



**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

Chair:	Alex Karman
Meeting Date:	Thursday, May 12 th , 2020
Meeting Time:	6:30 PM
Meeting Location:	Via Zoom Teleconference
Members (Check Those In Attendance)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Alex Karman <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Barbara Stronczer <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Edgar Ramos <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Myrna Caldron <input type="checkbox"/> Edgar Cisneros <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Erick Ascensio <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sandra Erickson
Minutes done by:	Alex Karman

Agenda:

- I) Introductions
- II) Review of previous minutes
 - a) The committee unanimously approved the February 2020 meeting minutes
- III) Follow-up from previous month (If applicable)
- IV) New Business
 - a) Woodlawn Conservancy – Woolworth Building Grant Letter of Support
 - 1) Mr. James Garland stated that Woodlawn Conservancy seeks a letter of support from CB 7 for capital funding to renovate the Woolworth Building. He noted that CB 7 recently hosted a general board meeting in the Woolworth Building. The renovations would make the Woolworth Building more accommodating to the public by providing ADA compliant restrooms and upgrading the HVAC system. He explained that Woodland Conservancy was seeking grants of \$500,000 from Borough President Diaz and Councilmember Cohen. He also stated there would be no changes to the exterior of the building. After some discussion, the committee unanimously approved a motion in support of Woodlawn Conservancy’s grant to renovate the Woolworth Building.
 - b) BSA Special Permit – Planet Fitness, 309-311 East Fordham Road



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- 1) **Mr. Frank St. Jacques of Akerman LLP presented an overview of the application by DG Fordham LLC (Planet Fitness) to the NYC Board of Standards and Appeals to extend the term of the previously granted special permit for a physical culture establishment (PCE) at 309-311 East Fordham Road. He stated that CB 7 previously supported the special permit in 2010. He explained the renewal application seeks to amend the previously approved conditions by allowing the Planet Fitness to operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The Planet Fitness is currently open 24 hours on Monday-Thursday, 12am-10pm on Friday, and 7am-7pm on Saturday-Sunday. He stated that Planet Fitness's 24-hour business plan was a good fit for people who work non-traditional hours. He stated he was unaware of any issues with security during overnight hours. Before voting on this request, the Committee asked Mr. St. Jacques to provide more information about: security during overnight hours; opening hours at other nearby Planet Fitness locations; attendance during overnight hours, and Planet Fitness' post-COVID health and safety plan.**

- c) **Catholic Homes NY – 3054 & 3069 Villa Avenue**
 - 1) **Ms. Susan Albrecht of Catholic Homes NY and other representatives presented an overview of the proposed construction of two new multiple dwellings at 3054 & 3069 Villa Avenue. She explained the two buildings, one 14 stories and the other 12 stories, would together contain 186 units of low-income and special needs housing for households with severe mental illness (SMI) as well as social services for building residents. The buildings were financed in large part through support from New York State. The buildings would be constructed on lots now used for parking adjacent to St. Phillip Neri Church. She explained that Catholic Homes NY has engaged Fordham Bedford to lease up the buildings and provide management and maintenance. However, because the buildings**



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were financed by NYS and not NYC, the buildings would probably not use NYC's housing lottery. To make the community aware of the proposed development, Catholic Homes NY has reached out to the St. Phillip Neri community as well as sent letters and gone door-to-door in the immediate area around the sites. In response to a question from the audience, she explained there was a clause requiring local hiring in their agreement with the general contractor. She explained the on-site social services would employ 18 people. The architects explained the building would contain a mix of studio, one- bedroom, and two-bedroom units and use a palette of different color brick to distinguish one building from the other. The mass of the building at 3054 Villa Avenue would be lowered adjacent to the historic church so as to appear as a smaller, separate building. The architects explained the construction phase would require the temporary closure of parking spaces on Villa Avenue but not a full street closure. Ms. Albrecht explained the SMI population residing in the building would be screened and would be individuals who are able to live independently. The Committee noted the concentration of supportive housing that was recently constructed nearby on Villa Avenue. Ms. Albrecht stated the developers would work with CB 7 to promote local hiring and training. She stated the site would include 12 parking spaces for staff of St. Phillip Neri Church and School. She explained the development would benefit St. Phillip Neri by helping it pay down its debt.

- V) Next month's meeting date – Thursday, June 9, 2020 @ 6:30 p.m.
- VI) Discussion on next month's agenda
- VII) Adjournment