



Hon. Vanessa L. Gibson  
Borough President

## **BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD No. 10**

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Joseph Russo  
Chairperson

Matthew Cruz  
District Manager

### **Public Hearing of Bronx Community Board #10**

July 26, 2023, 7:00 p.m.

Greek American Institute

3573 Bruckner Boulevard South

Bronx, New York 10461

**PRESENT:** T. Accomando, R. Baez, R. Barbarelli, C. Brockington, P. Cantillo, M. Caruso, J. Connolly, P. Del-Debbio, T. Franklin, D. Gonzalez, S. Hazell, D. Krynicki, J. Marano, MJ. Musano, N. Nunez, D. Prioleau, J. Robert, J. Russo, A. Salimbene, T. Smith, A. Torres, S. Woods (total # present = 22)

**ABSENT:** M. Ali, M. Bufano, J. Gomez Jr., J. Grell, D. Hunt, S. McMillan, J. Mondello, M. Morris, L. Popovic, N. Rosario, N. Sala, M. Sajous, J. Thomas, (total # absent = 13)

**Board #10 Staff:** Matt Cruz, District Manager  
Susan Duffy, Community Assistant

Chairman Joseph Russo began the meeting at 7:10 p.m. with the Pledge of Allegiance.

The purpose of the Public Hearing is to vote on an application received from Green Sun Inc. to operate a New York State Office of Cannabis Management (OCM) adult-use dispensary, at 3220 Westchester Avenue, Bronx, New York 10461. The agenda is as follows: presentation by Green Sun Inc., questions/comments from the public, questions/comments from Board members and a vote on the Resolution, noted below.

Chairman Russo noted that the applicants appeared before the Executive Board meeting on July 12, 2023 which was attended by Board members and public. The applicants are Elena Ristovski, Dragan Ristovski, and Edwin Ripoll. Mr. Desmond Lewis accompanied the applicants.

The applicants stated that they currently own and run several businesses independently of each other within New York City. Mr. Ripoll lives in the Bronx and runs a business in the South Bronx. Mr. and Mrs. Ristovski managed several restaurants in Brooklyn and Harlem. Plans for the Dispensary business will include two on-site security personnel, one inside/one outside; exterior of the property and parking area will be gated with interior/exterior security cameras. Enhanced exterior lighting will be installed. The business will operate seven days a week, from 10 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. At least one owner will be on site daily as well as a manager and several employees.

### **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SECTION:**

1. Albert Jansky, Pelham Bay resident: Mr. Jansky is against the Dispensary and expressed concern about the added problems and negative behaviors it will bring to the area.
2. Renata Raffi: Ms. Raffi asked the applicants about security for the facility.

Desmond Lewis, on behalf of the applicants addressed Ms. Raffi's concern. Mr. Lewis said that all OCM business undergo strict scrutiny from New York State adding that Board approval is not needed. Those entering a Dispensary must undergo identification, in which a photo id is scanned. A second identification is performed upon purchase; all purchases are tracked electronically by NYS OCM. Security will include cameras, gates, personnel and lighting.

3. Kevin Daloia: read a statement and did not oppose the Dispensary.
4. William and Camilla Washington: Both are opposed to the Dispensary. They are concerned about negative consequences a dispensary would bring to the neighborhood.
5. Irene Karounas: Ms. Karounas is against the Dispensary.
6. Anthony Saciolo: Mr. Saciolo is against the Dispensary. He noted that crime has increase due to the unlicensed/illegal smoke shops in the community and feels that this will only worsen.
7. Donald Jones: Mr. Jones is against the Dispensary.
8. Thomas Streppone: Mr. Streppone is against the Dispensary
9. Bob Bieder: Mr. Bieder is in support of the Dispensary, explaining the differences between legal and unregulated smoke shops. He added that a stipulations document agreed to by the applicants was signed.
10. Elsie Santana: Ms. Santana is against the Dispensary. A concern is the addictive behaviors and users.

Purchases will be tracked electronically by the Seed to Sale Tracking System. Illegal smoke shops are more harmful than legal Dispensaries in that there is no identification/tracking measures.

11. Robin Mitnick: Ms. Mitnick is in support of the Dispensary.
12. Michele Torrioni: Ms. Torrioni read a prepared statement outlining the negative effects that have occurred in the community, such as zoning changes resulting in excessive development. Ms. Torrioni asked the applicants if they have spoken to surrounding businesses and residents.

The applicants have not spoken to businesses and residents.

13. George Havranek: Mr. Havranek is the against the Dispensary. He expressed concerned about the location and stated it should be away from residences. He agreed with the comments made by Ms. Torrioni.

A motion to close the Public Participation Session was unanimously approved.

Board member questions included current business operations, on-site personnel, staffing numbers/ages, hours of operation, handling outside security, and lighting. Comments included discussions over fentanyl overdoses, illegal vs legal shops. One Board member noted that Dispensary applications undergo scrutiny that is not required of applicants for liquor licenses.

Many of the questions were answered in the paragraph at the bottom of Page 1 in these minutes. Additional information about staffing included five employees will be on site daily and all will be 25 years of age or older. It was noted that the location will not allow young adults under the age of 21 on the premise and will be escorted off the property by security personnel. As of the current moment, it has not been decided if the security personnel will be armed. Any violent disruptions will require NYPD intervention by calling 911. A Board member asked about school engagement that was discussed at the July 12 Executive Board meeting. It was stated that schools have been contacted but there has been no interaction due to summer recess; contact will resume in September.

Mr. Lewis, Green Sun, Inc. consultant, informed the community and Board members that all NYS OCM applicants must create a community impact plan outlining the proposed plans beneficial to the community.

## **RESOLUTIONS**

1. **“Resolved...**at the recommendation of Bronx Community Board #10 that the application received from Green Sun, Inc. to operate a New York State Office of Cannabis Management-licensed (NYSOCM)adult use cannabis dispensary at 3220 Westchester Avenue, 10461 be approved and with notification sent to the NYSOCM.”

A motion to accept the Resolution was made by M., seconded by M. with the following vote: (1) abstention, (9) against, (11) in favor. **The Resolution passed.**

A motion to close the public hearing was unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted by Susan Duffy.

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This is to certify that the foregoing minutes reflect the information that was discussed at the Public Hearing Meeting of July 26, 2023.



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Matthew Cruz, District Manager  
Dated: July 27, 2023

