

COMMUNITY BOARD 12, MANHATTAN
Executive Committee Meeting
530 West 166th Street, New York, New York

March 18, 2019
Executive Committee
DRAFT MINUTES

Executive Committee Members Present: R. Lewis (Chair); E. Bueno (1st Vice Chair & Chair, Business Development); I. Medina (2nd Vice Chair & Chair, Licensing); G. Dengel, Treasurer; M. Glenn (Secretary); B. Lehmann (Asst. Secretary); W. Benjamin (Chair, Land Use); E. Lorris Ritter (Chair, Parks & Cultural Affairs) Fe Florimon (Chair, Youth & Education); Fern Hertzberg (Asst. Chair, Committee for the Concerns of the Aging); Nick Martinez (Interim Chair, Traffic & Transportation); A. Ogilvie, (Chair, Housing & Human Services); M. O'Shaunessey (Chair, Public Safety); S. Simon (Chair, (Health & Environment); James Berlin (Parliamentarian); Richard Allman (Chair, LGBT & By-laws Task Forces)

Absent: M. Anderson (Chair, Aging Committee);

Other Board Members Present: T. Bonner

Staff: Ebenezer Smith, District Manager

Meeting was called to order at 7:11 pm by Chair, Richard Lewis

Chair's Report: Richard Lewis reported the following:

- He attended the street naming ceremony and the reception for the late Isaiah Obie Bing, former CB 12 member.
- A Preferential Rent Forum will be held on March 19th. HPD will be there. He will attend.
- The Inwood Merchants Association will meet on Wednesday between 6 pm and 8 pm.
- R. Lewis read a letter from Gristedes to CB 12 in which they asked for Board assistance In encouraging NYP to allow Gristedes to re-occupy it space on 169th Street & Broadway once NYP has constructed their new building. This letter was in response to the earlier letter sent by CB 12 to Gristedes regarding the suggested use of the vacant property they own on 168th & Amsterdam as a location for new affordable housing. The matter will be further reviewed
- The NYC DOT is experiencing some problems with their communication system.
- The Riverside Drive viaduct is still in contention.
- A public hearing will be scheduled regarding the closing of the Broadway Bridge at 225th Street.
- There were 54 applications for membership on CB 12. 24 Memberships are up for renewal and there are 4 vacancies. Public memberships are open.
- The CB 12 website correctly lists the Resolutions that were passed. There was a discussion as to whether to list Resolutions that did not pass, & the decision was not to list them.
- There will be a Public Hearing on the new homeless shelter planned for 286 Audubon Avenue corner of 179th Street) on Thursday, April 11th at 530 West 166th Street – 2nd floor. There was a discussion about the location and Ayisha Ogilvie indicated that DHS had attended the Housing & Human Services Committee meeting – but did no have any answers. She also indicated that HELP USA, which has been contracted to manage the shelter, has received a complaint of sexual harassment.

District Manager's Report: Ebenezer Smith reported the following:

- Ely Silvestri has resigned her position with CB 12 as of March 22nd in order to take a position with the Manhattan District Attorney's office. Recruiting to replace her position will take place once the vacancy has occurred. Pending a replacement, the position will be filled by a temporary worker.
- The NYC Comptroller's office conducted an audit of CB 12's equipment and found that we are in compliance. The only request is that CB 12 provide more detail on each piece of equipment such as the type, model number, etc. The office will comply.
- On March 28th, there will be a "Pop-up Tax Preparation" set-up in the CB 12 offices to assist community residents who earn less than \$54k a year to file their taxes.

Treasurer's Report: Gerard Dengel reported the following:

- He will prepare a monthly sheet of expenditures & revenue to review at the Executive Committee meetings.
- There was a discussion about the use and the cost of translation services at various meetings. Wayne Benjamin indicated that NYC has a registry of approved vendors – including translation services. Ebenezer Smith indicated that he will follow up.

Review of Calendars:

April Calendar:

- The Youth & Education Committee will meet on Sat, April 2nd at Isabella at 10:00 am.
- The Committee for the Concerns of the Aging will meet on April 4th at 10 am at the Nagle Ave. Y.
- The Public Hearing on the planned Homeless Shelter will take place on Thursday, April 11th.
- The District Service meeting on April 18th is actually the District Service Cabinet meeting.
- April 27th is Car Free Day. The WH BID is sponsoring the event. CB 12 will have a table.
- The CB 12 General Meeting will take place at Isabella Geriatric Center.

May Calendar:

- Land Use Committee will meet on May 8th, not May 1st.
- CB 12 General Meeting will meet at Yeshiva University.

Discussion about the scheduling of meetings for the following purposes:

- The Yeshiva University plan to revitalize its plaza on West 185th Street. – Decision was made to schedule the topic for the April 1st Traffic & Transportation meeting.
- The MTA would like to present information about the closing of the 225th Street Broadway Bridge. The Bridge closing meeting will be scheduled later.

Discussion about the Community League of the Heights (CLOTH) and their request for

- CLOTH conducted a study about vacant business sites in this community came up for discussion. There is a 19% vacancy rate. They would like to present their findings.
- There was a decision to have them present their findings at the next Business Committee meeting in April.

Committee Reports:

Parks & Cultural Affairs: Chair Liz Ritter presented the following:

- She referred to the minutes of the March meeting.
- The capital project scheduled for Ann Loftus Park refers to the middle of the park. Accessibility is an issue. There is more the Parks Department can do to remedy this matter as well as the features that exist at the perimeter of the park.

- There may be a replacement for La Marina. Any new partnership or replacement will come up for discussion at an upcoming meeting assuming when appropriate.
- Isidro Medina indicated that La Marina has to come back to the Board if a significant partnership is formed.

Health & Environment Committee: Chair Steve Simon, reported the following:

- There was a presentation concerning the brownfield remediation plan for 3875 Ninth Avenue at 207th Street. The comment period ends on April 6th. Several questions and concerns were raised at the meeting. He will review the concerns of the Committee and will respond in writing in advance of April 6th.
- The Resolution passed by the Traffic & Transportation Committee concerning the placement of billboards on Riverside drive by the MTA came up for discussion. The Committee adopted and approved the same Resolution.
- Julia Comagong of NYSNA updated the committee concerning contract negotiations and the matter of the closing of psychiatric beds at Allen Hospital. They are requesting a letter of support to foster continuing negotiations.
- NMIC will have the attorney who handles the lead paint situation in this community present at the next meeting. In addition, there will be an update on the status of the Audubon Research Center.

Traffic & Transportation Committee: Acting Chair, Nicholas Martinez, presented the following:

- A Resolution was passed opposing the placement of the billboards by AMTRAK on Riverside Drive overlooking the West Side Highway. It will now go the full Board.
- The Waterside Alliance presented their plans to establish ferry ports around the city. A public hearing about the Yeshiva University Plaza renovation will take place on April 1st.
- The Mayor's 10 Point Plan concerning the budget will be discussed at an upcoming meeting.
- There was a discussion concerning the number of pot holes along the Harlem River drive.
- A Resolution encouraging the MTA to include handicapped accessibility in its plans to renovate subway stations in our community will be considered at the next meeting.

Land Use: Chair, Wayne Benjamin reported the following:

- The Manhattan DA presented at the last meeting about companies who are in violation of site safety regulations pointing out that they may also be violation of MBWE requirements as well. They will provide CB 12 with some questions that should be asked when companies come before the Land Use Committee for various approvals.
- The HIT Lab currently housed at Columbia University property as a result of a \$20 million-dollar gift by the City. They are being pushed out and want CB 12 involvement to assist them to stay.
- There is a proposed rule change affecting BSA will e considered at the April meeting. The rule change is to promote greater transparency..

Licensing: Chair, Isidro Medina reported the following:

- Twelve licenses were considered. Two were "no shows". One was withdrawn.
- One new liquor license was approved.

Business Development: Chair, Eleazar Bueno reported the following:

- The meeting took place at the CLOTH School at West 159th Street where there was a first discussion of the CLOTH findings concerning commercial vacancy rates in this community.
- Councilman Mark Levine attended the meeting and provided an update on the SBA bill. He also spoke about the need for a commercial vacancy tax and the impact of landmark designation.

- A representative of “311” has been invited to attend the next meeting to review how the system of complaints within the City is administered.

Public Safety: Chair, Mary O’Shaunessey reported the following:

- There was no representation by the NYPD or the NYFD.
- Officer Bass of Transit presented about outreach to the homeless.
- Fire Department and Police Department summonses were discussed.

Concerns of the Aging: Assistant Chair, Fern Hertzberg reported the following:

- The speaker planned for the meeting cancelled at the last minute
- There was a discussion about the impact of the elevator replacement at various subway stations and the need for accessibility and ADA compliance.
- The responses by OMB to the budget matters relevant to the Aging Committee were reviewed.
- A discussion was held concerning the impact of proposed state budget cuts on senior services
- There was a discussion about the problems that may ensue with the planned location of the new homeless shelter on Audubon Avenue & 179th Street.

Youth and Education: Chair, Fe Florimon, reported the following:

- There was a presentation by NYC First a group that provides a program that teaches music to youth.
- The committee reviewed the OMB responses to budget items concerning youth
- A Resolution was passed to increase funding in FY 2020 to increase the number of Social Workers in schools. The ideal ratio of social workers to students is 1 to 250.
- There was a meeting on March 14th with the 33rd & 34th Precincts to plan for the upcoming “Building Bridges” March which is scheduled to take place on Saturday, May 18th.

Housing & Human Services: Chair, Ayisha Ogilvie reported the following:

- There was a discussion about the plan of NYC to phase out by 2023 the ability of apartments to be used as hotel suites.
- There was a review of the history and governance of the Armory. The matter of licenses and what the Armory should and should not be licensing and what they are actually doing was also a topic for discussion. A letter is being sent with specific questions to the Armory which they are expected to answer.
- A Resolution concerning Rent Reform was drafted but not voted upon due to the lack of quorum at the meeting.

Motion to Adjourn: Unanimous

Adjournment: 9:47 pm

Minutes prepared by: Elizabeth (Betty) Lehmann
April 15, 2019