

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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GREENPOINT RESIDENTS DEMAND “NO MORE DELAYS—AFFORDABLE HOUSING NOW” FROM NYC DEPARTMENT OF HOMELESS SERVICES

Community leaders, organizations, and elected officials rallied against expanded shelter use at former Greenpoint Hospital site

Photos here:

<https://www.facebook.com/StNicksAlliance/posts/pfbid0247KXvqwFH7zhR88c9mpstxrE1dkKAEjrAGQiGKBQdgU7tqm9T9fvHtz5A9S6XCsb1>

Brooklyn, NY (May 28, 2026) — Borough, city, state, and federal elected officials joined local organizations — including: NYCHA Cooper Park Houses, Friends of Cooper Park, several block associations, and members of the Greenpoint Renaissance Enterprise Corporation (GREC) — to rally in front of the Barbara Kleiman Shelter and the former Greenpoint Hospital.

The coalition is calling on the New York City Department of Homeless Services (DHS) to halt further delays in delivering long-promised affordable housing and to provide transparency regarding its decision to expand shelter operations at the site.

The rally comes in response to the City’s decision to relocate residents from the Bellevue Homeless Shelter to locations across New York City that includes the former Greenpoint Hospital campus. This decision would effectively double the number of shelter beds at the site — from 200 to 400 — and override the longstanding commitment to redevelop the property into affordable housing for low-income seniors and families, which the community fought for over four decades.

For more than 40 years, North Brooklyn residents and community leaders have advocated for an inclusive redevelopment plan for the Greenpoint Hospital campus. That vision was formalized through extensive community engagement. It prioritized affordable housing while reintegrating the long-isolated campus into the surrounding neighborhood.

“What’s been happening is that a lot of people didn’t know the history of this community. They don’t know our story. Because they don’t know our story they looked at numbers and they move

them around like there's no issues on the ground. They don't know that because they're just looking at paper. They aren't looking at people. They aren't paying attention to us. What we need to do is to tell them: We've been waiting too long for this to get done," **said Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso.** "We're supposedly in a housing crisis. People don't have homes. We have the largest population of people in homeless shelters in this entire city's history. And we have a solution. And they're going to slow that solution down because they're looking at papers and numbers and not at people. I want to be very clear this is not an anti-homeless rally. This district has taken its fair share of people that need housing. Community Board 1 consistently approves homeless shelters in this district. We want to take care of our homeless brothers and sisters. Many of these units you are seeing here are for people that are homeless to find them permanent housing. We support that. We always will. So let us finish the supportive housing that will let us move families into permanent space instead of continuing to have them move around and not be able to find a home. We want to provide homes to the homeless and that's why we're here today."

In 2018, the City designated St. Nicks Alliance, along with Hudson Companies and nonprofit Project Renewal, to lead redevelopment of the site under the **Kingsland Commons** plan.

In 2021, the project successfully completed the Uniform Land Use Review Procedure (ULURP), securing widespread community support. The approved plan includes:

- Three buildings with approximately **550 affordable apartments** for low-income families and seniors
- Renovation of an existing building to provide **200 shelter beds**
- Community facilities, retail space, and open areas

Following an emergency order to close the Bellevue shelter, the City has moved to repurpose existing facilities across multiple neighborhoods, many of them low-income communities of color, to accommodate the displaced shelter residents.

In North Brooklyn, this decision would extend and expand use of the former hospital as an assessment shelter. This contradicts the City's commitment to transition the site toward permanent housing once the 200-bed shelter was built.

Community leaders stress that their concerns are not about denying shelter, but about fairness, planning, and accountability.

"40 years, the community has advocated for permanent housing here. The plan already included maintaining shelter capacity while creating hundreds of affordable apartments and reconnecting the campus to the neighborhood. In 2026, stage one of the development opened with a 200-bed shelter operated by Project Renewal, that's right behind you. Although the men's shelter has relocated from building 3 [its original location] to the renovated building within this campus, DHS has now taken over building 3 for use as an assessment center delaying plans for a 107

affordable housing units for seniors,” **said longtime community leader Karen Leader**. “These units were intended to include Section 8 subsidies, so that seniors would pay no more than 30% of their income towards rent. Without a planned timeline from DHS, the future of this much-needed affordable senior housing remains uncertain.”

Residents also raised concerns about the operational model of an assessment shelter, where individuals typically stay for short periods—approximately 33 days—before being transferred elsewhere. This turnover could result in **over 3,000 individuals passing through the facility annually**.

Local advocate **William Vega**, who regularly volunteers cleaning public spaces, emphasized the strain on the community:

“We are concerned that the City’s decision to double the shelter population—without community input or adequate support services—will impact both residents and those experiencing homelessness. The assessment shelter moving into building 3, formerly the Greenpoint Hospital site, is not housing. It is a high value processing facility. Thousands of people will cycle through this [site] every year.” **Vega said**. “We are already dealing with issues such as discarded hypodermic needles in parks and playgrounds. This situation risks becoming a disservice to everyone involved.”

The GREC coalition is calling on the NYC Department of Homeless Services to:

- **Provide transparency and accountability** in communications with North Brooklyn residents, community leaders, and elected officials
- **Commit to a clear, concrete timeline** for vacating the Greenpoint Hospital site and advancing its redevelopment into affordable housing for seniors and families
- **Move out truck parking and laundry uses**, which prevent the affordable housing project from going forward.

Community members emphasize that the Kingsland Commons plan reflects a balanced approach, addressing both the urgent need for shelter and the long-term necessity of affordable housing.

“We are asking for accountability. The City should provide a clear and written timeline explaining [when] the building will be returned to affordable housing development. This protest is about preserving the future of affordable housing and ensuring the community is not left in the dark about decisions that affect our neighborhood,” **said Debra Benders, president Cooper Park Resident Association**. “It’s not about the guys in the shelter. It’s about us being aware of what is going on in our community. It’s about government standing on their word of truth to us. It’s about giving us the space that we need for seniors and affordable housing for anybody that could be homeless.”

Residents and U.S. Representative Nydia Velázquez, NYS Assembly Member Maritza Davila, NYS Assembly Member Emily Gallagher, and Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso, are urging the City to honor its commitments, engage meaningfully with the community, and ensure that temporary solutions do not derail decades of planning and progress.

“That’s what we’re here for Fair and Equitable housing. We have a 100% affordable senior building right here. We’re at the finish line of over forty years of decades of work. We are on the shoulders of people who have fought before us [for this],” **said NYS Assembly Member Maritza Davila’s chief of staff, Joseph Yannis.** “The assemblywoman always says, ‘Tell the story. Tell the story of how people fought to make sure this was fair and equitable housing.’”

“We’re all bound together by the need for equitable distribution and affordable housing. Last I heard there was a commitment to build senior housing here at this site. Not more shelters. This neighborhood is doing its job by providing the shelter that is needed. But we don’t have to do more than our fair share when we have people aging in place and needing a permanent solution to their housing problem. And we have it right here. We have the facility. We have the commitment,” **said U.S. Representative Nydia Velazquez’s district director, Dan Wiley.** “And last I heard the Mayor has a plan for 200 thousand units of affordable housing that’s preserved and that is what? New. This could be new senior affordable housing. So I think we can all work together, they can see the light. Let’s make it happen, right here in Greenpoint.”

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