

Community Board 12 - Public Safety Committee Minutes

November 6, 2019

Committee Members Present: Curtis Young (Chair), Katherine Diaz (Board Member), Ashley Fernandez (Board Member), Graham Ciarulo (Board Member), Yosef Kalinsky (Board Member), Nobles Crawford

Absent: Noquel Matos, Francisco Alvarez,

Excused: Danielle Jetto, Rud Morales, Lilliam Arias, Gabriella Estrella

Welcome, Opening Remarks, and Agenda

Curtis Young, Public Safety Committee Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:03pm. The meeting was recorded to a digital audio file on an OLYMPUS handheld device. Board members introduced themselves as did members of city agencies and the public. A quorum was established for the meeting.

Presentation on Marijuana Sentencing Laws by the Manhattan DA's office

The Manhattan District Attorney's office has worked closely with their Crime Strategy Unit team this year. As of August 2018, low level marijuana crimes will no longer be prosecuted. There was a six-month national review analysis that was handed out at the meeting. The Manhattan DA's office guided legislature to this conclusion. Low level crimes are considered as 56 grams or less and a C summons can be issued by NYPD.

There are two exemptions to these offenses no longer being prosecuted. The criminal sale of marijuana and possession of marijuana with an intent to sell (i.e. held in small bags) is illegal and therefore prosecutable under the law. The second, is if the use of marijuana is a public safety concern to the community.

The Manhattan DA's office shared that the New York State legislature became very close to the legalization of marijuana, but it will be re-evaluated in 2020. Questions were raised about how this affects bikers and drivers and it is difficult to decipher through and at subjective to the situation and persons involved. There were also concerns about the use of marijuana in individual homes. Each apartment building is governed individually and those concerned about the smell should raise complaints to their landlord or managing company.

Marijuana is still prohibited in areas where smoking cigarettes are prohibited (i.e. outside of schools, restaurants).

The Public Safety committee raised questions around the Key Performance Indicators the NYPD was measuring this by. Time saved relating to prosecutions and adjournment dismissal were mentioned as two possible strong components.

The DA office facilitated over 35 presentations on Domestic Violence in October, most of which were done in Washington Heights and Inwood.

Crime Stats (Transit)

District 3 reported that in the last 28 days on the ABCD transit line the 33 was down one crime and the 34 was up one crime. The most prevalent and consistent crimes have been training robberies. Citizens are encouraged to be vigilant and not keep their IDs and personal effects with their cell phone.

Transit police have been working to provide shelter for the homeless and connecting them with the right medical resources as needed. More to come on that in December.

Board members raised question about fare evasion to the NYPD. District 3 reported that they will staff people based on the complaints at a station. There is limited discretion they can use and if it becomes a rampant issue, they try to enforce it. They do not deal with buses - that is another unit that enlists plain clothes officers.

NYPD 33rd Precinct

The 28-day report was from October 7th to November 3rd, 2019. In this period, the 33 reported that they are 10% down on crime. Burglaries however are up 4 crimes for a total of 9 crimes compared to the 5 burglaries that happened in this 28-day period last year. Package thefts are still rising, and citizens are encouraged to ask the shipper for a receipt upon delivery.

There is a borough wide pattern of stolen tires. This trend is with 2016-2019 Hyundai vehicles. There was a total of 5 hits in this 28-day period.

On October 3rd, there was a homicide on the corner of 168th street between Audubon and Amsterdam avenue. It is believed to be a robbery gone bad. Two individuals, whom the NYPD knows to be local drug dealers were robbed and one individual was shot and died on the scene.

The ongoing investigation from the homicide on June 8th was closed on November 6th as the last of 5 suspects was apprehended and brought to the 33rd precinct.

NYPD 34 Precinct

The 34th Precinct provided that to date the 34th precinct is down 9% in crime this year and down 12.2% during this 28-day period comparative to 2018.

There were 19 felony assaults compared to the 25 felony assaults in 2018. Grand larcenies have increased by 53%. The increase is believed to be from package thefts.

In October there were 3 robberies in the 181st vicinity at Modell's Sporting Goods, Rite Aid, and CVS.

Fire Department

Kevin Murphy presented for the New York Fire Department. Between 161st and 207st there are 4 fire houses. In the last 28 days, there have been 49 structural fires, 12 non-structural fires (garbage fires), and 537 medical emergencies.

Holiday inspections will be conducted over the coming months as well as fire hydrant inspections.

Space heaters are a grave concern for the Fire Department and historically the reason for several fires during this time of year. Residents are reminded to not plug space heaters into an extension cord as they can overheat easily or catch fire if covered by items.

The Fire Department will cover Holiday Safety rules in December.

New Business

Community members have asked about installing lights on Fort George Hill for safety reasons. This will be brought up in our December committee meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:03pm.