

City Council To Fight Extreme Weather With Legislation

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Legislation aimed at fortifying the city's infrastructure to withstand future extreme weather events like Superstorm Sandy has been introduced into the City Council.

"Before we see another Hurricane Sandy hit our five boroughs, we must ensure our shoreline, our streets, our transportation system, our electrical system — every part of our city's foundation and groundwork is fully prepared," said Council Speaker Christine Quinn before the legislation was introduced. "If we want to protect our neighborhoods and prevent and limit future devastation, we have to act now."

The mayor's office said it was reviewing the bills.

The Council also announced a series of oversight hearings to look at the city's response to Sandy, scheduled to begin in January.

When asked whether the Council would look at the question of whether some rebuilding along the shoreline should be reconsidered, Quinn said it was a debate worth having.

"You don't want to ever say you can't rebuild, you can't go back, but it is clearly a tough discussion we are going to have to have," she said. "There are some real legitimate environmental, weather, safety issues here. And we have to have the conversation because New Yorkers are asking us to have it."

Here is a rundown of the package of bills announced today and introduced at the stated meeting:

â€˜ A bill to require the mayor's Office of Long-Term Planning and Sustainability to examine whether it would be possible to relocate power lines underground. The study would have to be conducted within six months of [the bill being enacted](#) .

â€˜ A [bill to require](#) that the city adopt updated flood maps created by the Federal Emergency Management Administration. Current maps are outdated.

â€˜ A bill that would [require buildings in floods zones](#) to construct electrical and other key equipment "so as to prevent water from entering or accumulating within the components during conditions of flooding."

â€˜ [A bill](#) that would amend building code to require healthcare facilities meet national and state flood construction requirements.

The Council also said it would vote on a measure that would waive Department of Buildings fees for buildings damaged or destroyed by Sandy.

"This bill will do away with one step and one cost in the rebuilding process," Quinn said. "This may seem like a little step, but these fees â€| can really add up and become an enormous cost for New Yorkers."

Image by Bill Alatraste, courtesy of the City Council.

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