

What exactly is the Manhattan Community Board #4 meeting on July 15th?

The meeting is the monthly meeting of Community Board 4's Housing, Health and Human Services Committee (HHHS). This committee is responsible for considering issues affecting affordable housing, hospitals and health care, and all types of social services in Community District #4. Some recent issues the HHHS Committee has considered have been the closure of St. Vincent's Hospital, the development of moderate and middle income housing on the New York City Housing Authority site at West 25th and 9th Avenue, and the Employer Sick Leave Bill currently pending in the City Council.

Why is a Committee meeting being called to discuss the Bowery Residents' Committee (BRC) Service Center and Shelter proposal?

All issues and matters that come before Community Board 4 are discussed and reviewed first by a committee. Applicants of a matter to be reviewed as required by City Charter, Law, Regulation or Zoning Resolution, or the proponents of an issue, present information to be reviewed by the committee. The committee then asks questions of the proponent or applicant. The committee also seeks out the concerns and positions taken by neighbors and interested community organizations. The committee then deliberates and determines a position. That position is drafted into a letter which is then considered and voted on by the full Community Board at its next scheduled meeting.

Does the public get to speak at this meeting?

The June 14, 2010 meeting about the new BRC shelter was a Community Board 4 Public Forum which invited community members to voice both their support and their concerns about this proposed project. This meeting tonight is neither a public forum, nor a public hearing. However, the Chelsea Flatiron Coalition has been invited to participate in this meeting as a representative of the surrounding residents and business owners.

What will the HHHS Committee do on July 15th?

The HHHS Committee has invited BRC, the New York City Department of Homeless Services (DHS) and the recently organized coalition of neighbors, the Chelsea Flatiron Coalition, to appear at the Committee meeting. At Community Board 4's public forum on the BRC Service Center and proposed BRC Shelter, BRC committed to answer, in writing by June 30th, 2010, questions raised by Community Board 4 and the public during that meeting. The Committee members will ask follow up questions to both DHS and BRC regarding their responses. The Chelsea Flatiron Coalition has already submitted its follow up questions to the Committee. The Chelsea Flatiron Coalition will be able to ask further follow up questions during the meeting.

What happens after the question and answer period?

The members of the HHHS Committee will deliberate in public and form a position to recommend to the full Community Board. The Committee will vote in public on its recommendations.

What happens next?

The position will be considered by the full Community Board for adoption on July 21st, 2010 at Fulton Center, 119 9th Avenue.

What role or effect does the Community Board's position have in the approval of the BRC Service Center and proposed Shelter?

The project, as presented by BRC, does not require any official public approvals under the New York City Charter, Law, Regulation or Zoning Resolution.

However, many proponents or applicants of issues which do not require public approvals seek Community Board support. The proposed BRC shelter is also proposed to be publicly funded by DHS.

The Community Board is frequently looked to as a barometer of public opinion since it represents many diverse community views. Community Board 4 has a record of thoughtful and balanced positions, therefore they are often taken seriously by City agencies and elected officials in their decision making process.