



# THE CITY OF NEW YORK

## BOROUGH OF THE BRONX

### COMMUNITY BOARD 7



RUBEN DIAZ, JR., BOROUGH PRESIDENT

ADALINE WALKER-SANTIAGO, CHAIRPERSON

DUSTIN ENGELKEN, DISTRICT MANAGER

## GENERAL COMMUNITY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

### Tuesday, June 17, 2014 @ 6:30 PM

Held at: Botanical Garden ◇ 2900 Southern Boulevard ◇ Garden Terrace Foyer ◇ Bronx, NY 10458

#### I. Public Session began with following speakers:

##### A. Deputy Inspector Nilda Hofmann, 52<sup>nd</sup> Precinct:

1. There has been an increase of robberies. However, on Father's Day, two male individuals were arrested with a BB gun and these individuals have been identified for a couple of the robberies
2. Photo of a bank robber who robbed 5 banks in one day were handed out
3. On June 19, 2014 at 7:00pm the Community Precinct Meeting will be held at the Bedford Park Senior Center
4. On August 5, 2014, the National Night Out will be held in the Williamsbridge Oval Park from 5:30 pm to 8:30 pm
5. The Grand Concourse and Gun Hill Road are now Slow Zones with a 25 mile an hour speed limit. Speeding tickets are being giving out
6. Enforcement of Dirt Bikes concerns is borough wide effort. Electric delivery bikes are being worked on locally

##### B. Andrew Cohen, 11<sup>th</sup> Council District Member:

1. He is working on improving conditions along Webster Avenue as well as seeing that Vision Zero projects improve pedestrian safety in his district

##### C. Fernando Cabrera, 14th Council District Member:

1. He reported that many agencies will now have their services base lined in the new budget
2. All schools which requested funding will get it as well as PAL's Play Streets and other youth services
3. Cameras at St. James Park are still being worked on
4. All city council districts will receive the same amount of funds
5. The Councilman has given \$5,000 to CB7 for board use

##### D. Anita Antonetty, DYCD Neighborhood Advisory Board (NAB):

1. This Board picks service providers for federal block grants
2. The Board is looking for new members (several individuals on the CB7 Community Board are members of the Neighborhood Advisory Board). Information Flyer available

##### E. Dilletta Pina, CB7 Member:

1. Spoke about the Board of Elections and their hiring of workers for the coming Elections. Information Flyer available

##### F. Frank Cutrone, UFT Resource Coordinator for Community Learning Schools:

1. This group is working to improve School/Community relationships. There is a Walton High School location



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2. Invited to attend the Education/Libraries/Cultural Affairs & Youth Committee Meeting
- G. William Francis, CB7 Member:
  1. Spoke about concerns of merchants along Kingsbridge Road
  2. Merchants are no longer being given long term leases
  3. Some businesses have closed which has put people out of work
- H. Christian Ramos, Blue Chus Owner & Kingsbridge Road Merchant Association Member:
  1. Spoke about merchant concerns for the area i.e. lack of leases and increase in rents as well as no work being done on the development on the Armory project
- I. Bernard Blackney, Community Resident:
  1. Spoke about a neighborhood concern. The 52nd Precinct Community Affairs Officer spoke with him privately
- J. Gwendolyn Steed and Hong Soon Kim, Green Thumb Neighborhood Program:
  1. Spoke on the need for metal fencing around street trees to protect them
  2. Expressed concerned regarding the need for people to pick-up after their dogs. It was noted that the Police Department is working on this issue
- K. Rena Whyte, Community Resident:
  1. Thanked CB7 and Chair Adaline Walker Santiago for their efforts to improve the community
- L. Carolyn Heredia, Principal of the new PS 77 School located on Webster Avenue:
  1. The school will be Pre-K thru 8<sup>th</sup> grade with a grade added a year. School is opening September 2014
  2. Invited to the Education/Libraries/Cultural Affairs and Youth Committee Meeting
- M. Michael Alvarez, Bronx Library Center:
  1. Spoke about new programs
  2. Book discussion program for Junior High Schools and an Artistic Art Program for Teens
- N. Cristina Contreras, North Central Bronx Hospital:
  1. Health Fair on Wednesday August 20, 2014 (Rain day August 21, 2014)
- O. Charlotte Walker, Community Resident:
  1. Spoke about concerns on litter and graffiti in the community. The Community Affairs Officer for the 52<sup>nd</sup> Precinct said that the Precinct has a Graffiti Office and that the Precinct could assist in getting graffiti removed
- P. Diana De Arce, Community Resident:
  1. Spoke about the increase of rooming houses in the community and if they were legal or not. Invited to the Land Uses/Zoning and Housing Committee
- Q. Betty Arce, Friends of Williamsbridge Oval Park:
  1. Love My Park event on Saturday June 21, 2014. Volunteers are needed.
  2. Spoke on the lack of trash cans in the Park as well as the Park having a rodent problem



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3. There were comments about the Parks Department needing a specific budget amount and that Outer Borough Parks need better funding as opposite to parks like Central Park and Prospect Park
- II. Public Session ended at 8:00 pm. and the meeting began
- A. Attendance Taken / Quorum present
    1. Present Members include: Gloria Bent, Nelson Cruz, Edward DeJesus, Sandra Erickson, Nora Feury, Paul Foster, William Francis, Fidel Gomez, Lowell Green, Helen Hartman-Kutnowsky, Jean Hill, Samelys Lopez, Eleanor Lundeen, Charlesetta Rhett, Khadijaha Saeed, Cynthia O'Neal-Riley, Dilletta Pina, Barbara Stronczer, Adaline Walker-Santiago
    2. Members not present (Excused) include: Mohammed S. Ali, Nilsa Cintron Hernandez
    3. Absent Members (Not Excused) include: John Snider
    4. Members in "Leave of Absence" include: Lisa Sills-Short
  - B. Approval of Agenda and Minutes:
    1. Approved unanimously
- III. Chairperson's Report by Adaline Walker-Santiago:
- A. Commended the WAM (Web Site/Acknowledgment and Media) Committee for creating the initial annual CB7 Newsletter. A copy was in all the members' meeting folders and distributed to the public. The Newsletter is a review of what the 11 Committees of the Board accomplished from September 2013-June 2014
  - B. The Board Chair acknowledged the Board's Committee Chairs and members, Elected Officials, Community Representatives, volunteer members and the WAM Committee for their excellent work this past year
  - C. The Newsletter will be posted on the CB7 Website and distributed at public events and at the office
  - D. The Chair also introduced the new District Manager, Dustin Engelken, to the entire body
- IV. District Manager's Report by Dustin Engelken:
- A. Thanked the Botanical Garden for the meeting place
  - B. He has been meeting with community organizations and individuals to learn about community concerns
  - C. Improvements to the Community Board office are being worked on
  - D. He is working on obtaining containers that can hold plastic bags that can be used for dog waste pick-up
  - E. He reminded people that open fire hydrants are not allowed and that the office can assist in getting spray caps
- V. Committee Reports:
- A. Budget/Personnel/Ethics reported by Andrew Laiosa:
    1. The Committee will met Monday June 23, 2014 to discuss attendance concerns
  - B. Community Relations & Long Term Planning by Mohammed Ali:
    1. No report was provided at this time
  - C. Economic Development by Eleanor Lundeen:



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1. The Chair reported that merchants along Kingsbridge Road are expressing concern about shorter leases being offered as well as rent increases
  2. The MTA is looking into merchant space at the Fordham Road D subway space
  3. The mapping updating project will start soon
- D. Education/Libraries/Cultural Affairs & Youth reported by Bruce Kaufman:
1. The Committee will meet Thursday June 26, 2014 to set up the agenda for September 2014-June 2015
- E. Environmental & Sanitation by Helene Hartman-Kutnowsky:
1. City Council member Cabrera has introduced Legislation that would inform a school community (staff, faculty, students and parents) within a week of when hazardous environmental contaminants were found at a school. The Chair hopes it will become a city law
- F. Health & Hospitals by Khadijaha Saeed:
1. On Thursday June 26, 2014 there will be a public meeting at NCB Hospital about the Labor and Delivery Unit. The Committee is working on having a Health Fair in the fall
- G. Land Use/Zoning and Housing by Jean Hill:
1. In response to community concerns, there is a need to get clarification about the KNIC development of the Armory. Adaline Walker-Santiago, Chairperson of CB7, read the following statement from Bronx Borough President, Ruben Diaz, Jr., "The Kingsbridge National Ice Center is a transformative project, one that will bring unique development, good jobs, new recreation opportunities and the most robust community benefits agreement the nation has ever seen, to the Bronx. My office is confident that this greatly anticipated project will continue to move forward and come to fruition as a definitive component of the 'New Bronx.'"
  2. CB7 voted to send a letter to the NYC Economic Development Corporation asking for a clarification about the KNIC development of the Armory
- H. Parks & Recreation by Barbara Stronczer:
1. The Committee presented the following motion: "CB7 supports the master plan for Van Cortlandt Park with the provision that once funding is obtained for any of the projects in the plan, the Parks' Department will return to the Board with a more detailed scope of the work for Board approval."
    - a. The motion passed
  2. Concerns about the condition of Aqueduct Walk Park will be raised at the Wednesday, June 25, 2014 Committee meeting. The Chair and the DM did a recent walk of the area and are concerned about its condition
- I. Public Safety & Quality of Life by John Snider:
1. No report was provided at this time
- J. Senior Services by Nora Feury:
1. The Committee will meet on Wednesday, June 25, 2014. The SCRIE (Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption) Program income allowance has been raised from \$29,000 for senior age 62 and over to \$50,000 effective July 1, 2014



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K. Traffic and Transportation by Lowell Green:

1. Asked the members to read the Committee's June minutes for an update on existing projects in the Community
2. The Committee will be looking at the five highest traffic areas in the Community and will see if anything can be done to improve traffic flow as well as pedestrians safety

VI. New Business:

- A. Lowell Green said she has been talking with the Bronx High School of Science's Holocaust Museum staff about arranging a fall tour of the museum for CB7 members. The tour would be during the week between the hours of 9:00 am -3:00pm

VII. Closing remarks by Chair Adaline Walker Santiago:

- A. Acknowledged Botanical Gardens for the beautiful enlarged space given for our end of the year, Community Board 7 General Board Meeting

VIII. Meeting adjourned at 8:50pm by voice vote