

Cesar Jimenez

4/5/2024

Harlem Review Paper

Professor: Yolande Brener

Affordable Housing in Harlem and Beyond

With rent prices that are rising rapidly, NYC is becoming more and more inaccessible to the citizens that have lived here for decades. With rent prices skyrocketing, as of 2023, New York was the highest median rent for the country, at nearly \$4000 average rent for a 1-bedroom apartment. It's hard for families to continue living in the city with the fear of increasing rent prices over their head. As such, affordable housing is important as it provides a safety net for individuals and families, securing and fostering a more united community altogether. With recent developments enacted in New York that aims to have more affordable buildings throughout the city, it's important to understand what's behind these new plans and what it means for the future in Harlem. However, it's important to note that affordable housing is a highly selective process, and it's very rare for individuals to be accepted into these lotteries.

What Is 24 In 24?

In Early 2024, Mayor Eric Adams launched an initiative called 24 in 24, which aims to create or preserve 24 affordable housing projects in sites located across the city. This plan aims to create and preserve over 12,000 units of housing. Living in one of the most popular cities in the world, it's no secret that thousands of people are trying to enter one of the most competitive

housing markets. With rising rent prices, housing security is something that many people, especially in Harlem are worried about. With over 50% of the country spending more than half their paycheck towards rent costs, it's hard for people to not feel worried about being displaced from their communities, which are often full of history, memories and culture. Thus the 24 in 24 plan should hopefully provide much needed relief towards citizens who are combatting the rising costs of housing.

Benefits of Affordable Housing

Being accepted into affordable housing is great in itself but they also come with added benefits. For starters, they come with the perk of being fully electric. Initiatives to being fully electric stem from an initiative to be carbon neutral for passive house standards. Passive House Standards are a set of design standards to ensure that houses are built with comfort and energy efficiency in mind. If accepted into affordable housing, most buildings come with an assortment of benefits such as: indoor gym, elevators, outdoor spaces, storage, high end energy friendly appliances and washer/dryers on units. Throughout the city, affordable housing lotteries come and go, so while they are very competitive, the [New York's Housing Connect Portal](#) provides information on lotteries that are added and you can check the standards and amenities they offer, as well as their location.

Why Affordable Housing Is Scarce?

Affordable Housing provides a safety net to protect the communities who are facing with rising rent prices, the reality is that not everyone will be able to benefit from the low rent prices and variety of amenities. In 2022, there were roughly 430 applications for each home, according to the housing department. Furthermore, there is also a chance that affordable housing promotes

segregation. A long-standing law has held in place that applicants living in the same community as the affordable apartments get priority to those living in the area. However, this same system is alleged to discriminate because on wealthier communities, people of color are at a disadvantage when majority of the applicants make up the minority of the community that the building is located in.

Why do we need Affordable Housing?

With rent prices skyrocketing, it becomes clear that some of the long-standing citizens in New York, and especially Harlem, with its rich history and culture are in danger of losing their homes due to increased rent and costs of basic necessities. It's important to note that Affordable Housing is a way to help preserve the community and help strengthen the community by providing a safety-net to those who are struggling, and provide some breathing room to the residents. However, it's not as easy of a process to get into, with thousands of residents applying, the chances of being accepted become increasingly lower. The 24 in 24 plan hopes to alleviate some of the stress and help to save the community, by addressing housing needs of the residents, and creating a stronger and more united community when it comes to local issues.

Works Cited

- “Adams Administration Advances 24 in 24 Plan with Month-Long Push on Affordable Housing Projects on P., NYC Housing Preservation & Development, 29 Jan. 2024,
www.nyc.gov/site/hpd/news/003-24/adams-administration-advances-24-24-plan-month-long-push-affordable-housing-projects-on#/0.
- Feldman, Ari Ephraim. “Your Guide to Understanding Affordable Housing in New York City.”
Understanding Affordable Housing in New York City, Spectrum News NY1, 11 Oct. 2022,
ny1.com/nyc/all-boroughs/news/2022/10/10/your-guide-to-understanding-affordable-housing-in-new-york-city.
- “From Parking to ‘Powerhouse’: Fully Affordable, Fully Electric Apartments to Replace Bronx Lot in La.”
The Official Website of the City of New York, NYC Housing Preservation & Development, 16 Feb. 2024, www.nyc.gov/site/hpd/news/008-24/from-parking-powerhouse-fully-affordable-fully-electric-apartments-replace-bronx-lot-in#/0.
- Kolomatsky, Michael. “Rent Increases Are Softening, but Not Everywhere.” *The New York Times*, The New York Times, 3 Aug. 2023, www.nytimes.com/2023/08/03/realestate/rent-increase-us.html.
- Seigel, Jonathan. *Comptroller.Nyc.Gov*, 17 Jan. 2024, comptroller.nyc.gov/reports/spotlight-new-york-citys-rental-housing-market/.
- Zaveri, Mihir. "Do New York's Affordable Housing Lotteries Fuel Segregation?" *New York Times* [Digital Edition], 23 May 2023, p. NA. *Gale In Context: Opposing Viewpoints*,
link.gale.com/apps/doc/A750288450/OVIC?u=cuny_ccny&sid=bookmark-OVIC&xid=4e9eacf4.
Accessed 13 Mar. 2024.