



CITY OF NEW YORK  
**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 10**  
215 West 125<sup>th</sup> Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor—New York, NY 10027  
T: 212-749-3105 F: 212-662-4215

**HENRIETTA LYLE**  
Chairperson

**ANDREW LASSALLE**  
District Manager

## **Parks Recreation & Transportation Committee Minutes**

Wednesday, May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014, 6:30pm

Hon. Deborah Gilliard, Chair  
Hon. Karen Horry, Acting Chair  
Hon. Daniel Clark, Co-Chair

Meeting began at 6:40 pm and was held in the 3rd floor conference room. The meeting was chaired by Hon. Karen Horry, Acting Chair.

**Committee Members in attendance:** Derrick C. Graham, Lupe Moreno and Barbara Nelson. Michelle Booker and Deborah Gilliard, (Chair) were excused. Also in attendance were Chair Henrietta Lyle, Parliamentarian Manny Rivera, Board Members; Ashley C. Emerole, Daniel Parcerisas, Maria Garcia and Camille Edelen, Tamara Martin

**Guests in attendance:** Thomas DeVito (Transportation Alternatives), Rene Calvo (Mandela Park), , Kieishsha Y. Garnes (DPR), (WE ACT), Nadirah Ahmed (Better Family Life), Martin Baez, Stephen Miller (Streetblog), Maurice Sessoms, Julius Tajiddin, J.P. Partland, Bobby Jones (Dunbar Houses), Marianna Schaffer(North Star),Tom Lunke (HCDC),Malcolm Punter (HCCI), Jan Ransom (NY Daily News), Lachena Clark (Bradhurst Merchants) Shamell Martin (Partnerships for Parks)

### **Presentations**

**HCCI – Bradhurst Plaza Proposal** – The plan details the creation of a pedestrian plaza on Frederick Douglass (FD) Blvd. and Macombs Place in front of 2816 FD Blvd., between West 149<sup>th</sup> and 150<sup>th</sup> Streets. The proposed plaza is a collaboration of the Harlem Congregations for Community Improvement (HCCI), Harlem Community Development Corporation (HCDC) , Bradhurst Merchants Association and the community-based Herban Farmer’s Market which plans to operate a Farmers’ Market during the week. Per the plan, community residents will be able to get permits through the City’s Street Activity Permit Office (SAPO) to use the plaza for their own events, as well, in the hours and days that the farm stand is not running. During night hours the tables and chairs will be put into storage off-site and the plaza, which will remain closed to vehicular traffic, will function as an extension of the sidewalk. The proposal is supported by NYC DOT, elected officials and a variety of community-based organizations and institutions.

Strong opposition was expressed by community residents in attendance, who is concerned about a negative impact of the proposed plaza on the day-to-day activities of local residents, particularly seniors and young children traveling on school buses. The Dunbar Tenants' Association has a petition signed by 500 local residents who are against the plan. In compromise, the collaborative and community residents agreed to a trial run of the project, consisting of 3 Saturdays over the course of the early summer months, followed by an effectively publicized and well-attended community Town Hall. This would allow residents to get a sense of an actual experience for the plaza as well as an opportunity to discuss any collected data with respect to community impact.

**Outcome:** The Committee suggested, as a next step, that the collaborative coordinate with Dunbar residents and that the collective group provide a tentative schedule for the events to the PRT committee for the 3 trial dates and the Town Hall.

**David Garcia Rosen- DOE Funded Sports** – Mr. Garcia Rosen is the founder and Administrative Director of the Small Schools Athletic League (SSAL). The mission of the organization is to improve student athlete's academic performance, behavioral outcomes and attendance by facilitating interscholastic sports competitions tailored to the unique needs of small schools, bringing increased opportunities to New York City public high school students who currently have little to no access to interscholastic sports. The SSAL is building an interscholastic sports model that will provide year round athletics and twelve month wrap-around services, including life coaches and academic tutors. The organization proposes to facilitate access to interscholastic sports for Manhattan CB 10 students who attend local area public schools that have historically received low levels of New York City Department of Education (DOE) funding for athletic sports team activities in the areas of volleyball, soccer, baseball and softball. The SSAL is requesting the support of CB10 to compel the DOE's Public School Athletic League (PSAL) to proportionately and equitably provide funding for all New York City public schools.

**Outcome:** The Committee and community are in support of the project. It was suggested that a resolution be developed to substantiate the need for equitable access to NYC DOE funding for interscholastic sports activity for CB 10's local area schools. The Committee recommended that (1) SSAL acquire support from elected officials from varying governmental levels, (2) reach out to elementary and middle schools as well as high schools, (3) engage parents in local area schools and (4) reach out to the Education, Youth and Libraries Committee.

**Grant Harper Reid – Street Co-naming: Leonard Harper** Mr. Reid is the grandson of African-American Dancer and Choreographer Leonard Harper (April 9, 1889 -February 14, 1943). Mr. Harper, born in Birmingham, Alabama started dancing early in life as a tap dancer and after his father's passing danced in traveling medicine shows. Before Harper was 20, he and his new wife, Osceola Blanks, who herself was already a performer as a member of the "Blanks Sisters" danced as a team. The duo worked the Theatre Owners' Booking Association (T.O.B.A.) circuit as dancers "Harper and Blanks...the Smart Set couple". Their act was based on classic ballroom dances of the day, which was a unique performance of the time for African-Americans. Leonard and Osceola retired their act in 1926. Mr. Harper, who migrated to Harlem in 1923, was instrumental during the 1920s in transforming Harlem into the African-American

cultural center thru his nightclub productions at Connie's Inn, Lafayette Theatre and the opening of the new Apollo Theatre which drew people from all over the world. Harper was a producer, choreographer, dance instructor and director. Mr. Harper's theatre works left a lasting legacy and helped open the door of opportunity to black performers. Mr. Harper's directing, productions and choreography impacted future Broadway shows, especially thru his direction of the smash hit musical production entitled "Hot Chocolates" in 1929. He is also credited for directing the cabaret scenes in the first black talkie film ... The Exile. Mr. Harper managed both Connie's Inn and the Kentucky Club in Harlem in the early 1920s which was backed by mobsters. Later he moved to the Cotton Club where he staged such productions as the "The Cotton Club Parade" in 1935. Mr. Harper worked with most of the big name talents working the nightclub circuit of the time, i.e., Bojangles, Florence Mills, Mae West, Billie Holiday, Lena Horne, Fats Waller, Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, Mr. Harper died of a heart attack incurred while rehearsing a chorus line at Murrain's Harlem Club in 1943. He has been honored by the New York State Assembly and the New York City Council for his remarkable achievements in contribution to the Harlem Renaissance. Mr. Reid is requesting a street co-naming for 132<sup>nd</sup> and Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Blvd in honor of his grandfather.

**Outcome:** The Committee and community are in support of the project. The Committee advised that in addition to his extensive documentation that community support should be evidenced by submission of letters of support from local tenant organizations, block associations, resident petition, schools, religious institutions, businesses, etc., in the immediately adjacent area.

**Dexter Davis – Street Co-naming: Dr. Ora Mobley- Sweeting –** Dr. Ora Mobley-Sweeting (March 16, 1927 – Present) – educator and human rights activist, was responsible for the Harlem street renamings for 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue to Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Blvd., Lenox Avenue to Malcolm X Blvd., PS 154 to Harriet Tubman School and PS 92 to the Mary McLeod Bethune School. Dr. Mobley-Sweeting was also involved in Education Decentralization nationwide. Dr. Dexter Davis and the family of Dr. Ora Mobley-Sweeting are requesting the co-naming of Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Blvd. and 125<sup>th</sup> Street to Dr. Ora Mobley-Sweeting Square. Street co-naming guidelines do however stipulate that an individual honoree must be deceased.

**Outcome:** The Committee and community found the proposed commemoration to be favorable in view of Dr. Mobley's notable contributions. The Committee advised that community support should be evidenced by submission of letters of support from local tenant organizations, block associations, a resident petition, schools, religious institutions, businesses, etc., in the immediate area.

### **Voting Item:**

**Morningside Avenue-Hancock Place Resolution -** The Committee has been awaiting a revised presentation promised by NYC DOT since December 2013 and remains in continuous dialogue. The new plan would reflect traffic safety measures as alternate to lane reductions. The agency has once again postponed the tentative date for submission. Deputy Commissioner Margaret Forgiore advised that the agency is experiencing difficulty in arriving at an alternate streetscape design without approval of proposed signaling that cannot be assessed until warmer weather

when the area is more frequented by people going into Marcus Garvey Park. The plan will not be available until June or July.

The safety of community residents is of utmost concern to the Board and this is the reason for precaution. Lane reductions on Mount Morris Park West, Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Blvd and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue resulted in problematic and hazardous conditions that are still being remedied. Transportation Alternatives submitted a document listing 1,000 names in favor of the proposed DOT plan inclusive of reduced lanes. In view of the insistence of community residents in attendance, The North Star Neighborhood Association, as well as the delayed NYC DOT revised plan, the Committee and Board Members opted to support the community and remain in continued dialogue with NYC DOT. The Board's position is reflected in the revised resolution which was sent back to committee per the May General Board Meeting in response to a motion to add extensive friendly amendments submitted by Board Member Maria Garcia.

The revised resolution, which reflects the position of the Committee with respect to lane reductions, was discussed at length by the Committee before being put to a vote.

**Outcome:** The Committee and Board Members in attendance, with the exception of Maria Garcia, who was recused and Manny Rivera, voted unanimously in favor of the revised Resolution. **The vote was 7 in favor and 0 opposed.** The Committee will also request in writing that NYC DOT will review the impacts of changes in street design on pedestrian and motorist safety and mobility six months after their implementations and that NYC DOT has agreed to study these recommendations before proceeding and to make any necessary revisions to correct unforeseen problems as part of a clear and consistent design review process. The resolution was forwarded to the Executive Committee.

**The Committee is continuing its work on developing a District Needs Statement.**

**Adjournment – meeting adjourned at 9:46 pm.**