

Testimony

CUNY Board of Trustees Annual Brooklyn Borough Hearing

Submitted by: Sean MacDonald, New York City College of Technology

On October 16, 2025, City Tech held its second annual Climate Town Hall, with the theme of “What Climate Priorities Do You Want from Our Next Mayor”? Invited speakers included environmental and community organizations, City Tech alumni and City Council member Lincoln Restler. The town hall was one of many similar events held across several CUNY campuses in the early fall to highlight the importance of climate priorities.

The event, organized by NYPIRG, was held in the open space located on the ground floor of the City Tech Library Building with about 25 students and some faculty in attendance. Midway through the program during Lincoln Restler’s presentation, an audible ‘thud,’ followed by an enormous cloud of dust descended from the ceiling in the hallway adjacent to the event space, escaping from a tarp installed to protect from repeated ceiling leaks in that same area. Some attendees immediately began trying to wave the dust away, while others put on masks. It should be noted that this entire ground floor area also serves as a gathering and study space for students.

Despite this jarring episode, the day’s program and presentations continued. However, some students reported having allergy and asthma symptoms immediately after the event. While construction that had been ongoing just outside of the event space was halted in the wake of the incident, and we immediately made campus administration aware of the incident, we are concerned that the administration has not taken campus health and safety matters seriously. The dust incident is just the latest episode of many involving persistent problems with leaks, mold, falling ceiling tiles and related problems throughout the Namm and Library Buildings in recent years. Our repeated requests to have potentially toxic substances tested – for example, the dust at the Town Hall, or visible mold in many areas that have seen water intrusion – have too often been denied.

Ensuring the well-being and safety of the campus community – especially our students – should be a central priority. Communication and transparency, and a serious commitment to address these problems are essential to any meaningful assurances that the issues will be remedied.

Regards,

Sean P MacDonald

Member - City Tech PSC Executive Committee