

IBO BALTON COMMUNITY PLANNER AWARD

SIMON KAWITZKY

NEW YORK CITY HOUSING AUTHORITY

Simon Kawitzky is the Vice President of Portfolio Planning at the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) and has been instrumental in embedding new community planning processes into NYCHA's real estate work over recent years. Simon oversaw the first resident-led working group at Elliot-Chelsea and Fulton houses to review and select the new PACT partner for their development – fundamentally shifting the power to resident decision-making. He is now rolling out this new dynamic of resident-centered planning across the PACT pipeline. He is also the lead designer of the PACT Resource Team, a fund to give residents access to any third-party technical assistance related to PACT and to support their new decision-making roles.



SIMON HAS BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN EMBEDDING NEW COMMUNITY PLANNING PROCESSES INTO NYCHA'S REAL ESTATE WORK OVER RECENT YEARS.

As the Assistant Commissioner he also helped develop the city's first Assessment of Fair Housing, a historic step in addressing New York City's legacy of segregation and discrimination in the housing market. In his previous role as Director, he applied his passion for community engagement to create the agency's first Neighborhood Planning Playbook – a framework for inclusive community engagement. He also oversaw the creation and implementation of the Brownsville Plan as well as the East New York Neighborhood Plan – one of the city's first neighborhoods to undergo the Mandatory Inclusionary Housing (MIH).

Before his time in city government, Simon built an impressive portfolio of affordable housing projects and comprehensive planning initiatives at Jonathan Rose Companies, where he worked with the private and public sector in housing financing and development. He also led the community planning process for the Town of Morristown, which was the first town in the state to attempt a master plan that incorporated mobility and community design – leading ultimately to the adoption of form-based zoning code in Morristown. In addition to his work in Morristown, Simon helped develop the first comprehensive plan for Newark, New Jersey in over two decades.

Much of his work Simon credits to his education at Pratt Institute, where he received his M.S. in City and Regional Planning. At Pratt, he worked under the mentorship of several professors, including John Shapiro and Ronald Shiffman, both who continue to shape his work today. It was at the Pratt Graduate Center for Planning and the Environment where Simon learned much of what he knows today in terms of authentic and effective community engagement, affordable and fair housing and comprehensive planning.

Simon's resume is impressive – from city government to private industry, his work has extended across the city in all areas of housing, neighborhood development and community engagement. He is deeply passionate and committed to advancing more fair and equitable neighborhoods for all New Yorkers, with a keen understanding of the intersection of public and private partnerships in the process. Across his several roles of leadership in the last decade, he has continued to go back to his roots of community engagement – serving as a model of city and private sector partners everywhere.