



Ruben Diaz, Jr.
Borough President

BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD No. 10

3165 East Tremont Avenue • Bronx, New York 10461

Tel: (718) 892-1161 • Fax: (718) 863-6860

E-mail: bx10@cb.nyc.gov

Facebook.com/BronxCommunityBoard10

Website: www.nyc.gov/bronxcb10



Peter J. Sullivan
Chairperson

Matthew Cruz
District Manager

HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE

April 23, 2019

Present: N. Rosario, H. Acampora, B. Bieder, T. Smith, I. Guanill, J. Marano

Absent: R. Barbarelli, W. Chin, L. Council, M.J. Musano, A. Ponder, A. Salimbene,

Guests: J. Vaini, B. Acampora, L. Gonzalez, B. Cohn, D. Teska, L. Vargas, A. Garcia, J. Garcia, J. Luccioni, B. Jaen, G. Gerbacia, S. Bernard, P. Spencer, K. Ramos, L. Rocco, E. Sementilli, M. Allard, S. Hernandez, J. Hernandez, G & P. Culen, D. Scarcella, Z. Torres, E. Valarezo, J. Miller, C. Mullane, V. Mullane, E. Forlich, A. Gershkowitz, V. Vittorio, I. Gonzalez, A. Corson

The meeting began promptly at 7:30 P.M with the Pledge of Allegiance and the first agenda item which was the Bronx Community Health Network. The organization is embarking on a program for anonymous information on medications to be tailored to individuals.

Chairperson Rosario then moved onto the next agenda item of the proposed post-substance abuse/recovery counseling facility at 2800 Bruckner Boulevard in Throggs Neck. The program is officially called Miracle City and is applying for an 822 designation in order to operate. The building currently holds a cardiologist, attorney, real estate businesses and political campaign committee. In June 2017, the building caused much concern for the community as it was rumored to be opening a shelter which was prevented under previous ownership. Chairperson Rosario read the committee's standing rules on member and public conduct advising everyone in the meeting that questions will first be asked by the Committee and then members of the public.

Miracle City's Chief Compliance Officer, Andrea Corson, discussed the facets of the program where she emphasized that though Miracle City is applying for an "822 designation" from the Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) from the New York State Department of Health, the business will not be dispensing or storing medication and that to operate counseling services an "822 designation" is needed. Bronx Community Board #10's advisory opinion is not required. In order to dispense medication such as methadone, it requires federal approval by the DEA, SAMHSA or by an accrediting organization like the Joint Commission. Miracle City is required, by NYS OASAS, to present before the Community Board. Miracle City stated it has no intention of dispensing medication. Other facets of the program include counseling, job training and group discussion resolutions. The program is out-patient where someone can receive step down or after care treatment. Clients must have already completed their substance abuse treatment and are ready to re-join their respective communities. Miracle City is not receiving any public subsidy to operate. Miracle City conveyed that it currently provides home-based community services where staff members visit. Its licensed professionals visit their clients in their homes to assist with their recovery on illnesses such as mental health, diabetes and asthma among others. Miracle City's hours-of-operation will be Monday through Thursday from 9 A.M. to 7 P.M. Miracle City

indicated that they are willing to work with the community to ensure that 7 P.M. closure is not every day. The members of the public present questioned whether or not services can be provided earlier in the day. However, Miracle City conveyed that they want to assist working-class clients as well which necessitates an after 5 P.M. closure on certain days. Currently, Miracle City is budgeted for up to forty (40) clients including staff members but is not limited to a clinical director, medical director, two (2) credentialed counselors and a security officer, part-time billing staffer, and a full-time administrative staff member as well as a certified peer advocate.

Among questions and concerns brought up by members of the public are the close proximity of These Our Treasurers, Inc. (TOT) at 2778 Bruckner Boulevard and that students are dismissed after 2 P.M. and that their safety could come in conflict with clients of Miracle City. To address this concern, Miracle City left open the idea of having more security if needed. Miracle City made mention of the occupancy threshold of the building. Its grounds and waiting rooms are not large and cannot accommodate influx of many people at once. All clients are by referral. Members of the public voiced their concerns throughout the meeting about issues such as having the organization in the community, whether or not Throggs Neck had issues with drug abuse though members of the committee did comment that CB #10 has issues with drug abuse by those that appear at precinct council meetings, the proximity to the schools, and whether or not clients may be registered sexual offenders, and how Miracle City can capture clients from zip codes 10461 and 10465. Miracle City does not intend to service registered sexual offenders who will be referred elsewhere. However, referrals made by doctors and hospitals bar Miracle City from discriminating against clients' personal histories. Miracle City reiterated that there is a community advisory group that consists of homeowners, merchants and members of the Community Board that can meet to discuss issues at the facility. Miracle City, per its representatives, seek to operate as a community-based organization and that members of the public are welcomed to tour the facility and bring to ownership's attention any matters of concern. The public voiced concerns about the level of involvement of Michael Fernandes who allegedly tried to have the building converted to a shelter. Miracle City representatives disclosed that Mr. Fernandes is no longer involved with the project, but a member of the public argued that Mr. Fernandes is a guarantor of a loan on the property.

Towards the conclusion of the meeting, it was stated that Miracle City is a health maintenance organization (HMO), but Miracle City representatives disputed and were not aware of this designation. However, no one was sure as to what this meant for the business itself. It is certain that the public – those in attendance specifically - is strongly opposed to the siting and operation of this business. However, Bronx Community Board #10 is not required to vote on this proposed counseling service.

This discussion concluded at roughly 8:45 P.M. where the committee moved onto to discuss and old business item where the Full Board voted to send a letter of support to state elected officials on behalf of the New York State Nurses Association. Mr. Press, an observer, advised that the committee should contact Assembly Member Reyes who was a former NYSNA member on assistance with nurse to hospital ratios. Also on, Saturday, June 1, will be the annual Healthy Lifestyle Walk in Co-op City in partnership with the Co-op City Section 1 fair at 10 A.M. Entrance is through Bellamy Loop. Community Board will be on Spot #78.

The meeting ended at 9 P.M. by a vote of adjournment proposed by R. Bieder and seconded by T. Smith and unanimously approved.