

## **MINUTES OF COMMUNITY BOARD #16 – April 26, 2011**

### **Attendance**

David Alexander  
Carolyn A. Benjamin-Smith (A)  
Margaret Brewer (E)  
Adrainer Coleman (E)  
Essie Duggan  
Helen Giles (A)  
Shirley Gonsalves (E)  
Danny Goodine  
Chanel Haliburton  
Sarah Hall  
Kofi Hormeku  
Michael Howard  
Allene Ingram  
Prince Issachar (E)  
Daisy Jackson (E)  
Carl Joseph  
Pamela Junior (E)  
Eula Key  
Bettie Kollock-Wallace  
Charles Ladson  
Deborah Mack (E)  
James Mack  
Yolanda Matthews (A)  
Linda Mayo  
Sadie McNamara  
Ted McQueen  
Genese Morgan

Rev. Joseph Norton (E)  
Deidre Olivera-Douglas (E)  
Blanche L. Peltonbusch (A)  
Marie Pierre  
Rev. Devon Ponds  
Mattie Pusey (A)  
Linda Rivera  
Melaine Rochford  
Wendy Rutherford  
Beatrice Saunds (E)  
Evang. Hellen Thomas-Purdie (E)  
Ernestine Turner  
Rev. Dr. Miran Ukaegbu  
Alice Vines (E)  
Annie Walkes  
Yvette Williams-Lawson  
Herman Winston  
Hazel Younger  
Viola D. Greene-Walker, District Manager  
E. Jane Coleman, Assistant District Manager  
Jimmi Brevil, Community Assistant  
Essie Duggan for Hon. Velmanette Montgomery  
Maurice Phillips for Hon. John Sampson  
Saba Debesu for Hon. Bill diBlasio  
Rene Hastick-Motes for Hon. Marty Markowitz

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

### **PUBLIC HEARING**

Chairperson Hazel Younger called the public hearing to order at 7:11 p.m., followed with an invocation by Deacon Edna Massey.

IN THE MATTER OF THE application submitted by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) pursuant to Article 16 of the General Municipal Law of New York State for:

1. a) the designation of property located at 21 Truxton Street (Block 1542, Lot 44), 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 such property to a developer to be selected by HPD;

to facilitate development of a five-story building with approximately 48 units, to be developed under the Department of Housing Preservation and Development's Supportive Housing Loan Program.

District Manager Viola Greene-Walker requested that Ms. Judith Jackson come forward for a brief presentation.

Ms. Jackson stated that she is the Chief of Staff at Services for the Underserved. She introduced her staff: Martha Lopez, Vice President of Mental Services, Angela Robinson, Program Director of the Mother Gadson Residence, and Deborah Cumberbatch, Senior Vice-President of Mental Health Services.

The project proposed for 21 Truxton Street will be a mixed use facility consisting of residential (39 units for formerly homeless individuals and 9 units for low-income individuals with preferences made to individuals who currently reside in Community District #16) and community space. The building will be 5-stories tall with a sixth floor setback. Schematic drawings of the building were presented which featured landscaping and typical floor plans. Financing will be provided by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development and other low income housing initiatives.

Services will be similar to those available to their tenants at 86 Mother Gaston Boulevard and will include vocational, health, and family conflict resolution services, and assistance with other issues which a tenant may face. An open invitation was extended to Board members who are not familiar with the Mother Gaston Residence to reach out to them through District Manager Greene-Walker to arrange a site visit.

Wherever they operate facilities, they work to be a part of the community. In Community District #16, they have sponsored a job fair and hosted community meetings at their facility. They intend on continuing to work with the community whenever possible.

Mr. David Alexander asked if the units will be for single individuals only or will couples be accepted.

Ms. Jackson stated that the units will be for singles only.

Someone asked if Services for the Underserved will have oversight over the construction of the facility and if so, will they be hiring from the community.

Ms. Jackson stated that she is not prepared to answer the question but will find out. Ms. Lopez stated that permanent jobs at the facility will be offered to community residents.

There being no further comments, a motion was made by Ms. Linda Rivera, seconded by Ms. Yvette Williams-Lawson and carried to close the public hearing.

### **REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING**

A motion was made by Ms. Yvette Williams-Lawson, seconded by Ms. Eula Key and carried to waive the reading of the minutes.

A motion was made by Ms. Linda Rivera, seconded by Ms. Yvette Williams-Lawson and carried to waive the reading of the District Manager's report.

Chairperson Younger recognized Ms. Cruz Fuksman from the New York Psychotherapy and Counseling Centers.

Ms. Fuksman stated that the New York Psychotherapy and Counseling Centers is the largest provider of mental health services in Brooklyn. They operate from two locations, one is in Bushwick and the other is in East New York. The East New York location is located opposite the Lindenwood Diner (2857 Linden Boulevard between Emerald and Amber Streets) and operates from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. on Monday through Friday and from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. Services are provided to persons four years and older. They provide assessment of individual and family needs, crisis prevention and intervention, parent workshops on topics geared to help parents enhance their relationships with their children, assistance to parents to enhance the skills necessary to help their child succeed academically, and training for school support teams and community programs on methods of helping children and families to improve their relationships and functioning.

Unfortunately, at this time they can only accept individuals who receive Medicaid and or Medicare. Private insurance and cash are not acceptable.

She encourages anyone who has or knows of an organization in need of their services to reach out to her. Brochures are available on tonight's distribution table and contain her contact information.

Someone stated that mental health issues are rooted in the history of the community. What does Ms. Fuksman know of the history of the community?

Ms. Fuksman stated that as a Hispanic-American, she is acutely aware of how a community can deny the need for mental health services. In general, the community believes that mental health issues are considered to be a personal matter that should not be discussed outside family circles. This internalization is harmful and can lead to suicides.

Chairperson Younger thanked Ms. Fuksman for her report and next recognized Mr. Brian Goldblatt of GrowNYC.

Mr. Goldblatt stated that he works out of the Brownville Youth Market which operates at Rockaway and Livonia Avenues. In a collaborative effort with Brownsville Partnership, the Market sells fruits and vegetables from New York and New Jersey farmers. The Market is open Fridays and Saturdays from 1:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. beginning July 5 through November and this year, they plan to expand to Tuesdays as well.

Mr. Daniel Murphy asked if the Youth Market accepts the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's Health Bucks.

Mr. Goldblatt stated that Health Bucks are accepted as well as EBT and WIC.

Chairperson Younger next recognized representatives from the Mayor's Adult Education Program.

The representatives, Maria Chaumahla and Aziza Akhmedova, stated that "We Are New York" is a special project created by the Mayor's Office of Adult Education.

We Are New York is an award-winning half-hour television show designed to help New York's immigrant population who are new to English. The show can make a difference in people's lives. Each show has a different story of immigrants living in New York City. They show how New Yorkers can work together to solve problems and create better lives for themselves. The stories capture the spirit of people who have come from all over the world to make the City their home.

We Are New York is intended to help people learn English that will be useful to them. Each week, a new story will show people speaking English in important and realistic situations, such as going to the doctor or talking with a child's teacher.

The characters speak the English of everyday life, but they speak a little slower than the average English-language television show. The show also has subtitles in English, helping people to understand and learn the language.

The We Are New York project also organizes free conversation groups across the City. Volunteer language leaders are trained and placed at community organizations. They use the show to help immigrants practice their English and learn about helpful City services. They are seeking organizations to sponsor the training classes by providing space for the classes. The space should comfortably accommodate at least twenty people and be equipped with a television set and a DVD player.

To learn more about the program, volunteer, or sponsor a class, please visit [nyc.gov/learnenglish](http://nyc.gov/learnenglish).

Chairperson Younger next recognized Ms. Sharon Leid from the Office of Kings County District Attorney Charles Hynes.

Ms. Leid stated that she is the Director of the District Attorney's Community Relations Unit. She is here tonight to let the community know about a task force that District Attorney Hynes has created to address the issue of youth violence in the Brownsville community. The program is entitled "Back on Track", located at 2318 Atlantic Avenue. They will host a Grand Opening Ceremony on Wednesday, May 11<sup>th</sup>. The program operates Monday to Friday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. She can be reached at (718) 250-3470.

Ms. Genese Morgan, Chairperson of the Economic Development Committee, reported that members of the Committee held a meeting on Thursday, April 21, 2011 at 6:00 p.m.. The Committee briefly discussed the Brooklyn Federation of Block Association's Annual Assembly which was held at Borough Hall on Tuesday, April 12, 2011 at which District Attorney Charles Hynes (DA) addressed the attendees as the keynote speaker for the evening. The Committee thought it important to report that at this meeting DA Hynes mentioned that he is

looking forward to helping Brownsville by providing assistance similar to what was provided in the Red Hook section of Brooklyn i.e. Red Hook Community Corp. The Committee will follow-up with his office to learn more about these plans and keep the community informed.

Additionally, on Friday, April 15, 2011 members of the Committee held a conference call with Hunter College to discuss the possibility of having a studio project completed for Brownsville. This project is a yearlong volunteer service provided by graduate students of the College. They will assist the community with designing a full proposal for revitalizing the neighborhood. The Committee is excited about the possibility and believes that it will be a great supplement to its efforts thus far on the revitalization of Belmont Avenue.

Furthermore, the Committee is interested in getting the entire community involved with the revitalization of our neighborhood, therefore, the Committee discussed the idea of starting a public relations campaign entitled “Be About Brownsville♥Ocean Hill”. This campaign will give residents an opportunity to make personal contributions that impact the entire neighborhood.

Lastly, the Committee reviewed three (3) applications for liquor licenses, one (1) new applicant and (2) renewals. All three establishments were food service providers with dining areas. The beverages are intended to be served on premises with the purchase of a meal. The addresses of these establishments are as follows:

- A. (New) El Patio Familiar Coffee Shop Corp – 361 Sutter Avenue
- B. (Renew) La Palma Restaurant – 371 Mother Gaston Boulevard
- C. (Renew) Rema Restaurant – 371 East 98<sup>th</sup> Street

All establishments have submitted to the interview with the Committee and have been visited by members of the Committee. The Committee finds no immediate cause to not support the approval of the application.

Anyone with any questions or comments regarding the ideas mentioned above should email her at [genesemor@aol.com](mailto:genesemor@aol.com).

The matter of the liquor license applications was submitted to the floor for a vote by the full Board. The Board voted 18 in favor, and 3 against, with abstentions by Danny Goodine, Michael Howard, Bettie Kollock-Wallace, Charles Ladson, Melaine Rochford, Wendy Rutherford, and Rev. Dr. Miran Ukaegbu to support the liquor license applications of: A) El Patio Familiar Coffee Corp. at 361 Sutter Avenue B) La Palma Restaurant at 371 Mother Gaston Boulevard, and C) Rema Restaurant at 371 East 98<sup>th</sup> Street.

A motion was made by Mr. Charles Ladson, seconded by Mr. David Alexander and carried to accept the Economic Development Committee Report.

Ms. Sadie McNamara, Chairperson of the Health and Human Services Committee, reported that members of the Committee met with staff from the BACHE (Brownsville Action Community Health Equality) project on April 20, 2011 and were given an update on the goals of the BACHE project which is to reduce infant mortality in the Brownsville community.

Statistics reveal that a disproportionately high rate of infant mortality affects African American and Puerto Rican women ages 14 to 49 in Brownsville. Social determinants that impact this include: family and community poverty, under-resourced service providers, poor coordination between medical and social health service providers, and the chronic stress of living in a low income and underserved area.

Partners in this project to address infant mortality and very low birth weight babies include the Brooklyn Task Force on Infant Maternal Mortality and Family Health, Brookdale University Hospital and Medical Center, Brownsville Multi Service (BMS) Family Health Center, East New York Diagnostic and Treatment Center, Kings County Hospital, and the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

By the year 2012, it is the BACHE project objective: 1) to develop and pilot an enhanced approach to prenatal care services offered by medical providers serving 60% of the target area priority population and 2) to develop and pilot a Community-Based Service Navigation (CBSN) system for social health services.

The Committee will next meet on Wednesday, May 18<sup>th</sup>, 5:30 p.m. in the Community Board

office.

A motion was made by Ms. Yvette Williams-Lawson, seconded by Mr. David Alexander and carried to accept the Health and Human Services Committee Report.

Ms. Bettie Kollock-Wallace, Chairperson of the Land Use, Planning and Zoning Committee, reported that the Committee met on April 12, 2011 with representatives of Services for the Underserved (SUS) who are proposing 48 units of supportive housing on a city-owned vacant lot at 21 Truxton Street. This site is also adjacent to their existing building at 86 Mother Gaston Boulevard that opened in 2010 with 49 units.

As you heard at tonight's public hearing, this proposal is before the Community Board at this time for a formal vote as part of the Uniform Land Use, Review Procedure (ULURP) process.

The Committee notes that at its monthly public meeting on June 22, 2010, Community Board #16 approved the preliminary plans for 21 Truxton Street.

The Committee recommends that Community Board #16 approve this project:

- 1) because it will create 48 units of permanent affordable housing on what is now a vacant city-owned lot at 21 Truxton Street, and
- 2) on condition that priority be given to homeless adults from shelters in Community District #16 for the designated 39 units for homeless adults and priority also be given to adults from Community District #16 for the 9 units of low-income housing, and
- 3) on condition that residents of Community District 16 be informed of employment opportunities at 21 Truxton Street and be given an opportunity to apply for them.

A motion was made by Ms. Linda Rivera, seconded by Ms. Allene Ingram and carried to accept the Land Use, Planning, and Zoning Committee report and its recommendations.

Mr. Kofi Hormeku, Chairperson of the Parks and Recreation Committee, stated that copies of his report can be found on tonight's distribution table as well as in each Board member's folder.

He requested the cooperation of everyone in helping to keep our parks and playgrounds well maintained by reporting any problems to the Board's office so that any questions on the issue can be responded to in a knowledgeable manner at Board meetings.

Ms. Marie Pierre stated that because there was no quorum present for the April scheduled Committee meeting, no business was conducted by the Legislative Committee. She calls upon those who have requested to serve on the Committee to fulfill the commitment by attending the meetings. She further stated that legislation is important to the community and that the Committee's next meeting will be on Wednesday, May 18<sup>th</sup>.

A roll call vote was conducted regarding the public hearing matter of the application submitted by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) pursuant to Article 16 of the General Municipal Law of New York State for:

1. a) the designation of property located at 21 Truxton Street (Block 1542, Lot 44), 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 such property to a developer to be selected by HPD;

to facilitate development of a five-story building with approximately 48 units, to be developed under the Department of Housing Preservation and Development's Supportive Housing Loan Program

The Board voted 23 in favor, and 3 against, with an abstention by Danny Goodine to approve the application with the following recommendations:

- 1) on condition that priority be given to homeless adults from shelters in Community District #16 for the designated 39 units for homeless adults and priority also be given to adults from Community District #16 for the 9 units of low-income housing, and
- 2) on condition that residents of Community District 16 be informed of employment opportunities at 21 Truxton Street and be given an opportunity to apply for them.

Chairperson Younger stated that in accordance with the By-laws of Community Board #16, at this month's meeting, she is to appoint members to a Nominating Committee which will meet and come back to the May 24<sup>th</sup> Board meeting with suggested names of members to serve as Executive Officers of the Board for 2010-2011.

She has asked the following persons to serve on the Nominating Committee: Essie Duggan, Michael Howard, Eula Key, and Annie Walkes.

Chairperson Younger recognized Mr. Maurice Philips from Senator John Sampson's office.

Mr. Philips announced that Senator Sampson will sponsor a town hall meeting on Thursday, May 18<sup>th</sup> at Holy Family Church on Flatlands Avenue. Senator Sampson is inviting the community to two job readiness workshops on Friday, May 20<sup>th</sup>, at Holy Family Church, located at 9719 Flatlands Avenue, the first entitled "Present Your Best Self" from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and the second, entitled "Resume Preparation" from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.. A job fair will also be held at Holy Family Church on Friday, June 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Chairperson Younger recognized Mr. Maurice Roberts from the Office of Senator Eric Adams.

Mr. Roberts stated that Senator Adams would like to hear about issues concerning New Yorkers and encourages you to contact his office by calling (718) 284-4700 or emailing him at eadams@nysenate.gov.

Chairperson Younger recognized Mr. Melvin Faulkner from Assemblywoman Inez Barron's office.

Mr. Faulkner announced that, in part due to the death of a neighborhood resident wherein the family was unable to access the decedent's home, Assemblywoman Barron has invited two attorneys, well versed on the issue, to address the community on the issue of probate. The workshop will be held on Saturday, May 14<sup>th</sup> at Assemblywoman Barron's District Office, located at 669 Vermont Avenue.

They are sending out a rallying call to end the dumping of homeless shelters in our communities. We need to stand up and let people know it will no longer be tolerated.

Chairperson Younger recognized Ms. Renee Hastick-Motes from Borough President Marty Markowitz's office.

Ms. Hastick-Motes announced that Borough President Markowitz has declared Wednesday, April 27, 2011 to be Denim Day in the Borough and will present a Youth Poetry Slam & Speakout event. This youth event will take place at Borough Hall from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., featuring the talent and participation of Brooklyn youth involved in a variety of healthy relationship and youth development programs and will be facilitated by poet/activist Caridad de la Luz. Partner agencies for this event include: The Center Against Domestic Violence, Safe Horizon/Brooklyn and STEPS To End Family Violence, & Day One. All are invited to join them and encouraged to wear denim for the day as a sign of solidarity for the youth.

Chairperson Younger recognized Ms. Saba Debesu from Public Advocate Bill de Blasio's office.

Ms. Debesu introduced herself as the Brooklyn Liaison to the Public Advocate's office and encouraged the audience to reach out to her with their concerns at (212) 669-4124.

Chairperson Younger recognized Ms. Essie Duggan from Senator Velmanette Montgomery's office.

Ms. Duggan announced that Senator Montgomery and her colleagues continue to work on the State budget. She is working to ensure that our community receives equitable funding. Senator

Montgomery urges the community to keep the pressure on my writing and calling your elected officials.

She stated that there are seniors in the community who are homebound and may not be able to have a hot meal. The Wayside Development Outreach Program can provide hot meals to these individuals. If you know someone who maybe in need of this service, please call (718) 443-6174.

Chairperson Younger recognized Mr. Randy Hudson.

Mr. Hudson cautioned the audience about making online purchases using their credit cards and suggested the use of debit cards which are designated for that purpose.

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