



CITY OF LONG BEACH

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CITY OF LONG BEACH CITY COUNCIL

May 5, 2015

Ms. Kaii Torrence
Director of Intergovernmental Affairs, Office of Storm Recovery
25 Beaver Street, Fifth Floor
New York, NY 10004

Re: Co-Op/ Condominium Recovery Program

Dear Ms. Torrence,

With thousands of Long Beach residents financially and emotionally devastated by Superstorm Sandy, the City Council is continuing to encourage the community to join them in rebuilding their homes and buildings stronger, smarter, and safer - creating a more resilient and sustainable Long Beach that can withstand potential future storms. Unfortunately, bureaucracy continues to prevent many homeowners from moving forward in their recoveries.

Just when people were at their wits' end, NY Rising came in to assist the community with funding. As stated by The Governor's office in regards to the Co-Op and Condominium Recovery Program, "NY Rising will provide assistance for owner-occupied units that are being used as places of primary residence, or for condo/ co-op units that are leased to renters as places of primary residence. Condominium Associations and Co-Op Boards are also eligible to apply for storm-related damages to repair a building's common elements, such as lobbies, hallways and mechanical systems." Although this reconstruction program had good intentions, many residents feel defeated by the NY Rising process.

We write this letter to inform NY Rising of the issues we are facing in the Co-Op/ Condominium Recovery Program within our community, and make the following recommendations:

1. Residents are concerned with the release of their tax returns to NY Rising. Since NY Rising is a government-run program, we believe that residents' information should be obtained through the STAR Program.

Recommendation - NY Rising should use the information from the STAR Program in lieu of Form 1040.

2. Because individual shareholders/owners will not be receiving the grant funds, we believe that residents should not be required to release such sensitive information. Many

residents are hesitant to apply to NY Rising due to the amount of information that is asked in the application.

Recommendation - We recommend NY Rising drop the requirement of a Social Security Number on the application.

3. The clause in reference to Flood Insurance on page 2 of the "Program Eligibility Certification Form Condominium or Cooperative Individual Assistance" currently states "I understand that if I am accepted into the program, and accept funds for reimbursement, rehabilitation and/or reconstruction, I will be required to maintain flood insurance on the Unit at all times, etc."

Recommendation - We recommend NY Rising reword the clause, since individual shareholders and/or unit owners are not able to maintain flood insurance for their individual residences. NY Rising should impose that obligation on the Coop and/or Condo board, so that the entire building is insured.

4. NY Rising currently requires that 66% of the shareholders *during the time of the storm* must apply in order to qualify for grant funds.

Recommendation - Unfortunately, since the storm many shareholders have sold their units. We recommend NY Rising change their policy in regards to the shareholders who apply to NY Rising to require that 66% of the *current* shareholders apply to NY Rising.

The City of Long Beach is committed to working with you, step-by-step, in this process, and we know you share our commitment to helping our City's residents move forward in their recoveries. NY Rising is there to provide our residents with the necessary resources to rebuild stronger, smarter, and safer - so we can all withstand future storms. Our shared goal of a more resilient and sustainable community can only truly be achieved with your help. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
City of Long Beach City Council



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