

**Community Board 9 Health / Environment Committee
December 9, 2008 Meeting Minutes**

Committee Members Present: P. Lewis, C. Perez, W. Simpkins, C. Singleton
Committee Members Excused: C. Gilmore
Public: Z. Torres, Partnership for the Homeless

At 6:50pm, Chair Perez called the meeting to order. Agenda was adopted. Minutes from the October and November committee meetings were adopted.

Report: Partnership for the Homeless

Zoilo Torres, Director of Community and Volunteer Program for The Partnership for the Homeless, returned to the committee to request a letter of support to open Peter's Place, a center for at-risk seniors at 429-423 West 127th Street (they formerly came before the Board requesting a letter of support for a move to 135th and Broadway in the old Claremont Theatre space). Hamilton Grange, Manhattanville Senior Center, Wilson Major Morris Community Agency, and Heritage Health, Community Cathedral Cares, and Congressman Rangel have all written letters of support for their program. Program is preventative, but also works with currently homeless senior citizens. He has presented already to the Seniors committee and Housing committee. Mr. Torres reminded us that Peter's Place is relocating from St. Vincent's Church on 23rd Street. They are being asked to leave the space to make room for a re-development of the space.

The program offers legal services, counseling including substance abuse counseling, rapid housing placement services, and a senior job development and placement program in addition to meals, temporary housing, recreation, and shower facilities for seniors. Program has a team of field organizers who can also assist seniors to integrate into new communities once they have found housing. They also provide "wrap around" services to assist seniors in staying housed. Mr. Torres indicated that the program does not ask clients to pay for their services, but that occasionally clients will request the organization to assist them in managing their finances.

Mr. Torres indicated that the Partnership, with a letter of support from CB9, will have resources from the Department of Homeless Services for the outfitting of the new space. Partnership has worked with architects to review the space and feels that construction, after agreements have been reached, could take 3-5 months. If everything moves well, the facility could be open by July, 2009. A letter from CB9 will assist the Partnership to comply with Department of Homeless Services requirements.

Partnership is also concerned with DHS closing bed facilities in some churches due to budget restrictions and cut-backs and has over 5000 signatures on petitions protesting these closures. C. Singleton pointed out that Peter's Place offers some similar services to the Department of Aging, with the exception of controlling clients' finances.

The committee voted unanimously (4-0-0) in approval of a letter of support for the Partnership for the Homeless' move of Peter's Place to the Mink building in Community Board 9.

OLD BUSINESS: Cell Phone Towers and FCC Regulations

Last month, P. Lewis raised some concerns about cell phone towers being placed on the roof of her building. Since then, C. Perez reached out to Lyle Ishida, Consumer Education and Outreach Specialist, and Patricia Chew, Senior Consumer Affairs and Outreach Specialist, for the Federal Communications Commission and was told that cell phone towers, if they follow FCC guidelines, should not interfere with any other equipment, including medical equipment, in the building. If the towers are not in compliance, the FCC will send someone to inspect. C. Singleton asked that we do a review of medical research on the topic. C. Perez indicated that she will work with the FCC to have someone visit a committee meeting and answer questions. She indicated that she will report back at our next meeting in January, 2009.

OLD BUSINESS: Manhattanville Health Center

New York City Public Design Commission voted to approve the rehabilitation of the Manhattanville Health Center. Now the Department of Design and Construction will vote. C. Perez reports that no one from the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene was present at the PDC hearing.

New Business: None

Meeting was adjourned at 7:45pm.

Minutes submitted by W. Simpkins.