

Mayor Adams Appoints Eric Ulrich as Department of Buildings Commissioner; Kazimir Vilenchik, P.E. as First Deputy Commissioner

May 3, 2022

NEW YORK – New York City Mayor Eric Adams today appointed Eric Ulrich as commissioner of the Department of Buildings (DOB) and Kazimir Vilenchik, P.E. as first deputy commissioner. As the leadership team at DOB, they will enforce the city’s construction codes and zoning resolution, as well as the New York State Multiple Dwelling Law, to protect workers and the public on construction sites and in the city’s nearly 1.1 million buildings. They will also play a key role in advancing the city’s sustainability goals, including through the enforcement of Local Law 97.

“Eric Ulrich and Kazimir Vilenchik are the right leadership team at the right time for the Department of Buildings,” said **Mayor Adams**. “Our city and our economy cannot recover from the COVID-19 pandemic without a strong construction industry, and this team will deliver while prioritizing worker safety and customer service. I want to thank Acting Commissioner Gus Sirakis for his deep commitment and ongoing service to DOB, and I look forward to continuing my work with Commissioner Ulrich and First Deputy Commissioner Vilenchik to move our city forward.”

“I’m thrilled by the selection of Eric Ulrich as commissioner of the Department of Buildings,” said **First Deputy Mayor Lorraine Grillo**. “I have known Eric for many years, and during his time in public service, he has shown his dedication to cutting through red tape and solving complex problems New Yorkers face with pragmatism and compassion. I look forward to seeing the department under his leadership support the industry and homeowners alike in a full recovery.”

“It’s fitting that today’s announcement is in the midst of construction safety week, highlighting the importance of worksite safety that Commissioner Eric Ulrich will keep

front and center 365 days a year,” said **Deputy Mayor for Operations Meera Joshi**. “I look forward to working with him as he brings his common-sense and collaborative approach to greening the city’s buildings under Local Law 97 and improving DOB’s customer service processes. I also congratulate Kazimir Vilenchik on his appointment as first deputy commissioner and thank Gus Sirakis for his leadership and continued service to the Department of Buildings.”

“From day one, Mayor Adams has made ‘Get Stuff Done’ the motto of his administration, and this is the spirit I bring to the Department of Buildings,” said **incoming Commissioner Ulrich**. “I will be laser-focused on raising safety standards on job sites, delivering the customer service our city deserves, and making our building industry the most sustainable in the nation. I look forward to working collaboratively across the agency and with all of the stakeholders to move our city forward.”

“My focus will be on improving DOB performance, facilitating development, maintaining existing buildings, and ensuring construction safety,” said **incoming First Deputy Commissioner Vilenchik**. “It is my overall goal to remove impediments to efficient operations, so that DOB can be an integral part of the New York City business development process. I want to thank Mayor Adams for giving me this opportunity, and I look forward to working with Commissioner Ulrich and my partners across the agency and in the industry to make the agency work as effectively and efficiently as possible.”

A former three-term New York City councilmember who served on the City Council’s Committee on Housing and Buildings, Ulrich was a leader in the city’s rebuilding effort after Hurricane Sandy, passing legislation to accelerate the rebuilding process while using the council’s oversight powers to improve the Rapid Repairs and Build It Back programs. Currently, Ulrich serves as a senior advisor to Mayor Adams.

Vilenchik is currently the Brooklyn borough commissioner at DOB, having served as deputy borough commissioner in Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens, and Staten Island. He has worked at DOB for 14 years and brings over two decades of additional private sector experience.

“I commend Mayor Adams’ selection of Eric Ulrich as commissioner of the New York City Department of Buildings,” said **New York City Chief Efficiency Officer and former DOB Commissioner Melanie La Rocca**. “Eric has firsthand knowledge of how

critical DOB is shaping our city — ensuring the safety of New Yorkers while keeping our neighborhoods resilient. He is committed to this city’s success and growth and is able to slice through the biggest bureaucracies by leading with common sense, compassion, and a true understanding of public service. With a reputation for excellence and effectiveness, he will shepherd this agency to new heights.”

“Congratulations to my former colleague Eric Ulrich on his appointment as our new New York City Department of Buildings commissioner,” said **Bronx Borough President Vanessa L. Gibson**. “As someone that I worked alongside in the City Council, I look forward to working with him in his new capacity in promoting the safety of all people that build, work, and live in New York City.”

“I couldn’t be more pleased that Mayor Adams has appointed my longtime, dear friend Eric Ulrich as our new city Department of Buildings commissioner,” said **Staten Island Borough President Vito J. Fossella**. “Eric is a consummate professional. He loves New York City and wants to see it thrive and grow. As with any city agency, there are issues to tackle and challenges to resolve. Eric certainly has the experience and wherewithal to streamline the agency’s interaction with property owners and the public. As we move out of the COVID era, we need individuals like Eric to help get New York City growing again.”

“Eric Ulrich will help bring greater accountability, transparency, and efficiency to the Department of Buildings,” said **Manhattan Borough President Mark Levine**. “Especially after Hurricane Sandy, Eric understands the importance of cutting through the red tape of the construction process and getting New Yorkers into safe buildings.”

“Congratulations are in order for Eric Ulrich on his appointment as New York City Department of Buildings commissioner,” said **Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso**. “I only have good things to say about Eric from our time in the City Council together — sharing in the same goal of breaking apart bureaucracy to get things done. And congratulations are also in order for the first deputy commissioner, Kazimir Vilenchik, who has led Brooklyn as borough commissioner. I can’t wait to continue working and building together.”

“Eric Ulrich has served South Queens and our city with integrity and dedication for well over a decade, from fighting for a more efficient recovery following Superstorm Sandy’s devastation of his district to being a catalyst for the creation of the New York City

Department of Veterans Services,” said **Queens Borough President Donovan Richards Jr.** “It was an honor to have served with him in the City Council, and I look forward to the critical work we will do together in his new role as Department of Buildings commissioner. I commend Mayor Adams for this selection, and I have the utmost confidence in Eric Ulrich’s ability to serve our families in Queens and beyond as our city’s comeback continues.”

“On behalf of our respective chapters of American Institute of Architects (AIA), representing all five boroughs, we would like to acknowledge Commissioner Eric Ulrich on his appointment by Mayor Adams to lead the New York City Department of Buildings as the new commissioner,” said **Frank J. Quatela A.I.A., president, AIA Queens chapter; Talisha L. Sainvil A.I.A., president, A.I.A. Brooklyn chapter; Giuseppe Bonomo A.I.A., president, A.I.A. Staten Island chapter; Sara Jazayeri A.I.A., president, A.I.A. Bronx chapter; and Andrea Lamberti A.I.A., LEED AP BD+C, president, A.I.A. New York chapter.** “We also welcome the news that Brooklyn Borough Commissioner Kazimir Vilenchik, P.E., has been named as first deputy commissioner. We look forward to working together with the new leadership of the DOB in helping our industry to build safer and in creating greater sustainability for our beloved city.”

“On behalf of the five borough-wide chambers of commerce serving New York City, we applaud Mayor Eric Adams for appointing former New York City Council Member Eric Ulrich as the new commissioner for the New York City Department of Buildings,” said **Lisa Sorin, president, Bronx Chamber of Commerce; Randy Peers, president and CEO, Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce; Jessica Walker, president and CEO, Manhattan Chamber of Commerce; Tom Grech, president and CEO, Queens Chamber of Commerce; and Linda Baran, president and CEO, Staten Island Chamber of Commerce.** “Eric demonstrated a common-sense approach to governing and a deep commitment to public service that will serve the Adams administration and all New Yorkers well as he takes on this new role. We congratulate Eric on this appointment and look forward to working with him to streamline services and make the agency more efficient, so it can better serve New York City businesses and the public. We are confident that Eric is the right person to lead this agency and ‘Get Stuff Done’ for small business owners and all New Yorkers.”

“Eric Ulrich’s dedication to the working people of our city during his years of service in government makes him an outstanding choice to lead the New York City Department of Buildings as its new commissioner,” said **Vincent Alvarez, president, New York City**

Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO. “Our city’s workforce is the best in the world, and we’re confident that under Eric’s stewardship, the Department of Buildings will work with New York City union members, with an eye on future collaboration — resulting in a stronger, more resilient New York City.”

“Eric Ulrich’s appointment as Buildings commissioner is another in a long line of outstanding appointments made by the mayor,” said **Louis Coletti, president, Building Trades Employers Association.** “Eric has a long and proven track record of success in taking on tough public policy issues and will again be successful in a way that will protect public and worker safety as well as improve a process that will create thousands of new jobs and generate tax revenue to benefit all New Yorkers.”

“Eric Ulrich’s appointment as commissioner of the Department of Buildings is a tremendous victory for working men and women,” said **Joseph Geiger, executive secretary-treasurer, New York City District Council of Carpenters.** “As he has throughout his career, Commissioner Ulrich will put the interests of union workers first, cut red tape, and ensure development in New York City is responsible, safe, and creates good jobs. Mayor Eric Adams’ appointment of Eric to head up DOB is further proof of his commitment to put the best and brightest to work on behalf of all New Yorkers.”

“For years, Eric Ulrich has been a smart and thoughtful supporter of the restaurant and nightlife industry who seeks to find solutions to complex situations, first as a City Council member and then senior advisor,” **Andrew Rigie, executive director, New York City Hospitality Alliance.** “That’s exactly why we commend Mayor Adams on his excellent appointment of Ulrich as commissioner of the city’s Department of Buildings, where he can utilize his leadership and experience to support small businesses and their relationship and interactions with this important agency.”

“From his work on oversight after the devastation of Superstorm Sandy to his advocacy for employment access and veterans’ affairs, Eric Ulrich has shown a commitment to making this city run smarter and more efficiently,” **Carlo A. Scissura, president and CEO, New York Building Congress.** “The Building Congress is excited to welcome him now to the role of commissioner of the Department of Buildings. Mayor Adams has truly made another ‘Get Stuff Done’ choice. We look forward to working with him on taking that efficiency mindset into the DOB to help streamline the building and permitting process for the betterment of every resident of New York City.”

“We look forward to working with Commissioner Ulrich and the Adams administration to advance our shared goals of ensuring safety, efficiency, and continued innovation throughout New York City’s built environment,” said **James Whelan, president, Real Estate Board of New York.**

“Eric Ulrich is a demonstrated leader with a passion for New York City,” said **Elizabeth Velez, chair emeritus, New York Building Congress; and president, Velez Organization.** “As buildings commissioner, he will be a champion to keep New York City strong, safe, and growing.”

About Eric Ulrich

Eric Ulrich currently serves as a senior advisor to Mayor Adams. Prior to joining the Adams administration, Ulrich represented District 32 in Queens on the New York City Council from 2009 to 2021, serving on the Committee on Housing and Buildings. In the aftermath of Superstorm Sandy, he coordinated a massive relief effort to help area residents rebuild their homes and businesses. He introduced and passed legislation to accelerate the rebuilding process using the best available flood maps and led the effort to create a special coastal risk district in the zoning resolution to provide a planning tool for signifying flood risk in the areas of the city most vulnerable to projected future tidal flooding. He also utilized the Council’s oversight authority to improve the operations of the Rapid Repairs and Built It Back programs.

Ulrich attended St. Francis College in Brooklyn and Baruch College School of Public Affairs. He grew up in Ozone Park, Queens, and lives in Rockaway Park, Queens. He is the first member of his family to earn a college degree.

About Kazimir Vilenchik, P.E.

Kazimir Vilenchik, P.E. joined the DOB in October 2008 as deputy borough commissioner in Staten Island and served in Queens, Manhattan, and Brooklyn before becoming borough commissioner of Brooklyn in 2018. As borough commissioner, Vilenchik worked with a wide range of stakeholders to improve accountability and efficiency for construction processes in Brooklyn, while leading the borough office through the COVID-19 pandemic. He was a key participant in the implementation of the Universal Pre-K program and has worked on the development and implementation of code and zoning changes to promote affordable housing. He has received numerous

awards for his work on Universal Pre-K and flood mitigation efforts following Superstorm Sandy. Before entering public service, Vilenchik worked as an inspector, structural engineer, and project manager over more than 20 years in the private sector.

Vilenchik attended Belarussian State Polytechnic University in Minsk, Belarus. He is a New York State licensed professional engineer.

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