

Community Board 12 – Manhattan
Business Development Committee – Meeting Minutes
September 5, 2018

<u>Committee Members Present</u>	<u>Committee Members Absent</u>	<u>Board Members Present</u>
Eleazar Bueno, Chair	Matthew Levy, Asst. Chair	None
Tanya Bonner	Glennis Aquino	
Waldys Cruz	Domingo Estevez	
Sara Fisher		
Rud Morales		

<u>Public Member Present</u>	<u>Public Member Absent</u>
Bruce Robertson	

Guests: Angela Fernandez, Executive Director and Supervising Attorney of the Northern Manhattan Coalition for Immigrant Rights (NMCIR); Heidy Hernandez, Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce of Washington Heights & Inwood; Ira Hirschhorn, New York City Water Trail Association

1. Meeting called to order at 7:05 p.m. with quorum. Business Development Committee Chair Eleazar Bueno opened the meeting by welcoming Committee members and guests. As two of the guests were not present for the start of the meeting, Chair Bueno invited Ira Hirschhorn to present his information scheduled for the “New Business” section of the agenda in order to conserve time.
2. Ira Hirshhorn stated he was invited by CB12M Secretary Mitchell Glenn to make a presentation to the Committee regarding his findings while conducting water sampling for the New York City Trail Association’s Water Quality Testing program. Hirschhorn stated that while taking samples while biking between 105th Street and 172nd Street, he discovered a lot of standing water puddles that need to be filled. Hirschhorn showed Board members photographs of the standing water at one of the sites he sampled in the CB12 District area. Board members asked about the exact location in the photograph, but Hirschhorn stated he is unable to know his exact location as he bikes along the path. There were then efforts by Hirschhorn and Board Members to try to identify the exact location. Hirschhorn emphasized to Board Members that the dangers of standing water puddles include: 1). the threat of diseases like the West Nile Virus from the mosquitos the standing water puddles attract; 2). The downspout becoming clogged, causing the roadway to rot; and 3). Cars will find it hard to manuever over the standing puddles. Board Member Sara Fisher mentioned community complaints about the mosquito spraying that occurred last month in Washington Heights by the New York City Department of Health aimed at reducing mosquito activity.

Fisher also wondered if Hirschhorn's presentation was a better fit for the CB12M Health & Environment Committee. Fisher also stated she feels monies need to be allocated in the CB12M budget requests for the City's Fiscal Year 2019 Budget to look further into the issue and correct the problem.

Hirschhorn suddenly realized that he was not presenting before the CB12M Parks & Cultural Affairs Committee where he intended. But Hirschhorn decided to remain at his current location due to the location of the Parks Committee meeting being too far away for him to reach at a reasonable time to present his material.

3. Chair Bueno then proceeded with the main part of the agenda, as the guests for this portion had now arrived. Chair Bueno introduced Heidy Hernandez, Executive Director of the Chamber of Commerce of Washington Heights & Inwood. Hernandez told Board members and guests about the International Family Dine Out Festival happening at the Armory New Balance Track & Field building (216 Fort Washington Avenue, at 168th Street) on Saturday, September 15, 2018. The free event is part of the "Get Fit" Washington Heights & Inwood program. Hernandez stated it is an event for the whole family where they can taste healthy food and engage in fitness activities such as yoga. People must register in advance to attend. Fisher suggested that the Chamber invite the Washington Heights/Inwood Food Council to partner with them in a future event like this one. Hernandez stated this was a good idea.
4. Chair Bueno introduced Angela Fernandez, Executive Director and Supervising Attorney of the Northern Manhattan Coalition for Immigrant Rights (NMCIR), to speak about how new immigration policies effect businesses. Fernandez stated that the information she is presenting is very important because businesses and their employees need to be aware of their rights under these immigration policies. Fernandez discussed the 1-9 audit, as an example. Fernandez noted that if ICE reaches out to a business about an audit, businesses have three days to respond. Fernandez recommends that businesses take advantage of that legally-allowed time, as it gives time for the businesses to look thru their records. Fernandez stated it also gives businesses time to notify employees who have been flagged and gives those employees time to submit the documents needed, or for the employer to help that employee get the needed documents. However, Fernandez stated that if employees can't show they have the legal ability to work, employers have to end that person's employment. Fernandez warned that businesses can be both criminally liable and fined for not adhering to these guidelines of separating from an employee who is not legally able to work. Fernandez stated that it is not illegal to work with an I-9 number, but it is unlawful to work without authorization. Board member Rud Morales stated she wants more vigor and attention on this issue, as well as the 1099 issue. Fernandez agreed, stating that ICE is targeting immigrant-owned businesses in audits. Fernandez also stated it is important for businesses to know the difference between an I-9 employee and a 1099 employee. Board Member Morales

expressed a desire for a larger forum discussion with NMCIR on this issue, as not everyone has funds for an immigration lawyer. Fernandez discussed some things ICE can and cannot do when interacting with businesses: they can come into restaurants as they are public spaces, but they are not allowed to go into a private space and make an arrest unless they have a judicial warrant signed by a federal judge. Fernandez also encouraged businesses to send people with issues and needs to her organization and to train employees not to engage at all with ICE agents. Board Member Sara Fisher stated she would like to have fact sheets that can be given to businesses and their employees. Fernandez stated her agency is in the process of getting those fact sheets, and can have a one-pager ready for the September 15, 2018 “Get Fit” event at the Armory. Chair Bueno asked Board Member Fisher to draft a resolution on behalf of the Business Development Committee to obtain funding for the desired forum on the immigration policy impact on businesses. Board Member Fisher will work on that draft and present at the next Business Development Committee meeting.

5. The main portion of the meeting was concluded, and the New Business portion of the meeting continued from where it left off earlier in the evening. Board Member Fisher stated she wanted to introduce a resolution stating that the Committee opposes the Inwood Rezoning proposal that passed the City Council on August 8, 2018. Fisher stated that the proposal was not in the community’s best interest. Fisher stated she was very upset at seeing a press release by the New York City Economic Development Corp. that included a quote by the CB12M Board Vice-Chair Richard Lewis supporting the rezoning. Fisher stated that it feels like all of the work the Board has done over the last three years was for nothing. Chair Bueno stated that the board has lost some strength and some confidence from the public as a result of this issue. Board Member Fisher stated that the Board speaks for the community and we don’t work for politicians who may have appointed people to the Community Board. Board Member Fisher stated that she doesn’t think that Vice-Chair Lewis has the authority to say something in direct opposition to what the Board wanted. Board Member Morales stated that a lot of people lost a lot of faith in our Community Board after that EDC event. Chair Bueno added that the underlying elephant in the room is that what groups like Uptown United Platform, Northern Manhattan is Not For Sale, and others did on the issue was more than what CB12 did. Chair Bueno said CB12 needs to get united.
6. Board Members also discussed the Community Board Term Limits proposal that would limit Community Board members to four, 2-year terms. Board Member Morales stated she believes term limits are about getting rid of people who are against a certain agenda. A member of the public stated the proposal will be on the November 6, 2018 General Election ballot.
7. There was no old business.
8. The meeting adjourned at 8:21 p.m.