

MINUTES OF COMMUNITY BOARD #16 – November 27, 2007

Attendance

David Alexander
Joyce Anderson (E)
Renee Archer (A)
Octavius Bamberg
Sissi Benitez (A)
Josephine Blakeley (E)
Patricia Boone
James A. Bowens (E)
Gregory Coad (A)
Bonnie Crump (A)
Essie Duggan
Samantha Dunn (A)
Ivory Ellison (A)
Helen Giles (A)
Shirley Gonsalves
Daniel Goodine (A)
Sarah Hall
Henry Hill
Kofi Hormeku
Michael Howard (E)
Allene Ingram (A)
Daisy Jackson (E)
Javonn Johnson
Troy Johnson (A)
Dr. Cade Jones, III (E)
Pamela Junior
Eula Key

Danny King (E)
Bettie Kollock-Wallace
Shawn Lewis
Deborah Mack (E)
James Mack (E)
Yolanda Matthews (E)
Sadie McNamara
Rev. Joseph Norton
Edna Petty (A)
Marie Pierre
Elder Devon Ponds
Mattie Pusey (E)
Lashon Segar (A)
Ernestine Turner
Rev. Miran Ukaegbu
Alice Vines (E)
Dr. Merrill White
Herman Winston
Hazel Younger (E)
Viola D. Greene-Walker, DM
E. Jane Coleman-Assistant ADM
Jimmi Brevil, Community Assistant
Latrice M. Walker for Hon. Yvette Clarke
Essie Duggan for Hon. Velmanette Montgomery
Godzallia Britt for Hon. William F. Boyland, Jr.
Carolyn Sanders-James for Mayor Bloomberg

MEETING HELD AT BROWNSVILLE MULTI-SERVICE CENTER, 444 THOMAS S. BOYLAND STREET, BROOKLYN

PUBLIC HEARING

First Vice-Chairperson Henry Hill called the Public Hearing to order at 7:12 p.m. and an invocation was said by Rev. Joseph Norton.

IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD):

- 1) pursuant to Article 16 of the General Municipal Law of New York State for:
 - a) the designation of property located at 206, 208, 210, 214 Riverdale Avenue (Block 3602, Lots 34, 35, 36 and 37) and 774, 780, 782, 784, 786 Rockaway Avenue (Block 3602, Lots 38, 39, 40, 41, and 42), part of site 24 of the Marcus Garvey Urban Renewal Area as an Urban Development Action Area; and
 - b) an Urban Development Action Area Project for such area; and
- 2) pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter for the disposition of property located at 206, 208, 210, 214 Riverdale Avenue (Block 3602, Lots 34, 35, 36 and 37) and 774, 780, 782, 784, 786 Rockaway Avenue (Block 3602, Lots 38, 39, 40, 41, and 42) to a developer selected by HPD;

to facilitate development of a six-story, mixed-use building, tentatively known as River Rock Apartments, with approximately 54 residential units, retail and community facility space, to be developed under the New York City Housing Development Corporation's LAMP Program.

District Manager Viola Greene-Walker invited a delegation for the developer to come forward for a brief presentation on their proposal.

Mr. Mark Fraser, Manager for Guytec, Inc., introduced Mr. Herbert Quinteros of Danois Architects.

Mr. Quinteros presented drawings for a six-story building to be constructed on the southwest corner of Riverdale and Rockaway Avenues. The first floor will consist of ground floor commercial space that will front along Rockaway Avenue. The entry to the residential section of the building and the underground parking garage will be on Riverdale Avenue. The second through sixth floors will house fifty-four one- and two-bedroom apartments with community space on the second floor. There will also be recreation space and a laundry room for the residents.

Mr. Kofi Hormeku asked if the building will be elevated?

Mr. Quinteros stated that it will have one elevator.

Mr. Hormeku asked how many parking spaces will there be?

Mr. Quinteros stated that there will be twenty-five spaces which is over and above the required amount and the most that they can efficiently incorporate into the design.

Rev. Noel Norton stated that Guytec, Inc., founded and directed by Rev. Joseph Norton, is a faith-based organization that has been in the community for many years. They are part of the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development's Neighborhood Entrepreneur Program (NEP) - Mother Gaston Boulevard Cluster. Under the NEP, they manage nine buildings in the Ocean Hill / Brownsville area. Guytec, Inc. also operates out of the states of North Carolina and Virginia. Rev. Joseph Norton, along with operating his businesses in the community, is also a resident of the community for over two decades. Through the various entities he controls such as J N Realty, Norton Taxes, and Guytec Management, Rev. Joseph Norton employs about seventy people from the area. Much of that employment comes from tax preparation service from January through April.

Mr. Dennis Taylor, Executive Director of Sabaoth Group, Inc., stated that Sabaoth Group is a tenant services provider. He first met Rev. Joseph Norton three years ago and knew immediately that they would work well together because of their similar ideals.

Sabaoth Group, Inc. is located nearby at 475 Riverdale Avenue in East New York and he is also a resident of East New York. They currently hold ten contracts to provide services to tenants at NEP buildings. He has learned over the years that the longevity of these projects is predicated on the quality of services provided to the residents. They do needs assessments for every tenant to ensure that they each receive the necessary services that will allow them to be empowered. If the services are not available internally they provide the tenant a referral. A packet was disseminated with information about the various services that they provide to the tenants.

Mr. David Alexander asked if the proposal is for supportive housing?

Mr. Taylor stated that it is not.

Mr. Alexander asked will the services be rendered on the premises?

Mr. Taylor stated that there will be an area located on the second floor to service the tenants of the building.

Someone asked for a breakdown of the income ranges for eligibility.

Mr. Rich Comerford stated that the project is being funded through the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development's Low-Income Affordable Marketplace Program – LAMP. As such, the maximum income of any applicant is limited to sixty percent of the Area Median Income (AMI). Income limits vary by family size and there will be a small set aside for very low-income families. The income range for a one-bedroom apartment will be \$23,990 - \$31,905 and for two-bedroom apartments the range is \$28,680 - \$38,296. The selection process will be by lottery with a fifty percent preference given to current community residents.

Ms. Blanche Peltonbusch asked what about persons who are in need of larger apartments?

Mr. Comerford stated that this particular project is for one- and two-bedroom units, families of more than four people would not be eligible.

Ms. Peltonbusch asked if they considered that there are many large families in the community or that there are persons, such as herself, that are physically challenged and rely on the assistance of several family members who would need larger apartments?

Mr. Taylor stated that though she might not be eligible for an apartment in this particular building, she may be eligible for an apartment in another building. He offered a business card to Ms. Peltonbusch and asked that she contact him to discuss the possibilities.

There being no further comments, a motion was made by Ms. Patricia Boone, seconded by Ms. Pamela Junior and carried to adjourn the Public Hearing.

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

A motion was made by Ms. Pamela Junior, seconded by Mr. David Alexander and carried to dispense with the reading of the minutes.

A motion was made by Ms. Pamela Junior, seconded by Ms. Eula Key and carried to dispense with the reading of the District Manager's report.

First Vice-Chairperson Hill requested that the membership read both the minutes and the District Manager's Report at their leisure.

District Manager Viola Greene-Walker requested that particular attention be given to the articles on pages 1 and 2 of her report and that the information contained therein be disseminated to the community.

First Vice-Chairperson Hill recognized Ms. Dannette Sullivan-Hyatt, Branch Manager of Banco Popular's Pitkin Avenue Branch.

Ms. Sullivan-Hyatt stated that the bank offers the usual allotment of financial products. She is here tonight, however, to discuss some troubling trends that she has noticed. Developers, such as Rev. Norton, are rebuilding the community and it is up to us as a community go out and get a piece of the pie. We should not be looking for it to come to us.

There is a misconception amongst a portion of the residents of the community, who may have some money yet feel that they cannot own a home because they have no backup. She has been told by some who may for instance have received a sizeable inheritance, that they do not own a home because they do not have a man. She informs them that they have the financial means to purchase a home and that is what they need.

Guardian Accounts are a product that the bank has wherein the guardians of minors, who have money in their name, open and maintain accounts for the minors until they reach the age of majority (often monies received by the minor as the result of a lawsuit). It is not unusual for a minor and their parent to appear at the bank on the day the minor reaches majority in order that they may withdraw money from the account. She tries to advise them to use the money prudently, however, once their mind is set it is difficult to change it. The funds deposited in Guardian Accounts are tax-deferred. When cash is withdrawn, the bank is required to complete a Cash Transaction Report and the I.R.S. will seek to collect the taxes that have become due.

Compounding the problem, the same young person and their guardian (now wearing high-priced name brand clothing and flashy jewelry) will return to the bank within weeks to withdraw additional funds; and yet, they are still living in public housing and have now made themselves a target for bandits. On top of that, the money being spent is rarely being reinvested in the community. She has been a witness to individuals depleting \$100,000 in less than a year. She is here tonight to inform the community that the bank is there to be a financial education resource and they should take advantage of it.

We are an intelligent community; however, there are those who choose to misuse that

intelligence by attempting fraud. There have been instances where people have come to the bank with stolen checks and have fraudulent identification to match the check. Banks use a service call CheckSystems that is used to circumvent attempts to defraud by overdrawing an account at bank "A" and then going to bank "B" in an attempt to open an account without first clearing the debt with bank "A". There have been situations where a parent has established accounts in the name of their child for their personal use, which can cause a financial hardship for the child when he or she grows up.

Pamphlets are available on tonight's distribution table with information about scholarships available from Banco Popular. The scholarships are available to residents throughout New York State in the amount of \$9,000 per individual.

First Vice-chairperson Hill thanked Ms. Hyatt-Sullivan for her presentation and urged the audience to take advantage of the information that was disseminated.

Ms. Patricia Boone, Secretary of the Economic Development Committee, reported that the Economic Development Committee met on November 15, 2007.

They continued their discussion about the condition of Belmont Avenue between Rockaway Avenue and Mother Gaston Boulevard. Research is being done to locate the owners of the properties and meet with them to get their cooperation in our effort to revitalize Belmont Avenue.

There was also discussion about getting local entrepreneurs certified for participation in the Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (MWBE) program being offered by New York City and New York State. A special training project is being set up for Brooklyn businesses. As more information becomes available, the Committee will be publicizing it in the community.

A motion was made by Elder Devon Ponds, seconded by Mr. Kofi Hormeku and carried to accept the report of the Economic Development Committee.

Ms. Bettie Kollock-Wallace, Chairperson of the Land Use, Planning and Zoning Committee, reported that the Committee met on November 13, 2007 with representatives from the Central Brooklyn Community Services Corporation which is proposing to acquire 444 Thomas S. Boyland Street (the building we are in this evening), demolish the building and construct 129 units of low-income housing for single and married senior citizens and senior citizens who are raising their grandchildren and one superintendent apartment.

The project will consist of two buildings. On the first floor will be office space to house current tenants of the building at 444 Thomas S. Boyland Street and additional space for new tenants. The second thru sixth floors will house the residential units. There will be twenty studios, forty – one-bedroom, forty – two-bedrooms, and thirty – three-bedrooms. There will also be sixty-nine parking spaces.

The Committee recommends that the Board support this proposal because it will provide 130 units of low-income housing for senior citizens and grandparents who are raising their grandchildren. It will also provide more suitable accommodations for current tenants.

The Committee also met with representatives from Guytech Management Services, Inc. which is proposing to develop commercial space and 54 units of rental housing known as RiverRock Apartments on vacant land (Block 3602, Lots 34-42) bounded by Rockaway Avenue, Riverdale Avenue, Chester Street, and Newport Street. There will be sixteen – one-bedroom and thirty-eight – two-bedrooms. There will also be twenty-five parking spaces.

The Committee recommends that the Board support this proposal because it will provide fifty-four units of low-income housing and commercial space on what is now vacant land.

Ms. Kollock-Wallace requested Mr. Bill Wren, Chief Executive Officer of Central Brooklyn Community Services Corporation, come forward to answer questions pertaining to the acquisition and development of 444 Thomas S. Boyland Street.

Mr. Milton Hall asked if the land was purchased from the City?

Mr. Wren of Central Brooklyn Community Services Corporation stated that it would be given to them by the City.

Mr. Hall asked if there was any quid pro quo such as scholarships for the young people of the community.

Mr. Wren stated that there are no scholarships.

Mr. Hall stated that it is well to do for the seniors, however, there is a generation that is coming up that needs assistance as well.

Mr. Wren stated that the project is foremost a housing concern. If the funds are available afterwards, they will gladly provide scholarships.

Mr. Hall stated that since public funds are being utilized for the project, he is of the opinion that there should be a trickle down of benefits to the community. Not just the building which will one day be gone, but the youth will remain.

Mr. Wren stated that he agreed with the statement.

Mr. Hall stated that the community should request that something go to the youth of the community each time the City gives away land.

Someone asked what will happen to the current tenants of the building that are displaced?

Mr. Wren stated that every tenant in the building will have the opportunity to return.

Ms. Essie Duggan expressed a concern about the effect of displacing the services provided by the tenants and the affect on the community.

Mr. Wren stated that during the construction, Central Brooklyn Community Service Corporation will relocate the tenants at no cost to the tenant. They have already identified space where the services may be relocated. All attempts will be made to keep the tenants nearby and thereby, minimizing the affect on their clients. Upon completion, the new buildings will essentially double the amount of space available for service agencies.

Ms. Patricia Boone asked what is the timeframe for the project?

Mr. Wren stated that they anticipate construction time to be between eighteen and twenty-four months from start to finish.

Ms. Latrice Walker asked if there will be an increase to the rents paid by the current tenants?

Mr. Wren stated that the rents will remain the same.

Ms. Walker asked for what length of time will the rents remain stable?

Mr. Wren stated that the rent amounts are established by the Department of Human Resources.

A motion was made by Elder Devon Ponds, seconded by Rev. Miran Ukaegbu and carried to accept the report of the Land Use, Planning and Zoning Committee and its recommendations.

Mr. Kofi Hormeku, Chairperson of the Parks and Recreation Committee, reported that copies of this month's survey of the District's parks and playgrounds are available on tonight's distribution table. He urged anyone that has a comment or complaint about the parks and playgrounds to contact the Board's office so that the issue may be addressed.

A motion was made by Ms. Patricia Boone, seconded by Rev. Miran Ukaegbu and carried to accept to report of the Parks and Recreation Committee.

Reverend Miran Ukaegbu, Chairperson of the Sanitation and Environmental Protection Committee, reported that the Committee met on November 14, 2007.

According to data received from the Mayor's Office of Operations, the overall street cleanliness in our community is in the low 90 percentile. During the month of September 2007, compared to August 2007, there was an improvement from 85.7% to 92.2%. In October 2007, our street cleanliness declined to 90.5%.

Property owners are reminded to keep their sidewalks and the area along the curb clean. As of December 26, 2007, new hours will be implemented when Sanitation Enforcement can issue summonses to property owners who fail to clean their sidewalks and curbs. The new hours will be 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m..

Cell phones contain hazardous materials that, when discarded, can be released into the environment. It is the law in New York State to recycle cell phones.

A recycling program, co-sponsored by "Keep America Beautiful" and Sprint Nextel, is underway to recycle thousands of cell phones that are no longer needed.

Pre-paid recycling envelopes are available tonight for anyone who is interested in recycling their old cell phone. Regardless of the brand, all you need to do is remove the rechargeable batteries and place the batteries and your old cell phone in the envelope, seal it and drop it in the nearest mail box. No postage is necessary.

If you're concerned about the information stored in your phone, just remove the SIM card and reuse it or dispose of it separately.

This recycling program is open until December 31, 2007 and she urges everyone to take advantage of it.

Mr. Royston Antoine stated that the City is often an offender of its own regulations. At last month's meeting he pointed out that the fence lines of the parking lot across the street from 444 Thomas S. Boyland Street was filthy and up to now it has not been cleaned.

District Manager Greene-Walker stated that following Mr. Antoine's complaint, last month, the Department of Sanitation was contacted. They did, in fact, respond and clear the fence line and sidewalk area both along the Thomas S. Boyland Street and Bristol Street sides of the lot between Pitkin and East New York Avenues.

A motion was made by Mr. Kofi Hormeku, seconded by Elder Devon Ponds and carried to accept the report of the Sanitation and Environmental Protection Committee.

Dr. Merrill White, Chairperson of the Women's Committee, reported that the Committee met on November 19, 2007. The Women's History Month program is still in the planning stages. Certificates for community women and criteria for the selection of community women who will be honored were discussed. This event will be a tribute to Ms. Jeannette Gadson, the first woman Deputy Borough President and a past District Manager at Community Board #16.

The Women's Committee plans to invite a speaker from the Correctional Association of New York for our December general Community Board #16 meeting.

They are still discussing dates for the Prison Forum and the Education Forum. Plans to hold the education forum at a school or other educational facility are still being considered.

As HIV/AIDS and infant mortality are prevalent in our district, the Committee has considered inviting speakers from the Caribbean Women's Health Association, Inc. to some of the Women's Committee meetings.

An informational flyer listing services for women in the community should be ready by early next year.

The next Women's Committee meeting is scheduled for December 17, 2007 at 5:30 p.m.. An invitation is extended to all.

Mr. Antoine asked what can be done to reach the youth population to educate them about HIV/AIDS, in light of the fact that they do not attend forums such as this one and the prevalence of AIDS in this community?

Dr. White stated that Mr. Antoine brings up a valid point in that they have been able to get acceptable participation of adults at the forums. An example has not been set for the youth.

Mr. Antoine suggested bringing in rap artists to capture the attention of the youth.

Dr. White encouraged Mr. Antoine and others to come to the Committee meetings to discuss ways to have greater participation at the forums.

A motion was made by Elder Devon Ponds, seconded by Ms. Eula Key and carried to accept the report of the Women's Committee.

District Manager Viola Greene-Walker in behalf of Ms. Deborah Mack, Chairperson of the Transportation and Franchises Committee, reported that the Committee met on November 7, 2007.

In response to complaints about commercial truck traffic on Mother Gaston Boulevard and Thomas S. Boyland Street, the Department of Transportation (DOT) has posted "No Trucks, except local delivery" signs on Mother Gaston Boulevard at Linden Boulevard, on Thomas S. Boyland Street at Linden Boulevard, and on Thomas S. Boyland Street at Atlantic Avenue. A request was also made to replace the missing "No Trucks" signs at Saratoga and Atlantic Avenues.

A request was sent to DOT to survey the street lights along Livonia Avenue between East 98th Street and Junius Street, in an effort to increase the wattage because it's very dark underneath the elevated train tracks.

The Committee is preparing a questionnaire for dissemination in the community to report DOT problems. This questionnaire will be available at our December Board meeting.

A motion was made by Elder Devon Ponds, seconded by Mr. Kofi Hormeku and carried to accept the report of the Transportation and Franchises Committee.

First Vice Chairperson Hill recognized Ms. Dani Simmons of the New York City Department of Transportation.

Ms. Simmons stated that she is here tonight to do a presentation on PlaNYC 2030. PlaNYC 2030, announced by Mayor Bloomberg on Earth Day 2007 (April 22), is a plan that is thirty years in the making. It seeks to make New York the cleanest big city in the nation; even as the city adds one million more people to its population by the year 2030.

The City has come a long way from where it was three decades ago. Over sixty miles of waterfront wasteland has been reclaimed for use as recreational space. Unemployment rates are at an all-time low, we are the safest large city in the United States, and the City's bond rating (which allows it to borrow funds for many of its projects) is at a record high. Subways that were once broken down and dangerous now post near-record ridership. Our parks, that once were dumping grounds, are now cleaner and greener than they have been in decades. Housing stock, once abandoned, has been revitalized. Tourism is doing well and New Yorkers are now living longer than ever before.

The economic boom has also created some challenges for our city. Our subways and buses are crowded. The streets are often congested, especially in Manhattan. Air quality has suffered. The administration looked at these numbers and determined that the potential to back pedal as the population grew was great. They decided to draft a comprehensive land use plan to address these issues.

The plan had to be interconnected. You can not talk about land use without thinking about transportation. You can not talk about transportation without thinking about air quality. You can not talk about air quality without thinking about energy and how we power our city. You can not

talk about energy without thinking about global warming. It is all interconnected.

About a year ago it was decided to work on ten goals to provide an environmentally sustainable city. An Advisory Committee was formed, an interactive website was produced, and town hall meetings were held in all five boroughs in order to seek ideas on how to reach the goals.

On the issue of land use the goals are to create additional affordable housing, ensure that every New Yorker lives within a ten minute walk to a park, and cleanup all the contaminated land within the City. It is estimated that an additional 225,000 units of affordable housing will need to be built to meet the needs of the City. This will require rezoning of land and more efficient use of government property.

PlaNYC 2030 proposes to speed the clean-up of all the 7,600 acres of brownfields still in our city – while also ensuring public health protections by developing new time-saving strategies, new city-specific remediation guidelines, and a new city brownfields office to oversee the initiatives and encourage community involvement.

In the past five years alone, more than 300 acres have been added to the biggest and best parks system in the nation. But still: nearly 2 million New Yorkers live too far from parks and playing fields. We will open 290 schoolyards as local playgrounds. We will increase the hours of use at 39 fields by installing lights. We will reclaim eight large sites that were designated as parks decades ago but never completed. And we will also begin the most ambitious “street-greening” initiative in New York’s long history.

New York is fortunate to have not only a vast supply of fresh water, but also a wealth of rivers and creeks and coastal waters. But for too long, the city polluted these waters and as our population grew, that contamination increased.

We can change that. We can open nearly all of our City’s waterfront to recreation – if we overcome a major flaw built into our infrastructure many decades ago. Right now, 60 percent of the city’s sewer network captures both storm water run-off and sewage in the same pipes. Most days, that’s okay; our sewage treatment plants can handle it all. But sudden downpours, like this past August – strain treatment plants past their limits and then they dump untreated sewage into our bays and rivers.

Since 1980, we’ve cut this water pollution by more than half. Now, we’ll build on that progress, by investing more than \$10 billion in continued upgrades to our sewage treatment facilities and in preventing the rainwater run-off that triggers sewage overflow. That means greening our streets, promoting green roofs, even planting water-cleansing mollusks!

If we do nothing, the city’s total energy bill will increase by \$3 billion by 2015. This is why we are proposing ways to provide cleaner, more reliable power and ways to use it more efficiently. To do it, we will both expand our sources of clean energy and keep our demand constant even as we grow, a feat that no city has ever accomplished. To increase supply, we will build new clean burning power plants through guaranteed contracts, promote upgrades of existing plants, and create a market for renewable energy.

To stabilize demand, we will target our largest energy consumers through incentives that promote building retrofits and purchase of the most energy-efficient major appliances and we will also support new mandates – such as a proposal to require all new construction in our city to be 20 percent more energy efficient than our current energy code requires.

In addition, the City will ask the State Legislature to help it take an unprecedented step: changing the City Charter to require a funding level, equal to 10 percent of our energy bill, for retrofitting city buildings to improve their efficiency, which will make this the largest single energy conservation effort ever undertaken by an American city. And it will help us meet our ambitious goal of reducing city government’s energy consumption by 30 percent over the next ten years.

We are also proposing that the State establish a “New York City Energy Planning Board” representing the City, the State, and even Con Edison, to help us achieve all of these energy goals. This will allow New Yorkers to hold a single entity accountable for implementing a sound energy policy that examines both supply and demand.

There are going to be upfront costs in making our energy systems more efficient, but as an example of how those costs pay off in the long run, is a compact fluorescent lamp (CFL). A 26-watt CFL uses only a fraction of the electricity that a standard 100-watt bulb does – and produces just as much light.

This is just one way in which all New Yorkers can help reduce demand for electricity – and improve our air quality. Now, a CFL costs more than an incandescent bulb does. But it lasts about eight times longer. So, for each CFL in your home, you can save up to \$100 in lower electricity bills and fewer replacement bulbs.

We have already started to replace the bulbs in City Hall. This kind of approach – spend an extra dollar today, save two tomorrow – defines our entire energy plan. In the next few years, we might pay about two to three dollars a month more for energy. By the end of the fourth year, though, we'll have recouped that money in savings from lower utility rates and reduced power usage and the savings will start adding up. By spending an average of about \$30 every year between now and 2015, each household will be able to save an average of \$240 every year after that.

By making these investments in more efficient and reliable energy, not only will our wallets benefit in the long run, so will our lungs. Our plan for cleaner power, combined with conservation, will take seven million tons of carbon dioxide – and millions of tons of dangerous pollutants – out of our air every year. That will improve the quality of life – and lengthen the years of life – for millions of New Yorkers and it will help us reach our goal of achieving the cleanest air of any large city. Collectively, each of the individual initiatives will strengthen our economic foundation and improve our quality of life.

On the transportation front, there are two main goals of the plan: reduce travel times and reduce congestion.

New Yorkers are being slowed by packed trains. Congestion is overcrowding subway routes and key commuter lines. Today, 11 of the 26 subway routes experience peak-period congestion, and three are already at capacity – the routes in red (as indicated on a diagram displayed). If we don't act – by 2030, the situation will be intolerable. By 2030, it is expected that nearly every subway route – 23 of 26 – will be heavily congested.

But it doesn't have to be this way if we increase the speed at which trains travel, which will help reduce crowding – while also improving their reliability if we expand rapid bus service to areas of the city – particularly in Queens – that are poorly served by the subway if we build the 2nd Avenue Subway – not just from 96th Street to 63rd St, but all the way from Harlem to the Battery. If we expand ferry service to our growing waterfront communities and if we build a rail link to connect Lower Manhattan with Brooklyn, Jamaica, JFK, and Long Island where a light rail system could help many city residents and Long Islanders get to work more easily.

For decades, these and other major transportation projects – such as super express subway service to Queens – have been on the drawing boards spoken of in dream-like terms by planners and residents alike. If we could only build this, if we could only build that. The reason they haven't been built, of course, or why our subway hasn't been brought up to a state of good repair, is money. In fact, 18 critical transportation projects have identified that, collectively, face a \$31 billion funding gap.

We can continue to talk about filling that gap and I think we all know how that will turn out or, we can work with the State, and together, we can fill it. The consequences are clear. It's our choice. And we are choosing action.

We will begin by asking our partners in Albany to create a "Sustainable Mobility and Regional Transportation" – or "SMART" – Financing Authority. The SMART Authority will be authorized to raise funds and issue revenue bonds and it will award matching grants to transportation agencies – the MTA, the Port Authority, and the City's Department of Transportation – for key mass transit projects.

SMART funds will come from three sources: first, the City is prepared to make an unprecedented commitment of more than \$200 million a year to the SMART fund. Second, we'll ask the Legislature to match our commitment. And the third source of funding will be from congestion pricing.

There's no escaping the costs of the congestion on our streets – in all five boroughs. The costs are hidden – but they're real. Our child asthma rates are way above the national average. Congestion isn't the only cause, but we can't pretend it's not a significant factor – it is.

Congestion also leads to higher costs for consumers and businesses – because deliveries cost more than they would and people who cannot use mass transit decide not to come into the city. Who wants to sit in traffic for hours? Congestion wastes fuel – which fuels global warming. And, of course it wastes time. Time we could be spending with family. Or working. Or going to a park.

As the city continues to grow, the costs of congestion – to our health, to our environment, and to our economy – are only going to get worse. The question is not whether we want to pay but how do we want to pay. With an increased asthma rate? With more greenhouse gases? Wasted time? Lost business? And higher prices? Or, do we charge a modest fee to encourage more people to take mass transit?

The fact is in cities like London and Singapore, fees succeeded in reducing congestion and improving air quality. Many people are already paying to drive into Manhattan – there are tolls on most bridges and the four tunnels. But to avoid those tolls, many people drive through neighborhood streets. That not only clogs the streets, it increases air pollution – and asthma rates.

And why should commuters from the Bronx, Queens, Staten Island, and Brooklyn – and from the northern, eastern, and western suburbs – all pay different tolls? By charging a flat fee, we can eliminate these disparities – because tolls would be deductible. This means that commuters using E-Z pass at the Queens Midtown Tunnel and the Triborough Bridge and the Henry Hudson Bridge and the Lincoln and Holland Tunnels would all pay the same amount and so would commuters taking the Brooklyn, Williamsburg, and Queensborough Bridges.

They're all going to the same place: why shouldn't they all be treated equally? In setting the fee, there's no magic number, but it has to be high enough to encourage more people to switch to mass transit and low enough not to break the bank – for businesses and for those who have to drive. Based on thorough analysis and the experience of other cities, we believe that an \$8 charge would achieve these goals. There are many different ways that this system could work in New York.

As a test run, we will seek State authority for a three year pilot project, and we are very optimistic that, in working with State officials, we will secure hundreds of millions of dollars in federal funding for it.

Cars traveling south of 86th Street would be charged \$8 but those who travel only within the zone would pay half price. Most New Yorkers would not be affected at all – and not just because the vast majority don't drive to work. We believe a fee should apply only weekdays – from 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.. If you drive into Manhattan during the other twelve hours, or on a weekend, there would be no charge. And if you live below 86th Street, you're not going to pay for the privilege of moving your car across the street in the morning.

In addition, even during the 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. time period, there would be no charge for using the FDR or the West Side Highway so that people in Staten Island, Brooklyn, Queens, and The Bronx could still use the highways free of charge whether they're heading to Yankee Stadium or the Holland Tunnel. Even those who take taxis wouldn't be affected – because taxis will be exempt. In analyzing congestion pricing, commuting patterns across the city were studied, and it was found that of the New Yorkers who work in Manhattan, only five percent commute by car.

That's why we estimate that city drivers will pay only a little more than half of these congestion pricing fees. Drivers from outside the city will pay the balance.

First Vice- Chairperson Hill thanked Ms. Simmons for her presentation.

There being no quorum present, District Manager Greene-Walker stated that the vote on tonight's public hearing item will be held over until next month's meeting.

First Vice-Chairperson Hill recognized Ms. Latrice Walker from Congresswoman Yvette Clarke's office.

Ms. Walker stated that Congresswoman Clarke's District Office is located at 123 Linden Boulevard between Rogers and Bedford Avenues and the telephone number is (718) 287-1142. The telephone number for her Washington D.C. Office is (202) 225-6231. Ms. Walker stated that personnel from the District's Washington Office are in the audience and she asked each one to stand. She announced that a conference call will take place on December 10th. Persons wanting to take part should call Congresswoman Clarke's office for details.

First Vice-Chairperson Hill recognized Ms. Godzallia Britt from the office of Assemblyman William F. Boyland, Jr..

Ms. Britt stated that State funding has been allocated for the installation of security cameras throughout the Assemblyman's District. You may have noticed a security platform on Pitkin Avenue, do not be afraid, it is there for our protection.

You may have also noticed that there are many mental healthcare facilities popping up in the District. The Assemblyman will be meeting with mental healthcare providers to discuss the increase of drug addiction in the District along with other mental health issues.

Funds have been allocated to the Metropolitan Transit Authority for the renovation of the #3-IRT and "L" subway stations in the District. The work will begin in the Spring of 2008 and includes the Junius Street ramp.

Eighteen schools in the District will be receiving Campaign for Fiscal Equity (CFE) funds. The Campaign for Fiscal Equity sued the State for additional funds and won; these funds are finally going to be distributed to City schools.

First Vice-Chairperson Hill recognized Ms. Essie Duggan, representing New York State Senator Velmanette Montgomery.

Ms. Duggan stated that in behalf of Senator Montgomery she has placed pamphlets concerning homeownership on the distribution table.

Amongst the information is data about the School Tax Relief Program (STAR). Basic STAR is available to anyone who owns and lives in his or her own home. Enhanced STAR is available to senior homeowners whose incomes do not exceed the statewide standard. Many seniors may not be aware of this program, she urged the audience to take a pamphlet and pass it on to a senior homeowner.

First Vice-Chairperson Hill recognized Police Officer Dawn Townsend, Community Affairs Officer for the 73rd Precinct.

Officer Townsend reported that crime statistics for the 73rd Precinct overall is good. They do however, continue to be plague with shootings and homicides. Year to date there have been twenty-seven homicides as compared to twenty for the same period last year. In fact, they have already had more killings than the twenty-six that occurred all of last year.

Deputy Inspector Maddrey has attempted assigning officers to the locations where the shootings are taking place, however, the shootings are taking place when there is no police presence. It appears that the shootings are a series of retaliatory incidents. Thanks to some assistance from the community, most of the homicides have been solved. They continue to request that the community aid them by providing information on the whereabouts of persons known to have been involved in the commitment of a crime.

Police Commissioner Raymond W. Kelly, in an effort to provide an opportunity for Patrol Officers and the community to interact with each other in a positive manner, directed the development the Community Partnership Program. Within the Precinct, she and Police Officer Dean Elmore are designated to take newly assigned officers and familiarize them with different parts of the community. Beginning in January, Deputy Inspector Maddrey will incorporate the

Ride Along Program into the Precinct's Community Partnership Program. He would like to have as many people as possible take part and will seek the comments of the riders afterwards.

The Mayor's graffiti removal program continues to be in effect. If you own property that has been vandalized with graffiti, you are urged to complete an affidavit and submit to the Precinct. As the weather allows, the graffiti will be removed at no cost to you.

First Vice Chairperson Hill recognized Mr. Jon Furlong of the New York City Chapter of Habitat for Humanity.

Mr. Furlong stated that Habitat for Humanity is currently constructing 41 units of housing at the corner of Sherlock Place and Atlantic Avenue. Habitat is a program for first-time homebuyers that brings together family partners with volunteers from throughout the city who together build the homes. They are currently seeking applicants, preferably from the Brownsville/Ocean Hill community, for two-bedroom apartments at the Atlantic Avenue site. They are also seeking venues to do marketing sessions within the community. Anyone with an interest may see him after tonight's meeting.

First Vice Chairperson Hill recognized Mr. William Boone of the I.S. / P.S. 323 Beacon Program.

Mr. Boone stated that the program sponsored a Thanksgiving Dinner at the school that was well attended. He thanks the members of the community that supported this worthwhile effort. In cooperation with New York Cares, they are conducting a coat drive on Saturday, December 22nd from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.. In conjunction with the coat drive, they will distribute toys to kindergarten thru fourth grade aged children. If you are aware of any families with appropriately aged children in need, please have them contact his office at (718) 498-7033.

First Vice Chairperson Hill recognized Mr. Marcel Braithwaite of the PAL Beacon Program.

Mr. Braithwaite stated that their program operates from 3:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. Monday thru Friday at 985 Rockaway Avenue. They service young people 6 to 13 years old in an after school program from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.. From 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. they operate programs particularly designed for young teens. The programs include dance, drama, modeling, and steel band, just to name a few. They can be reached by calling (718) 485-2719.

There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Ms. Eula Key, seconded by Ms. Sarah Hall and carried to adjourn the meeting.