

RESOLUTION NO. 1210 -2019, ESTABLISHING A FAIR HOUSING TASK FORCE TO ADDRESS DOCUMENTED INEQUITIES IN OBTAINING HOUSING IN SUFFOLK COUNTY

WHEREAS, a recent multi-year investigation by Newsday has uncovered extensive evidence of impermissible steering of consumers seeking to purchase a home on the basis of race throughout Long Island; and

WHEREAS, this practice has reinforced racial divides throughout communities, despite fair housing laws which prohibit such pernicious discrimination; and

WHEREAS, the Suffolk County Human Rights Law proscribes certain activities relating to housing discrimination; and

WHEREAS, a task force comprised of experts in fair housing and leaders in County government should be convened to review the existing County Human Rights Law as it pertains to housing discrimination and recommend improvements that will strengthen County protections against these impermissible practices; now, therefore be it

1st RESOLVED, that a Housing Discrimination Task Force (“Task Force”) is hereby established to review the existing County Human Rights Law and provide recommendations to improve and strengthen these regulations to more effectively and efficiently deter individuals who seek to engage in practices which discriminate impermissibly against individuals seeking to obtain housing in Suffolk County; and be it further

2nd RESOLVED, that the Task Force shall be comprised of the following eleven (11) members:

- 1) the Presiding Officer, or his designee, who shall serve as chair;
- 2) the Minority Leader, or his designee;
- 3) the Executive Director of the Suffolk County Human Rights Commission;
- 4) the Chairperson of the Suffolk County Human Rights Commission;
- 5) a representative of NAACP;
- 6) a representative of Latino Justice;
- 7) a representative of Erase Racism;
- 8) a representative of LIBOR;
- 9) a representative of the New York State Division of Human Rights;
- 10) one (1) fair housing advocate to be selected by the Presiding Officer; and

11) one (1) fair housing advocate to be selected by the Minority Leader;

and be it further

3rd **RESOLVED**, the Task Force shall hold its first meeting no later than fifteen (15) days after the oaths of office of all members have been filed, which meeting shall be convened by the chairman of the Task Force for the purpose of organization and the appointment of a vice chairperson and a secretary; and be it further

4th **RESOLVED**, that the members of said Task Force shall serve without compensation and shall serve at the pleasure of their respective appointing authorities; and be it further

5th **RESOLVED**, that the Task Force shall hold regular meetings, keep a record of all its proceedings, and determine the rules of its own proceedings with special meetings to be called by the chairperson upon his or her own initiative or upon receipt of a written request therefor signed by at least three (3) members of the Task Force. Written notice of the time and place of such special meetings shall be given by the secretary to each member at least four (4) days before the date fixed by the notice for such special meeting; and be it further

6th **RESOLVED**, that six (6) members of the Task Force shall constitute a quorum to transact the business of the Task Force at both regular and special meetings; and be it further

7th **RESOLVED**, that clerical services involving the month-to-month operation of this Task Force, as well as supplies and postage as necessary, will be provided by the staff of the County Legislature; and be it further

8th **RESOLVED**, that the Task Force may conduct such informal hearings and meetings at any place or places within the County of Suffolk for the purpose of obtaining necessary information or other data to assist it in the proper performance of its duties and functions as it deems necessary; and be it further

9th **RESOLVED**, that the Task Force may delegate to any member of the Task Force the power and authority to conduct such hearings and meetings; and be it further

10th **RESOLVED**, that the Task Force shall cooperate with the Legislative Committees of the County Legislature and make available to each Committee's use, upon request, any records and other data it may accumulate or obtain; and be it further

11th **RESOLVED**, that the Task Force shall conduct a comprehensive analysis of the Suffolk County Human Rights Law as it pertains to housing discrimination and determine how it can be improved and strengthened to reduce the incidence of such discrimination and recommend additional opportunities to improve the County's enforcement of housing discrimination law; and be it further

12th **RESOLVED**, that this Task Force shall submit a written report of its analysis, findings and determinations together with its recommendations for action, if any, to each member of the County Legislature and the County Executive no later than ninety (90) days subsequent to the effective date of this Resolution for consideration, review, and appropriate action, if necessary, by the entire County Legislature; and be it further

13th **RESOLVED**, that the Task Force shall expire, and the terms of Office of its members terminate, as of December 31, 2020 at which time the Task Force shall deposit all the records of its proceedings with the Clerk of the Legislature; and be it further

14th **RESOLVED**, that this study shall not be performed by any outside consultant or consulting firm unless explicit approval and authorization for such consultant or consulting firm is granted pursuant to a duly enacted resolution of the County Legislature; and be it further

15th **RESOLVED**, that this Legislature, being the State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) lead agency, hereby finds and determines that this resolution constitutes a Type II action pursuant to Section 617.5(c)(26) of Title 6 of the NEW YORK CODE OF RULES AND REGULATIONS (6 NYCRR) and within the meaning of Section 8-0109(2) of the NEW YORK ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION LAW as routine or continuing administration and management not including new programs or major reordering of priorities that may affect the environment, and the Suffolk County Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) is hereby directed to circulate any appropriate SEQRA notices of determination of non-applicability or non-significance in accordance with this resolution.

DATED: December 17, 2019

APPROVED BY:

/s/ Steven Bellone
County Executive of Suffolk County

Date: December 24, 2019