



**THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
BOROUGH OF THE BRONX  
COMMUNITY BOARD 7**



RUBEN DIAZ, JR., BOROUGH PRESIDENT

EMMANUEL MARTINEZ, CHAIRPERSON

ISCHIA BRAVO, DISTRICT MANAGER

**HOUSING, LAND USE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

<b>Chair</b>	<b>Alex Karman</b>
<b>Meeting Date:</b>	<b>Tuesday, March 9, 2021</b>
<b>Meeting Time:</b>	<b>6:30pm</b>
<b>Meeting Location:</b>	<b>Zoom Teleconference</b>
<b>Members (Check Those in Attendance):</b>	<b>✓ Alex Karman    ✓ Barbara Stronczer    ✓ Edgar Ramos ___ Denise Relf    ___ Edgar Cisneros    ✓ Erick Ascensio ✓ Sandra Erickson</b>
<b>Minutes Done By:</b>	<b>Alex Karman</b>

**Minutes:**

- I) Introductions**
- II) Review of previous minutes**
  - a) The committee unanimously approved the February 9, 2021 meeting minutes.**
- III) Follow up from previous month**
- IV) Old Business**
  - a) New York Botanical Garden / Douglaston Development, 2856 Webster Avenue**
    - 1) Aaron Bouska and Angel Hernandez of New York Botanical Garden (NYBG) and Russell Lang of Douglaston Development (Douglaston) presented an update on their building under construction at 2856 Webster Avenue. NYBG and Douglaston are constructing a 12-story, 188-unit building of senior affordable housing for households making less than 50% of AMI. NYBG and Douglaston closed on their construction financing in December and demolition of the site is almost complete. Fordham-Bedford Housing will begin marketing the units about 6-8 months before construction finishes in Spring**



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**2023. Fordham-Bedford will also provide on-site social services to residents. Douglaston explained that because the project will use Federal section 8, there will be no community board preference for applicants.**

**2) In response to Edgar Ramos' question about labor on the project, Douglaston explained the project was obligated to pay Davis-Bacon wages, which are close to union wages, and Douglaston expects to meet or exceed MWBE goals for the project. Douglaston explained that there would be a seamless transition for the Cherry Valley Market from its existing location to its new space on the ground floor of the building. Douglaston explained that Clinton Management, which is a subsidiary of Douglaston, would manage the building. NYBG and Douglaston promised to update the CB 7 again as construction proceeds.**

**b) LPC Certificate of Appropriateness: St. James Church, 2500 Jerome Avenue**

**1) Tomasz Mlynarski of Barry Donaldson Architects presented St. James Church's application to the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) for a Certificate of Appropriateness (CoA) to make improvements to the landmark church. Mr. Mlynarski explained that along with the construction of a new affordable housing on the property, St. James Church planned to restore several walkways on the property, rebuild stairs leading to the church, rebuild a vestibule to the church, rebuild a stone retaining wall, add new HVAC units, make improvements to a back pathway, and restore ornamental glass windows in the church. Mr.**



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**Mylnarski explained the construction would take place simultaneously with the housing construction. Mr. Mylnarski requested the Committee send a “preliminary letter of affirmation” to LPC in order to allow the application to appear on LPC’s March 23 session agenda. After some discussion, the Committee voted 5- 0 in favor of a motion to support St. James Church application to the LPC for a CoA.**

**V) New Business**

**a) Comprehensive Long-Term Planning Bill (Intro 2186-2020)**

**1) This committee briefly discussed the bill and determined more information was needed before taking a position.**

**b) Neighborhoods Now – Northwest Bronx Community & Clergy Coalition**

**2) Julio Salcedo and Selma Antoine from Neighborhoods Now presented their plan, developed as part of a collaboration with Northwest Bronx Community & Clergy Coalition (NWBCCC), to add placemaking elements to the segment of Jerome Avenue between St. James Park and 197th Street. Specifically, their plan would entail the installation of lighting beneath the elevated train either suspended from poles or mounted from the sidewalk. They also proposed seating, water features, and flags or banners, and that the section of Jerome Avenue could potentially be closed to vehicles at select times. The committee appreciated the concept, especially the idea to add additional lighting in dark areas. However, the committee was concerned the proposed elements might attract unwanted activity at night, especially in the vicinity of St James Park.**



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**After some discussion, the Committee voted 5 – 0 in favor of a motion to support the concept of additional lighting along Jerome Avenue, while expressing reservations about additional features, suggesting NWBCCC test and evaluate the elements before making them permanent, and limit the improvements to the area from Kingsbridge Road to 196th Street.**

**c) NYC Department of City Planning, Housing Data: 2010-2020**

**1) This committee reviewed a Department of City Planning information memo, which presented the number of net new housing unit created in Bronx CB 7 versus all other NYC community boards between 2010 and 2020. Geethanjali Minirajesh of the Department of City Planning also previewed several zoning text amendments CB 7 would be asked to consider in the coming months.**

**VI) Next meeting date: Tuesday, April 13, 2021**

**VII) Discussion on next month's agenda**

**VIII) Adjournment**