable housing purposes in, you know, throughout the County. Was that -- is that something that has been moving along? I know it's addressed in your report, but it gives me the impression like I need to go out there and, you know, go up and down the streets in my district and I thought this was already being done.

DR. KOUBEK:

I would again, like you, defer to Commissioner Morgo. But my understanding was the town supervisors were asked to provide properties and I think the number was somewhat in excess of 200 properties that were identified or lots. I think this recommendation would be to put a little juice under that by asking each Legislator perhaps to identify where -- do I have any of those 200 units or properties, you know, are they in my district. And if they are, what can I do, as Legislator Montano or Legislator Browning, to develop those properties.

LEG. MONTANO:

Well, I have -- in fact, I just induced last month, I have two properties in my district that were Brownfield properties. One is Liberty Plating, the other is MacKenzie Chemical. Two years ago we introduced resolutions to have the County acquire those for back taxes. They were issues with clean-up, but we've moved along progressively. And, you know, on one of these properties the town has extensive plans because the town owns adjacent property and they want to build affordable housing. There are some minor things -- is that going to put a dent in the affordable housing problem? No. It's a small, little niche. But if we can get 20 or 30 units there, you know, it will be a higher density and it works a long way. But, again, my issue was that I thought that the County was in the process of doing that and you're saying that it is.

DR. KOUBEK:

It has identified the properties, yeah.

LEG. MONTANO:

Okay. Where is it going from there? Do you know?

MR. KOUBEK:

I do not know.

LEG. MONTANO:

Okay. Thank you.

MR. KOUBEK:

In terms, Legislator Montano, your concern about some of the resistance, you know, if I were asked what could you do now, you know, in the immediate future what could this committee do, I would say do something however you think it best done to convene this housing summit. I think if we get the stakeholders into the room, get the Senators into the room, invite them in and begin conversations so that we can start to deal with some of the resistance and look at some proactive things that can be done. That would be a first step, convene a summit.

LEG. MONTANO:

I don't disagree, but I'm one not to -- I don't like to reinvent the wheel. We've actually -- my

understanding is there have been a number of summits, a number of reports. In fact, I was cosponsor of one of the -- the report that Legislator Fisher referred to from Rutgers. You know, we have done that. I'm not saying we shouldn't do more, but there have been in the last three years I have been in the Legislature a number of meetings, high profile, about the problem and unfortunately we're still talking about it. I don't see that we're making a dent. I certainly agree that we should.

Is there a particular structure that you're looking for because you talk about of council of government. Are you looking to set up a -- you know, have a summit and then have something come out of it sort of like an offshoot of the Long Island Regional Planning Board? Because you keeping asking us to urge the State and urge the Regional Planning Board. Well, we create them, they should be responsive to our needs, and you know --

DR. KOUBEK:

That's why we're asking you to do that.

LEG. MONTANO:

All right. I'm not going to belabor this. Thank you very much.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. Legislator Kennedy has a couple of questions also.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Thank you, Madam chair. To the members of the committee I would thank you. Although I'm new to this committee I guess I'm not new to the issue. I had an opportunity to read your report over the weekend. Some of the things, like my colleagues have said, I guess are the things that we've kind of echoed as individual Legislators and collectively over the course of the time that I have been here. And Legislator Montano and I specifically have talked about some of those issues we look at in the Ways and Means Committee, particularly when we're looking at parcels that we as an entity are giving to adjoining property owners and what we can do to kind of be a little proactive to have those properties be available possibly for affordable housing development.

But I guess my comments and my questions are going to go to just a couple of things. One I guess I'll give you an observation, if you will, about, you know, the nuts and bolts about, in my opinion, how to go ahead and promote the affordable housing initiative. A lot of it gets down to, I think, some of the mechanics that folks don't necessarily want to talk to. Suing is one of the things that's preeminent. We talk about it consistently. We'll probably talk a little bit more about how we continue to go ahead and consent to connections to sewer districts and how we might be able to utilize that as a bit of a carrot and stick approach for developers that are looking to connect.

But also as we promote for expansion, and this is something that we are doing up in the Smithtown area. Legislator Nowick and I are promoting expansion of Sewer District 6 for the purpose of promoting connection to Main Street in Kings Park in Smithtown, for the promotion of expansion of the downtowns from an economic perspective, with the added impetus of accessory apartment development on second story. And Commissioner Morgo and his staff have been critical in helping with this.

I think as you look to promote affordable housing, I think you've got to package it in a broader fashion so that it works collectively where you are looking to bring it in. And if you are doing that in an economic center, if you can get the benefit of promoting the economic development and the influx or expansion of the affordable housing, now you've got an initiative that may be palatable to all and doesn't stand on it's own only as the affordable housing issue.

Also by doing that I believe what you do is, is you tap into some of our capital funding programs that help to make what is a large investment in capital viable because suing is not cheap, as you know. And for developers to go ahead and be attracted and get the density, they also have to have some

investment. But if some of it is offset by tapping into our Capital Programs, then maybe the economics work and they go towards what you are talking about, Mr. Barnett, which is keeping the unit cost down so that a developer -- we have to do this in the real world, which is developers are in the business to build in order to go ahead and get a return on investment. Should we facilitate, you know, tremendous amounts of return for them? Perhaps not, but at the -- it will never get off the ground unless we make it economically viable for those who do this to be able for come in and voluntarily participate. There is development opportunities out there. There is a finite number of resources. They are not going move to these types of initiatives if we can't at least present to them some return on investment.

So as we continue to focus on this issue and advocate, that's one of the areas that I encourage you as a group to continue to look at to do something for the purposes of packaging and partnering and looking at how to bring developers in. It's ironic when we talk about this as far as assembly of a council of governments and the fact that there have been groups that have been brought together to go ahead and advocate this.

I'd almost say to you we ought to be doing a council of civic associations, home owners association and other groups that traditionally will grab the ears of Senators and other elected officials as we're sitting here on one side saying we've got crying need, we're hearing about children leaving, we're hearing about developers who can't or businesses who can't keep talent, market talent, have talent. Then we have folks on the other side saying don't you ever consider building something like that in our neighborhood or we are going to ride you out on a rail. Give them the opportunity to go ahead and speak out and air their concerns and dissuade some of what you are talking about as far as impact to the school district or other negatives that may be out there that are folks who are here now with a vested interest may see as affordable housing eroding their investment.

Finally, the other thing that I think is unique and I'd like to see promoted and I'm aware of it just by virtue of that I dealt with for 15 years, so you read the bar journals and things like that and you know that other state do these land trusts. I'd like to hear more about East Hampton's land trust because we can do Suny Mae and we can do FHA203 programs and all the other things until the cows come home, and in four, five, six, seven years the dirt is going to appreciate beyond what's accessible and affordable. Only when you separate the dwelling from the dirt and keep the dirt in collective ownership and give folks the opportunity to have some investment gain from the structure but hold the land in common ownership, will we be able to continue to grow, host and promote affordable housing communities.

MR. KOUBEK:

Do you want to speak on the land trust, Peter?

MR. BARNETT:

Just to talk to you about land trust for a second. I think it's banks now have gotten on board with it and that's made a big difference because the banks now see the land trust as a viable way of going and I think it is the only way you ensure permanent, you know, flexibility and affordability. I know Jim has a whole bunch of deed restrictions he likes to use a lot and I'm all for that, too, but I think the land trust in the long run might work out better. But that's a little fight me and Jim have periodically.

LEG. KENNEDY:

And it's valuable, let's face it. I mean, you've got to go ahead and use the tools that you have in this arena and deed restrictions and covenants and declining return, you know, associated with Suny Mae and some of the other things with the affordable housing partnership have value to them. But, you know, a family who's looking to get in may stay in a residence 10, 15, 20 years and the stock can turn over. That's long gone are the restrictions and things like that and the appreciation comes to those folks. You don't want to punish them but we facilitated getting them in in the first instance and we want to promote the stock for entry level and not take it out of inventory. You don't find, you know, many starter homes built here in Suffolk County any more at all.

MR. BARNETT:

The other point I'd just like to reemphasize is the idea that when we do the affordable housing, we help this family, it's making \$87,000, buy their house, if we could attach a rental unit to that house so that they have to in a sense share their good fortune with another family, I think that is another way to go. That having the rental units get attached to the affordable housing, that also makes that community welcome in somebody who's not making quite as much as them, but it also is going to give them housing. And that's another possibility we could do, is attach rental housing to our affordable housing

LEG. KENNEDY:

I think the idea is great. I think what you need to do, though, and I've not heard of this, maybe it has been done. Two things. One, it is simple mathematics as far as the additional square footage that gets constructed and the cost to development and the cost that would go ahead and be offset for the developer. And two, you are talking about ten town and 13 village -- or 31 village Planning Directors that you would have to sit and, you know, assemble and put it flat out, will you buy into this, is this something that is palatable and can be worked through in a particular municipality or not.

MR. BARNETT:

There's one being worked right now in Huntington, so.

MS. BOYD:

I think the Take Back the Block initiative is hopefully a pilot that will be done in the other towns.

LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:

Actually, it has been done with the -- planning the affordable housing with the rental unit component. That has been done and I think that that was part of the beauty of the -- there was a tour for people to take of affordable housing projects throughout Suffolk County and that was one of the models that has been done.

And, by the way, infrastructure improvements, even before we had a Workforce Housing Commission, while Jim was still at the Long Island Housing Partnership, Dave Bishop had introduced legislation about four years ago where infrastructure improvements were permitted on a sliding scale. You know, depending on the percentage of affordable housing set aside. And as far as sewer hookups, we were very excited in the Affordable Housing Commission regarding the Southampton project that we were looking at because there was -- am I saying -- it was Westhampton?

COMMISSIONER MORGO:

Westhampton Beach.

LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:

Southampton Beach. Okay. Anyway, Jim knows about that. Tim knows about that I should say. And we were very excited. But then the locality didn't accept the plan and we really had a lot in place with that. So, you know, we're really -- we really have a lot of great things in place in Suffolk County. And I believe in the deed restrictions as well because they are written into how the deed moves and that does keep the cost down. I think that it was a model that was presented to us by the Long Island Housing Partnership when I was on the Commission.

And now that, you know, the CDC is also working on a different -- a number of different packages and products to help people move into the housing market. We're looking at the combination of home ownership and rentals, we're looking at zoning that would allow for, you know, the multi-use where you have apartments over retail -- Port Jefferson is a wonderful model. Port Jefferson, an upscale place, but there are lots of apartments over the retail. What's happened, Mayor Garant was very excited about this, and now the new Mayor of Port Jefferson is as well. It's eyes on the town.

When you have people who live in the town, and young people like to live in Port Jeff Village because they can come downstairs and they are in the midst of a lot of action and that's what I was speaking to before. That's how you keep young people.

In any case, we are doing a lot of what you just said, John. I think what we have to do, though, is keep having these public hearings and have the council, and I think you are right, we should include other people. I think we should have all the kids who have just graduated college who can't come back here be part of that council so that people see that that somebody is us. That somebody is our kids, it's not them, it's us. You know, as Martin Luther King said, when you say somebody that somebody is me. And that's how we have to look at affordable housing.

Kids who are just graduating college are in that affordable housing not -- you know, we use workforce housing, but they are in the affordable housing range. They can't make their way into the home ownership or even rental, you know? They have to live with three other young people to afford that \$1,400 a month and, you know, utilities.

MR. KOUBEK:

One of the advertisements that the LICAR group put together, can you afford to live without me, you may recall, Legislator Fisher, was kids in their caps and gowns. And it was can you afford to live without me -- you just paid for their education, through 12th grade and then four years of college.

LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:

And they had that other piece that Jimmy Rogers was in, the painters --

MR. KOUBEK:

That was the TV piece and they were disappearing. Yeah, the painter disappeared and the bus driver disappeared.

Legislator Kennedy, on your very important point about the opposition, I want to return again to the idea of a summit. They should be at the summit. And also, to the first recommendation, we need to run those ads again because those ads were really having an impact. The Long Island Association had a finite amount of money; it ran out. LICAR had a finite amount of money; we ran out. Somebody has to bankroll those ads so that the civic associations will begin to see, just as Legislator Viloria-Fisher said, this is us we're talking about. This is our kids, these are our workers, these are our neighbors that we're talking about.

I think when you begin to change that overall atmosphere through -- with public service ads perhaps, just perhaps the civic groups might be a little more reluctant to immediately and viscerally say I don't want that in my neighborhood, because it's our kids.

LEG. KENNEDY:

And my point there also is I think what I found, as all of us find, that where we may encounter, and I don't want to mischaracterize civic groups, because civic groups play a very important role in what we all do. But so many times knowledge is power. When you give the opportunity to any group, any individual, any group who may be opposed to a particular idea or strategy or notion, the opportunity to have a voice, to have a discussion and to go ahead and hear an exchange of ideas, there may be movement, there may be some progress.

To not at least give a forum or allow for an exchange in my opinion only promotes this notion that it's them that are doing this to us and so we have no choice but to stop them from that. We may not change the idea, but at least we will have the -- try to promote inclusion and an opportunity to exchange and have dialogue. We may very well get other ideas that come from folks out there as far as iterations or modifications to what we propose that may be palatable and then we can go ahead and have success.

MR. KOUBEK:

Supervisor Petrone in Huntington wants to have some sort of a summit where the civic groups would come in with the advocates and with the not-for-profits to talk to one another. And we have identified in Huntington, and it is true around the Island, one little area where you could get common ground. The fire departments are desperate for volunteers and they don't have the volunteers because the young people are leaving. If that becomes the organizing principle to bring us all together, to make sure our homes don't burn down, that's a good starter.

LEG. KENNEDY:

Absolutely. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

One thing I wanted to ask you, because I am glad you brought up sewer districts, because I know with Forge River and polluted rivers -- you know, in Fairfax and Montgomery County they have sewer districts; correct?

MR. KOUBEK:

I believe so. Do you know? Does anybody know?

COMMISSIONER MORGO:

Yes, they do.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

You know, that was one of my questions because any time we talk about doing anything on the east end, you know, like even in the Shirley/Mastics area, you're talking about it is always cesspools. And, you know, that's one of the arguments, is we can't keep putting cesspools in. So I'm just curious on that one.

Jim, there was a question for you at one point. I believe, Rick, you had a question that you felt Jim could answer?

LEG. MONTANO:

Excuse me, Jim. Jim, we were just talking about the inventory. One of the recommendations was, as you know, that each Legislator should identify -- which I think is a great idea. But at the same time my understanding was that you had initiated a study or an inventory, collection of inventory to determine what was available in the County, Countywide, with the idea that we would begin to make an aggressive push towards solving some of the issues dealing with affordable housing and work with the towns. Is that accurate?

COMMISSIONER MORGO:

Pretty much, but let me just give you some qualifications. Before I do that, I want to commend the Welfare to Work Commission. I sat in on one of the recent meetings dealing with the 72-h transfers and I was really impressed by the level of the work and just how comprehensive it was.

That being said, there are some other things I'd like to clarify. But to answer your question directly, Rick, as Legislator Vilorio-Fisher mentioned, that the asking each of our 44 jurisdictions that have land control, that is zoning powers, we asked each one of those municipalities for sites within those municipalities that the chief executive, the mayor, or the supervisor would think would be appropriate for workforce homes.

LEG. MONTANO:

So it's discretionary on the chief executive as to -- he could have or she could have a number of parcels but just not recommend them to you for possible sites.

COMMISSIONER MORGO:

And the question is she or he doesn't have a number of parcels. Most property, most dirt, as

Legislator Kennedy characterized it, is privately owned in Suffolk County. So the parcels and properties that were recommended were mostly privately owned, held by private individuals.

That being said, the workforce housing development that is just about completed, people are moving in in the Village of Patchogue was -- that consists of 19 of the 250 parcels that was recommended. You folks appropriated funds from the affordable program, acquisition program under multifaceted, for property in Mattituck in the Town of Southold. That property was privately held but recommended by the Supervisor of Southold and is going to result in affordable homes. So those properties are out there.

I would second very strongly this Commission's asking you to find other properties. Legislator Viloría-Fisher will let you know that the Planning Department listed the appropriateness as they saw for each of the parcels recommended, and many that we all saw as great sites for workforce homes, for mixed use, for two family homes, combining home ownership and rentals, many of the prices were too steep and that the Environmental Trust Review Board would never have allowed those nor should they recommend those appraisals.

So it was really the question of privately held properties where we had unwilling sellers. Legislator Browning, we have tried many times in North Bellport to buy from the landlords. They don't want to negotiate.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Yup.

LEG. MONTANO:

They want to sit on it.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

They want to sit on it.

LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:

Have to condemn them.

LEG. MONTANO:

Yeah, well that's a good question. I mean, how would we go about or could we go about the process of forcing the hand of some of the people that own property that would be suitable for, you know, for development along the lines of affordable housing. I mean --

COMMISSIONER MORGO:

Well, in your town, Legislator, South Wind Village, that is now a beautiful new community. Seventy-eight homes, ownership and rental. Forty properties, forty properties, had to be acquired. There were 37 willing sellers. The Town of Islip commenced eminent domain proceedings against the three others. Eminent domain, as you know, is sometimes a third rail and very dangerous, but frequently not only for workforce homes but downtown revitalization it is a very effective tool.

I just wanted -- a couple of things that I want to add very quickly to this terrific report. I want to thank particularly Dr. Koubek for his kind words about my department, but you should know it is not even two-and-a-half years old yet. I'm very conscious of age these days.

One of the things that I do want to mention on the question of money for public education. I disagree slightly because as we know, as was said, 70% of the general public says yes, it's a need, but then we get into the location. The only time I think public education makes sense about the need, if you're talking about a specific development. Not if you are saying this kind of feel good, we need it, we're losing our nurses, we're losing our children.

I think -- and I can tell you the converse of that. Sitting to my right I have an example of the

converse of that. When Legislator Vilorio-Fisher talked about Westhampton and extending the sewer district from Gabreski for workforce homes, which Timmy really championed when he was a village trustee, because things were distorted, because of the way the -- I don't want to use a cliché, but the politics of fear frankly, and intentional misrepresentations. An election was lost there. This didn't happen in Patchogue. In Patchogue the people who proposed the workforce housing development were elected by 70% of the vote.

Something that I saw very recently is in consideration of the County Executive's plans for workforce homes in Yaphank. I heard that characterized as a government sponsored project. Anybody who knows anything, the rudiments of the workforce housing development that is already taking place in this County -- Millenium Hills, the Bay Shore Commons, Copper Beach Village, the Cottages at Mattituck, know that it is anything but, anything but, anything but a public government project.

There are incentives given to the private sector and what better incentive than lower cost land, because as Legislator Kennedy said, it's the most expensive thing that we have going. And the whole point behind the entire comprehensive, cohesive Yaphank development of sports, recreation, entertainment, cultural and homes is that it will be a public/private partnership and it will be done by the private sector and there will be incentives to the private sector.

The other couple of things that get into something that Legislator Kennedy mentioned and something that my friend Peter Barnett talked about. The Health Department cannot compromise Article 6. We can only have 300 gallons per day for septic tanks or cesspools. That's why we need sewers so desperately. The federal government has abdicated the environmental and the economic development impact of sewers.

You all know that when the Southwest Sewer District was built it was 85% federally funded? Yeah. That is no longer the case and to increase the capacity of Sewer District 3 by five million gallons a day it is going to be over \$45 million. I couldn't agree more. I have been talking about it for a long time. There's nothing more important in Suffolk County, for density we need it.

Just a couple of other things. The analysis of impediments that was recommended. That's already done. Any community receiving any community development funds has to give us an analysis of impediments. And the key question that several of you brought up, the key question is land use decisions, as we already talked about. Montgomery County took ten years not to get the County to have land use decisions, it took ten years to get the inclusionary zoning bill passed. That's what took ten years.

Something that came up, and I am going to be very brief, I know you have another committee, but something I want you all to think about. The administration is advocating now for State legislation that would require down state, suburban, high cost regions to come up with regional housing plans. This is something, Vivian, we saw that Westchester has done. Westchester did a plan and every single municipality in Westchester, where dirt costs even more than it does here, every single municipality had to come up with an affordable housing goal, a number of units. Units could be new construction, they could be units that are preserved. And the County Legislature adopted that.

The plan that you referred to, Vivian, that is being done by Rutgers is not completed yet. It is only in draft form, that's what you have seen there, and it doesn't really do that. We are looking to improve it. But then we are talking about the State and using, somebody mentioned this, the Long Island Regional Planning Board. It has been reconstituted, you know. I don't think we need a board of governance. I think we need a real regional planning board that makes decisions. In fact, I have to talk to Michael White, the new Executive Director, about exactly this.

So the idea behind a regional housing plan, every municipality would get a number, but most importantly the elected representatives, town board, village board, supervisors, mayors, would be given education on why this is important to sustain economic development. You know, some of these folks have no clue. They really don't see the link between housing and economic

development. And also there would be technical assistance on what works, inclusionary zoning, density bonuses, transfers of development rights, and then there would be carrots and sticks. Some of it would -- the inclusionary zoning bill, what we called Balboni/DeNapoli, great, great, thing, but it certainly is not the silver bullet. It's not going to solve the problem.

I think we need a more comprehensive approach, and we're working on that. It came out after you folks had had your hearings. Actually, it came out of my work with the Spitzer transition team and because it was realized by the Governor that doing housing in New York City is very different from doing housing in Suffolk County. So that has been realized. Okay. I have probably gone on too long.

LEG. MONTANO:

Can I -- two quick things.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay.

LEG. MONTANO:

We're out of time, but very quickly. My understanding was that last year, maybe the year before, we had \$5 million in a fund for purchase of available land for affordable housing. Do we still have that money available?

COMMISSIONER MORGO:

It has been combined in the multifaceted fund. You're going to have an appropriations request resolution for Take Back the Block. At the ETRB on Friday there was a fair appraisal reached, a fair figure. We're going to begin negotiations and we're going to be entering into --

LEG. MONTANO:

Is that the Huntington property?

COMMISSIONER MORGO:

Yes. We're going to be entering into a 50/50 -- well, not necessarily 50/50. We are going to give -- the most we're going to give is half of the assigned appraised value.

LEG. MONTANO:

Okay. That's good.

COMMISSIONER MORGO:

By the way, in both the acquisitions for Copper Beach Village and for Mattituck it was less than the appraised value.

LEG. MONTANO:

And the last thing I was going to ask you, you mentioned the exclusionary zoning bill in one of the counties and then you said that the DeNapoli/Balboni bill is an exclusionary zoning bill.

COMMISSIONER MORGO:

Inclusionary.

LEG. MONTANO:

Inclusive, right. I didn't look at it in that fashion, but I would be very interested in looking at an inclusionary zoning bill that you referred to -- was it, Montgomery County?

COMMISSIONER MORGO:

Yes.

LEG. MONTANO:

Do you have that?

COMMISSIONER MORGO:

Yes.

LEG. MONTANO:

Could you e-mail to my office?

COMMISSIONER MORGO:

Sure.

LEG. MONTANO:

I'd like to look into that and study that.

COMMISSIONER MORGO:

By the way, Rick, it was passed in '78. It's resulted in literally thousands and thousands of affordable units right next to million dollar homes.

LEG. MONTANO:

Send it over to my office, please? Thanks, Jim. Appreciate it. And thank you all.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. Thank you.

MR. KOUBEK:

Just one last point on education. We're both teachers by trade. We have had numerous conversations, even when Jim was at the Housing Partnership. Do you educate for a site or do you educate generally. You need to do both. And one of the things that neither of the ad campaigns I referenced did is what Jim did in one of his last decisions in the Housing Partnership. You know when he took that bus tour that you were referring to? We need to have the bus tour for the people who live in the County to see those sites. So that would be, I think, part of the education campaign. Get the cameras into those places and let them see Copper Beach, let them see South Wind, and let them see that this is not something they should be afraid of.

COMMISSIONER MORGO:

I agree, if I may, Vivian. I agree that we need the general. I just wanted to make the point that it's difficult when you have people who are distorting, who are creating myths about workforce homes, and I had the Yaphank on my mind. So you could do all the general education you want, but if you have someone calling that a public project, you're always going to take five steps backwards. That was my point.

LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:

Just to refer to what you said, Dick, and going back to what I said about LION. If you looked at the New York Times, I believe last Sunday, there was a chart on what people talked about in churches --

MR. KOUBEK:

I saw that. Wasn't that interesting?

LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:

And affordable housing, I think, is something which is such a basic need that that's something that should be talked about and that's why I think LION is so important and having that kind of link. You know, my particular church joined Jobs With Justice also because that was something that we had -- you have to talk about. It's basic social justice issues and this is a basic social justice issue.

MR. KOUBEK:

The Legislature can't organize the communities, but groups like Catholic Charities and LION, we can do it and we are working at it. You got to go at the grass roots to get the people ready to step up to the microphone at town hall and say I don't agree with those people who are screaming against this. We need the housing. You can't do that, we can.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Okay. And again, I would like to thank the Welfare to Work Commission for everything you have done. The Legislature changed and you didn't and you stuck in there and like Vivian said, good leadership and commitment to coming up with a solution. We appreciate everything you have done. Thank you.

MR. KOUBEK:

Thank you very much for the time. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

We'll now go to the agenda.

Tabled Resolutions

2091, Adopting Local Law No. 2006, A Local Law to encourage affordable housing and workforce housing initiatives in towns and villages. (Schneiderman)

LEG. MONTANO:

Motion.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Motion -- I'll make a motion to table it.

LEG. MONTANO:

I'll second it.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

We have a second from Legislator Montano. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Okay, it's tabled. **(Vote: 4-0-0-1 Not Present: Legislator Losquadro)**

2579, Adopting Local Law No. 2006, A Local Law to broaden eligibility under the 72-h Transfer Program. (Schneiderman)

I think we heard enough. We have to table it anyway, so I'll make a motion to table for a public hearing.

LEG. MONTANO:

Second.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Second by Legislator Montano. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Tabled. **(Vote: 4-0-0-1 Not Present: Legislator Losquadro)**

Introductory Resolutions

1019, Establishing an application fee waiver policy for Civil Service examinations for veterans. (Cooper)

The sponsor wants it tabled to amend it.

LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:

Second.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Second by Legislator Viloría-Fisher. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? **(Vote: 4-0-0-1 Not Present: Legislator Losquadro)**

1033, Amending the Suffolk County Classification and Salary Plan in connection with a new position title (Assistant Economist) in the Legislature, Budget Review Office. (Lindsay)

LEG. MONTANO:

Motion to approve.

LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:

We are going to have two Roberts?

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

I'll make a motion to approve.

LEG. MONTANO:

Second.

CHAIRPERSON MONTANO:

Second by Legislator Montano. BRO, do you want to make a comment?

MS. VIZZINI:

Just to clarify that this would be a lower level economist that would be working under the Deputy Director and assuming a lot of the day to day projections and forecasting and providing resources to the Legislature and the staff of the Budget Review Office to free the Deputy Director to do what you have called upon him to do.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Any questions? I made the motion, Rick made the second. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries. **(Vote: 4-0-0-1 Not Present: Legislator Losquadro).**

1080, Authorizing planning steps for implementation of Suffolk County Workforce Housing Program (SCTM No. 000-356.00-02.00-p/o 009.000) (Lindsay)

LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:

Motion to approve.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Motion to approve by Legislator Viloría-Fisher.

LEG. MONTANO:

I'll second.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Second. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Motion carries. **(Vote: 4-0-0-1 Not Present: Legislator Losquadro)**

1099, Employee incentive for donating blood. (Caracappa)

LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:

Motion to approve.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Motion to approve by Vivian. I lost your last name there.

LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:

Viloria-Fisher.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

Thank you. Second? I'll make a second. Any questions? Comments? I knew you had something to say. Go ahead.

LEG. KENNEDY:

You knew I had something to say. I'm going to support the motion because obviously donating blood is one of those basic things that I guess we should do to try to promote. I am somewhat conflicted about offering what in essence is a cash incentive, but nevertheless, if it helps get more blood, I'm in favor of it.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

I was a blood donor since I was 17, and now that they changed the requirements a couple of years ago they won't take mine because I lived in Germany in the military base.

LEG. KENNEDY:

They won't?

LEG. VILORIA-FISHER:

But you know what? This is somebody who donates four times in one year, so you figure they are spending four hours so you are giving them seven hours.

LEG. KENNEDY:

I've been doing it for 20 years and nobody has given me any hours, but that's okay.

CHAIRPERSON BROWNING:

The more we can get the better, right? I believe Vivian made the motion. I second. All in favor? Opposed? Abstentions? Okay. Motion carries. **(Vote: 4-0-0-1 Not Present: Legislator Losquadro)**

We will adjourn. Thank you.

**(THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 1:16 PM)
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