



# Queens Civic Congress

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## QUEENS CIVIC CONGRESS WELCOMES DOB DELAY IN RULES CUTTING PUBLIC REVIEW OF PROJECTS & DEVELOPMENT

Queens Civic Congress welcomes the NYC Department of Buildings (DOB) delay in proceeding with [changes](#) to its system for the public to make building complaints. Following the issues raised by Queens Civic Congress, elected officials including Queens Council Member Tony Avella, Brooklyn Council Member Bill deBlasio and Comptroller William Thompson, and civic advocates from throughout the city, including our partners at the Historic Districts Council, the Greenwich Village Society for Historic Preservation and the Municipal Arts Society, the DOB announced that "the launch date for the new process will be moved to mid-April." As the umbrella group of 110 and growing civic organizations, with a [membership](#) that represents every community in the borough, Queens Civic Congress welcomes this additional period to allow the Department of Buildings (DOB) to address clear flaws in the process.

In a [letter](#) commending Commissioner Robert LiMandri for putting the rules off, Queens Civic Congress noted that the DOB lacks any authority to limit the reporting of illegal activity. In fact, the proposal, if adopted unchanged, clearly creates an immunity for the building community when civics, community members and others with standing challenge in court any dismissal of their examining a complaint. Queens Civic Congress strongly recommends the DOB reform the propose changes to avoid what must be an unintended consequence – that would perpetuate illegal and often hazardous development.

Why risk effectively development activity that fail to follow plans that may be legitimate but the illegality gets exposed after the passage of thirty days? Many illegal condition may not be visible even subsequent to the substantial completion, again after the 30 days are tolled. In addition, concerns remain about the general inability of the DOB to respond timely to inquiries or make files available. A short complaint period thereby delays any reasonable attempt to conduct a due diligence prior to filing a complaint.

As stated in its [testimony](#), Queens Civic Congress generally opposes any statute of limitation type prohibition on complaints beyond the 30 day process outlined in the proposed rules.

Queens Civic Congress looks forward to continuing its dialogue with the DOB and looks forward to Commissioner LiMandri's participation in the April 20 Queens Civic Congress membership meeting as a good opportunity to further explore areas for attention and reform.