

## **MINUTES OF COMMUNITY BOARD #16 – SEPTEMBER 24, 2019**

### **Attendance**

David Alexander	Melanie Mendonca
Cynthia Bannister	Shemene Minter (A)
Margaret Brewer (A)	Genese Morgan
Dr. Cleopatra Brown	Deidre Olivera-Douglas (A)
Kaseem Clark-Edwards (A)	Busayo Olupano (A)
Adrainer Coleman	Anita Pierce (E)
Norman Frazier (A)	Marie Pierre
Danny Goodine (A)	Linda Rivera
Chanel Haliburton	JoAnn Sexton
Sarah Hall	Keturah Suggs (E)
Balinda Harris (E)	Richard Swinson
Zalika Headey	Rev. Eric Thompson (A)
Michael Howard (E)	Brenda Thompson-Duchene (E)
Gabriel Jamison (E)	Christopher Toomer
Lannetta Jeffers (A)	Ernestine Turner
Carl Joseph	Rev. Miran Ukaegbu
Maurice Joyner (A)	Deborah Williams (E)
Eula Key (E)	Pat Winston
Gwendolyn King	Viola D. Greene-Walker, District Manager
Leticia Knowles	Jimmi Brevil, Community Assistant
Dr. Betty Kollock-Wallace (A)	Hon. Latrice Walker
Charles Ladson, Sr. (E)	Ronald Baez for Hon. Zellnor Myrie
Digna Layne (A)	Matthew D’Onofrio for Hon. Roxanne Persaud
Kelly Lee-McVay (A)	Melvin Faulkner for Hon. Charles Barron
Albion Liburd (E)	Christina Serrano for Hon. Alicka Ampy-Samuel
Deborah Mack	Joy Simmons for Hon. Inez Barron
Yolanda Matthews (E)	Shelton Jones for Hon. Eric Gonzalez
John McCadney, Jr. (E)	Malcolm McDaniel for Hon. Eric Adams
Andrew McCoy	

### **PUBLIC MEETING HELD AT BROWNSVILLE**

#### **MULTI-SERVICE CENTER, 444 THOMAS S. BOYLAND STREET, BROOKLYN**

Chairperson Genese Morgan called the public hearing to order at 7:05 p.m., and an invocation was said by Ms. Sarah Hall.

Chairperson Morgan recognized Ms. Giovania Tiarachristie and Mr. Michael Sandler from the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD).

Ms. Tiarachristie presented an overview of the progress of the Brownsville Plan. Examples of progress include almost 700 new affordable homes and community spaces currently under construction, the transformative renovation of Betsy Head Park that began construction in late 2018, renovation of an industrial building to spur jobs, improved access to fresh and healthy foods, pedestrian safety improvements, expanded activities for children and young adults, and so much more.

HPD has also designated development teams identified through the Brownsville Request for Proposals (RFP) process that launched in August 2017 for three sites in the neighborhood. These projects are currently undergoing pre-development activities and preparing for environmental review and the public land use review.

A critical strategy to the implementation of this plan is the Brownsville RFP for the development of City-owned vacant land. An RFP is a competitive review process in which HPD asks developers to submit project proposals that respond to defined goals and guidelines that are informed by the community. Non-profit and for-profit were eligible to apply for and seek City financing for their proposals. HPD works together with development teams to ensure that projects are designed and built in keeping with the agency's standards for quality construction and environmental sustainability.

The RFP, issued on August 23, 2017 and designated on July 26, 2018, encouraged respondents to incorporate the goals and strategies outlined in this neighborhood plan. The RFP features

three themes that reflect community priorities: 1) Innovation and Entrepreneurship 2) Arts and Culture, and 3) Healthy Living and Food Systems.

The plan is organized around eight strategies to guide City agencies and local organizations as they design and implement work in the neighborhood. Any investment has the potential to accomplish multiple goals, and it is important that they aim to achieve a common vision, consider holistic impacts, and identify opportunities for synergy.

Strategy 1 Promote Active Mixed-Use Corridors - Increase access to services and amenities that bring activity to Brownsville streets, and couple affordable housing development with investments in the public realm to create safe, attractive, and accessible spaces.

There are RFP's for new mixed-use developments along Livonia Avenue, New Lots Avenue, Hegeman Avenue, Rockaway Avenue, and Mother Gaston Boulevard; commercial revitalization pilot project on Belmont Avenue and a Livonia Avenue streetscape plan

Strategy 2 Improve Connections Throughout the Neighborhood - Implement physical, design, and programmatic interventions that make it easier, safer, and more pleasant to walk and bike throughout the neighborhood, as well as cross to surrounding neighborhoods such as East New York.

Plans include community workshops to create design solutions for public safety on NYCHA campuses and the entire neighborhood, new lighting and pedestrian safety improvements at dangerous intersections, elevator and free connection between the 3 and L trains at Junius Street and Livonia Avenue subway stations.

Strategy 3 Create Active and Safe Public Spaces - Improve safety and health by creating high quality places for gathering, recreation, and community building.

Strategy 4 Provide Resources to Support Healthy Lifestyles - Improve access to healthy food, community gardens, quality healthcare and wellness programs, and places to exercise.

Strategy 5 Connect Brownsville Residents to Jobs and Job Training - Ensure City investments are paired with access to jobs and educational resources for residents, including opportunities in affordable housing construction and management.

Coordination between City and community-based workforce development service providers  
Summer Youth Employment Program opportunities with local businesses  
New Young Innovators Program pilot and computer science education in Brownsville schools.

Strategy 6 Support Small Businesses and Aspiring Entrepreneurs - Connect local businesses to resources to start, operate, and expand their business in Brownsville.

Strategy 7 Improve Housing Stability and Support Residents at Risk of Displacement - Improve housing quality and ensure that residents have opportunities to stay in the neighborhood.

Strategy 8 Support Capacity Building for Local Organizations - Provide support to local organizations to continue the plan's work into the future.

Someone stated that there are bike lanes in East New York leading into Brownsville that have been converted into protected lanes. Will the conversion continue into Brownsville?

Ms. Tiarachristie stated that this is a function of the Department of Transportation.

Chairperson Morgan stated the question will be brought to the Department of Transportation at the next District Service Cabinet meeting in two weeks.

A roll call of the membership was called with no quorum achieved.

Chairperson Morgan recognized Captain Hugo Dominguez, Executive Officer of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Precinct.

Captain Dominguez stated that thanks to a strong partnership with the community and the hard work of the men and women of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Precinct he is pleased to report that overall crime is down 16% year-to-date. Shootings are down from 35 to 26. There were 42 victims of shootings

versus 47 last year. There remains work to be done and each day, they try hard to make this a safer community and it can only be done with strong partnership with the community.

Dr. Cleopatra Brown stated that there will be a parade hosted by Community Boards 3 and 16 and they would like any police officers of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Precinct who are also veterans to march with them. Can a list of such officers be made available to her?

Captain Dominguez stated that she can reach out to the Community Affairs Unit and he is certain that an arrangement can be made. They welcome all positive relationships with the community.

Chairperson Morgan recognized Mr. Ricky DaCosta from the New York City Economic Development Corporation.

Mr. DaCosta stated that he is an Assistant Vice President of Government and Community Relations with the New York City Economic Development Corporation (EDC) and present this evening with colleagues Annemarie Gray and Andrea Zhu. He then distributed a document entitled: Broadway Junction Planning Study.

Ms. Gray stated that she is in the Development Department at EDC and they do many projects around job generation.

Broadway Junction is an amazing hub for transit access but has not received much business investment as other areas have. There are over one million workers within 45 minutes of Broadway Junction. The area sits at the convergence of several neighborhoods and the East New York Industrial Business Zone. The City is investing over \$267 Million in the surrounding neighborhoods, but nothing in the study area.

The study specifically targets the area of the triangle formed by the Broadway Junction, Alabama Avenue (J/Z), and East New York (LIRR) stations. Throughout the process, they received a lot of feedback about the Broadway Junction Station being a critical node and is completely inaccessible. The station is used by over 100,000 people every weekday, but 90% are transferring. Many users arrive by bus from transit inaccessible neighborhoods further away. It is frequently overcrowded.

A commitment was made in 2016 to study Broadway Junction in the East New York Neighborhood Plan. The study launched and the Broadway Junction Working Group convened with many community stakeholders involved. Several meetings and visioning sessions have resulted in the release of their Broadway Junction Vision Document.

Ms. Zhu stated that the year-long community engagement process revealed broad support for new uses and transformation of the area. They heard from 13 organizations in Working Group over the course of six meetings. They had over 100 participants at a public open house and over 640 respondents through a public survey; wherein 68% of all respondents rated overcrowding as the biggest challenge within the station, and 50% of all respondents rated unsafe pedestrian conditions and unpleasant public spaces were the greatest concern around the station. Future development at Broadway Junction is supported by 86% of respondents. There was also support for job development in the area along with vocational training, new retail amenities, food options, and entertainment/cultural attractions. There was consistent concern regarding direct/indirect displacement and gentrification.

They processed what they heard and created their vision document which was distributed earlier. The vision for Broadway Junction is to create a more accessible and dynamic transit hub and economic center for current residents and businesses, as well as for the borough and the City. Declaration of goals, each with approx. 5 sub-recommendations:

1. **TRANSIT ACCESS AND EQUITY:** Improve the daily experience for all commuters using all transit stations in Broadway Junction.
2. **INCLUSIVE GROWTH:** Ensure that existing residents and businesses benefit from any future changes and development in the Broadway Junction area.
3. **ECONOMIC AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT:** Grow Broadway Junction into a major jobs center and expand access to training and career opportunities.
4. **ACTIVE PLACES AND NEIGHBORHOOD AMENITIES:** Make Broadway Junction an active, mixed-use district anchored by the transit stations.
5. **PUBLIC REALM AND OPEN SPACE:** Improve and activate the streets, sidewalks, and open spaces to promote a sense of place and safely connect to surrounding neighborhoods.

Renderings which are also shown in the document were displayed indicating some of the ways the space could be utilized to make it brighter and more inviting.

Ms. Gray stated that to address transit access and equity they recommend improving the daily experience for all commuters using all transit stations in Broadway Junction by providing ADA access to all lines at the Broadway Junction Station, exploring opportunities with MTA to improve subway service on all lines serving Broadway Junction and increase frequency on the Long Island Railroad (LIRR) Atlantic Branch, instituting a permanent reduced fare policies for city trips on the LIRR, reconfiguring streets to improve safety and circulation between the four transit stations to make Broadway Junction feel like a true transit hub. Leverage new development to create new and improved transit connections, including alternatives to the existing the LIRR underpass and an additional entrance to Broadway Junction Station and make the intersection of Jamaica Avenue, Georgia Avenue, and Fulton Street at the bus depot safer using traffic-calming measures, signals, and other circulation improvements, while maintaining existing bus operations.

To address inclusive growth, they suggest ensuring that existing residents and businesses benefit from any future changes and development in the Broadway Junction area. Connecting residents, social service agencies, and homeless service providers in the area to new job training programs available through the East New York Workforce1 Center.

Ms. Zhu reported that to address economic and workforce development there was interest in identifying opportunities to attract educational institutions such as CUNY to teaching technologies to help innovate in growing industries, such as healthcare and green technology to expand and anchor new development in the area.

Expand vocational and apprenticeship programs that help people develop skills that employers are seeking and connect existing community members to training and jobs through apprenticeship and its industry partners such as those in the IBZ.

Ms. Gray stated that to make Broadway Junction an active, mixed-use district, needs to include concrete items such as improved lighting and signage to help navigate the area, but also give thought to how to activate the streets with different amenities and neighborhood businesses.

They heard from many people that there are not enough places to eat and shop for food; creating a strong interest in having a supermarket and other healthy food options in the area.

Having CUNY or another educational facility could also activate the area with more pedestrian traffic.

Ms. Zhu stated that to improve the public realm and open space, the City has already funded \$18 million towards the improvement of nearby Callahan Kelly Playground and they are looking at ways to make additional investments. They heard a lot about parking and recommend exploring parking demand management strategies to improve street parking and consolidate existing surface parking lots (including MTA employee, bus, and private lots) to free up space for more active street-level uses.

There is also a desire for public spaces for film screenings, and public art installations that highlight local artists and culture.

Immediately after EDC released this study, Councilmember Rafael Espinal held a rally at the Broadway Junction calling on the MTA to make the station accessible. The MTA has since committed funding to make four accessibility points to the station.

EDC remains in constant contact with the MTA to make sure that this happens.

Mr. DaCosta stated that a lot of effort went into creating the study and put it into a tangible form. They want it to be something that inspires further action and not a document that sits on bookshelves gathering dust. However, since there is no funding for many of the suggestions in the report, the question is how do we continue to generate pressure on the city, state, and others who need to make investments going forward? For its part, EDC stands at the ready to make additional presentations and advocate for the investments.

Someone asked what is being done to keep gentrification from happening and having property taxes increased.

Mr. DaCosta stated that, at this there is no funding for any of the recommendations, other than what is being done by the MTA. However, the study includes an entire section on inclusive Brooklyn and how we ensure that displacement of long-time resident does not take place.

Chairperson Morgan stated that the City cannot increase property taxes by more than 6% in a year, regardless of any changes to infrastructure. This may be of little comfort, as homeowners still need to be able to afford whatever taxes are due on the property. She sees the need to advocate for things such as tax abatements to keep homes affordable for longtime residents. These are the types of conversation that we need to have with our elected officials.

Regarding the ability to participate on the contracts for the developments to take place, she urges those who are interested to be ready by meeting the requirements such as the ability to be bonded, having the necessary certifications, and having access to capital. All city contracts, especially those of a million dollars or more, are required to have Minority and Women-owned Enterprise participation. The Central Brooklyn Economic Development Corporation, which has an office at 444 Thomas S. Boyland Street, is working on building a list of organizations in the community that are certified MWBEs. They also work with small businesses that are not certified to become certified.

Mr. David Alexander asked what precautions will be taken to protect persons who are passing under the area of the elevated train tracks?

Mr. DaCosta stated that the ideas presented this evening are speculative. Any plans for actual development would need to take safety into consideration.

Someone asked if there was a way to implement the installation of elevators at the Broadway Junction Station?

Chairperson Morgan stated that at a General Board meeting, earlier this year, the MTA began to step back on a promise that had been made previously to make the station accessible. The Community Board with assistance from the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) and Deputy Mayor Vicki Been, MTA's Capital now officially list Broadway Junction, Livonia Avenue on the "L" line, and the Junius Street on the Number 3 line with getting elevators in the next four years.

Chairperson Morgan recognized Councilmember Alicka Ampry-Samuel who administered the Oath of Office to newly appointed Board members and Executive Board members.

Chairperson Morgan recognized representatives from Project Eats.

Ms. Unalissa Suncar of Project Eats asked the audience how far does the average banana travel to get their table? She stated that the answer is about 4,000 miles from Costa Rica, South America. She then asked how far the produce sold at their farmers' markets travel? She stated that, at most, their produce travel 15 miles. Sometimes it is picked right at the market having been harvest the same day it is sold.

The produce they sell are organically grown using sustainable practices, vitamin packed (Picked just before market for peak freshness) and harvested from their 10 farms across the city.

They operate farm stands across East New York and Brownsville. In Brownsville, they operate on Tuesday, Fridays, and Saturdays. They accept cash, debit and credit cards, EBT, SNAP, Health Bucks, and Farmers' Market checks.

Ms. Suncar introduced Angel, Ronnie and Annecia, three of the youth who work with the program. The youth each briefly related their relation to the project and how it helps them.

Ms. Suncar stated that one of their primary focuses is on workforce development. The three youths are from the Brownsville community and this is important to the program. Community involvement is also important to them. Beginning in October, they have Community Council meetings at their farm, located at 300 Chester Street, and invite the audience to take part.

They also host community dinners where they give back to the community by providing a healthy meal and getting an opportunity to meet each other. At the end of October, they will have a farm festival and talent show and are looking for youth to participate.

Ms. Deborah Mack asked if they plan to have Sunday farm stand openings?

Ms. Suncar stated that during their Sunday Breakfast events, held every other Sunday, they do have a small farm stand offering.

Ms. Jestine Roper asked if they still operate gardens at Amboy Street and Blake Avenue, and another on Herzl Street and are they now open to the public?

Ms. Suncar stated that the two gardens have always been open to the public. They are now in the inventory of the GreenThumb Program.

District Manager Viola Greene-Walker highlighted the following from her report:

- 1) On Saturday, October 5<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, October 6<sup>th</sup>, the Fire Department will host its citywide Open House program. Firehouses and EMS Stations will open their doors to the public from 11:00am to 1:00pm or 1:00pm to 3:00pm.
- 2) The Brooklyn Neighborhood Advisory Board 16 invites the community to a public hearing on federal funding for community social services for low-income individuals and families in our neighborhood on Thursday, October 3, 2019, 6:00 p.m. at Kappa V Middle School, located at 985 Rockaway Avenue.
- 3) The Friends of Saratoga Library are hosting a Friends Group meeting to discuss upcoming events, fundraisers and branch updates on Tuesday, October 8, 2019, 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Saratoga Library, located at 8 Thomas S. Boyland Street (corner of Macon Street). Join staff and Friends from Saratoga Library to find out more about how you can support your library.

For more information and to R.S.V.P., call (718) 573-5224 or email Towanda Pace at [tpace@bklynlibrary.org](mailto:tpace@bklynlibrary.org).

- 4) The last day to register to vote in this year's general election will be October 11, 2019. New York offers online voter registration at [vote.nyc](http://vote.nyc). You can register to vote by mail in New York by completing a Voter Registration Form (available on tonight's distribution table) and mailing it. You can also register to vote in person if you prefer by visiting the Board of Election Office, located at 345 Adams Street - 4th Floor. The office is generally open Monday to Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. but will remain open until 9:00 p.m. on October 11, 2019.

To register in New York, you must:

- be a citizen of the United States
- be a resident of the county, or of the City of New York, at least 30 days before an election
- be 18 years old by December 31 of the year in which you file this form (Note: You must be 18 years old by the date of the general, primary, or other election in which you want to vote)
- not be in jail or on parole for a felony conviction
- not currently be judged incompetent by order of a court of competent judicial authority
- not claim the right to vote elsewhere

- 5) The Senior Citizen Rent Increase Exemption (SCRIE, also known as the NYC Rent Freeze Program) freezes the rent for head-of-household seniors 62 and older who live in rent-regulated apartments. In order to satisfy the income eligibility requirement, the senior's household income must be \$50,000 or less.

Senior Centers that provide case assistance can also help with starting the application process.

If you recently applied, it may take up to 4 weeks from the mailing date for the application to be processed and for the status to be available.

If due to a disability, you need an accommodation in order to apply for and receive a service, or participate in a program offered by the Department of Finance, please contact the Disability Service Facilitator at "[nyc.gov/contactdofeeo](http://nyc.gov/contactdofeeo) or call "311."

Ms. Adrainer Coleman, Chairperson of the Land Use, Planning, and Zoning Committee, reported that the Equity Planning Work Group met on September 10, 2019 with Daniel Murphy and Jesse Gericke from the Pitkin Avenue BID to review the draft of the Commercial District Needs Assessment. The Work Group gave several comments to be incorporated in the statement.

The New York City Department of Design and Construction held a public hearing on September 16, 2019 in connection with the acquisition of certain portions of properties along Osborn Street from Belmont Avenue to the Dead End which is needed to construct Osborn Plaza.

The NYC Administration for Children's Services has informed us that they are proceeding to construct a parking lot on East New York Avenue opposite Crossroads Juvenile Center to park vans used to transport youth in their facilities.

The next Equity Planning Work Group meeting will be held on October 8, 2019, 6:00 p.m.

Ms. Melanie Mendonca, member of the Youth Services Planning Committee, reported that in August, the Community Resident Planning Work Group met with the staff of SCO to discuss their Homeless Shelter Program for adolescents and young adults from ages 14 – 24. This program is divided into two parts. They operate a Drop-In-Center for adolescents, located at 774 Rockaway Avenue, who are facing homelessness due to family problems, and the second part is that they offer temporary housing for adolescents ages 16-20 years old at an undisclosed location. SCO offers a myriad of services such as linkage to schools, which is mandatory for the adolescents to attend, mental and physical health, college preparation, clothing, etc., and make referrals to the appropriate agencies to address specific needs outside their scope of service. Ms. Greene-Walker and Mr. David Alexander, Chairperson of the Youth Services Planning Committee, conducted a walk-through of their establishment and found it to be appropriate for the residents.

On September 11, 2019, the Work Group met with a representative from Care for the Homeless, which will offer mental health and other services to families living in the shelter system. They will be located at 91 Junius Street once the renovation has been completed.

They also met with Dr. Tenya Blackwell, who works with the Arthur Ashe Institute, an outreach program that engages community members to discuss their concerns surrounding various issues, and ways to address them through community partnerships. Dr. Blackwell is preparing a report for developers of housing to be located at 803 Rockaway Avenue.

The Youth Services Planning Committee discussed changing the Committee name to Youth and Education Service Planning Committee to include the education of older residents living in Ocean Hill - Brownsville.

The Senior Citizen Affairs Committee will be conducting a Breast Cancer Awareness Walk on October 17, 2019. The Committee will meet on Wednesday, October 9, 2019 at 12:30 p.m. in the Community Board office.

Boys and Girls Club will have a Ribbon Cutting on September 26, 2019, at Frederick Douglass Academy VII and Teacher's Preparatory High School. The Boys and Girls Club will open in October.

The Veterans Affairs Committee continues to plan for a Veterans Parade on Saturday, November 2, 2019.

The Department of Youth and Community Development will have a Public Hearing on October 3, 2019 to discuss funding for need programs in Ocean Hill Brownsville.

Ms. Zalika Headley, Chairperson of the Transportation and Franchises Committee, reported that the City Services Planning Work Group met on September 12, 2019 and reviewed the Parks Capital project status report as of July 2019.

- P.S. 125 Playground on Rockway Avenue between Blake and Dumont Avenues is scheduled to begin construction in Fall 2020 and complete in Fall 2021.

- Betsy Head-Anchor Parks Phase 1 Bristol Street and Blake Avenue construction began January 2019 and to be completed Spring 2020.
- Betsy Head-Anchor Parks Phase 2 Dumont Avenue at Strauss Street construction began on September 3, 2019 and scheduled for completion in Spring 2021.
- Betsy Head Imagination Playground Comfort Station on Bristol Street and Dumont Avenue construction to start Fall 2019 and be completed Spring 2021.
- Osborn Playground on Linden Boulevard and Osborn Street construction to start Fall 2020 and be completed Fall 2021.
- Newport Playground on Newport Street at Riverdale Avenue construction is completed and playground is open to the public.
- Newport Playground Comfort Station construction is schedule to be completed by summer 2020.
- Ocean Hill Playground on Bergen Street between Rockaway Avenue and Thomas S. Boyland Street scope meeting scheduled for Friday, September 27th, 4:00 p.m. at the Playground.
- Brownsville Recreation Center Linden Boulevard at Hegeman Avenue construction expected to start Spring 2020 and be completed Fall 2021.

The Department of Transportation has notified us that Citi Bike Stations will be installed this fall as part of the Citi Bike Phase II expansion at the following locations:

- West side of Van Sinderen Avenue, South of Truxton Street.
- South side of Somers Street, west of Broadway.
- East side of Rockaway Avenue, north of Bainbridge Street.
- South side of Halsey Street, west of Broadway.

MTA NYC Transit has informed us that the following stations will be made fully ADA accessible under the proposed 2020-2024 capital plan:

- J, Z and L at Broadway Junction
- Junius Street on the IRT-3
- Livonia Avenue on the L-line

They also discussed outstanding issues from last year's submission of the Statement of District Needs and will be resubmitting these items in our FY 2021 Statement of District Needs.

The next meeting of the City Services Planning Work Group will be held on Thursday, October 10, 2019.

Chairperson Morgan requested a moment of silence in memory of Board member Carolyn Lee who passed away unexpectedly earlier this month and the husband of Board member Brenda Thompson-Duchene who we lost last Friday.

Chairperson Morgan recognized Mr. Melvin Faulkner, representing the Office of Assemblyman Charles Barron.

Mr. Faulkner warned the audience to be wary regarding the deed to real property that they own. He relayed an incident in which the owner of a property became elated because someone paid a large water bill on the property. However, what she thought was a blessing was, in fact, a curse as it led to her losing her home which is valued at \$500,000.

He advises that anyone who may be in arrears on any bill, be it an IRS tax bill or a local utility bill, meet with the party you owe and work out a payment plan. If you fulfil your end of the bargain, the party you owe will also keep their end of the bargain.

Another thing to be cognizant of is that you do not own the sidewalk in front of your property. The city often cites property owners for broken sidewalks in front of their property. However,



you should know that you are not responsible for repairs to sidewalks that are damaged by city trees.

Ms. Venus Watson added that New York State Attorney General Letisha James and District Attorney Eric Gonzalez met yesterday at Pratt Institute for a massive deed theft town hall.

The event covered all areas of fraudulent property seizures, from deed theft and deed fraud to other forms of predatory schemes diminishing black and brown property ownership in Brooklyn. They both encourage those who are being approached by parties seeking to take control of their property to contact their offices. They offer a host of services to prevent unlawful seizure of real property.

Chairperson Morgan stated that the Department of Finance offers a service through the Automated City Register Information System (ACRIS) that can notify you if any changes are made to documents such as deeds and mortgages related to your property. She encouraged property owners to register to this service and requested the audience to spread the word, especially to our vulnerable senior citizens.

Ms. Joy Simmons, representing the Office of Councilmember Inez Barron, stated a horrible act of violence took place at the Brownsville Old-timers Day event, this past July, with several people being shot (one fatally). At the time, the mayor did not want the incident reported as a mass shooting, saying instead that it was a gang-related shooting.

Many community leaders stated that it should be categorized as a mass shooting in order that related resources be allocated. Councilmember Barron has been working with the mayor on additional resources, particularly in the area of the Brownsville Recreation Center and will be providing updates on what those initial investments are.

National Grid has issued a moratorium on connecting gas service in New York. This is affecting many new developments in our community as well some smaller private home where the service may have been shut while renovations were being done. If you or anyone you know are having trouble reconnecting to National Grid, please reach out to Councilmember Barron's office at (718) 649-9495.

Ms. Isis McIntosh-Greene, representing the Office of Assemblywoman Latrice Walker, announced that the fourth Tuesday in September is National Voter Registration Day and voter registration cards can be found on tonight's distribution table. Assemblywoman Walker, collaboratively with Councilmember Alicka Ampry-Samuel and Senator Zellnor Myrie, also spent some time at the corner of Pitkin Avenue and Rockaway Avenue registering new voters.

Assemblywoman Walker's office often receives inquiries on how someone can participate in the construction process for new developments being built in her district. On Thursday, September 26, 2019 from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. Assemblywoman Walker is co-sponsoring a recruitment event in collaboration with Building Skills NY, an organization that helps train individuals for work in the field of construction. The only requirements are that candidates be at least 18-years old, have an interest in the construction trade, and have already obtain an OSHA-10 certificate. She urges persons interested in construction who do not have an OSHA certificate to contact Assemblywoman Walker's office for information on OSHA training classes. They are located at 400 Rockaway Avenue, the telephone number is (718) 342-1246, and they open Monday to Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Ms. Christina Serrano, representing the Office of Councilmember Alicka Ampry-Samuel, stated that Councilmember Ampry-Samuel will soon be voting on the plan to move prisoners from Riker's Island to four borough-based facilities spread throughout the city. Councilmember Ampry-Samuel is seeking input from the community on how she should vote on the issue.

Ms. Serrano polled the audience who overwhelmingly favored Councilmember Ampry-Samuel vote against the proposal.

Mr. Ronald Baez, representing the Office of Senator Zellnor Myrie, stated that the nation's decennial census will take place next year. He cannot overemphasize its importance to our community. To help bring awareness to importance and to provide information on the procedure, Senator Myrie is collaborating with Congresswoman Yvette Clarke, Assemblywoman Latrice Walker, and Councilmember Alicka Ampry-Samuel to present a Census 2020 Counts event on Tuesday, October 1, 2019 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the Tilden Senior Center,

located at 630 Mother Gaston Boulevard. He asks that everyone join them and learn more about the census, how we can ensure that we are all counted, and about job opportunities with the Census Bureau.

Senator Myrie, in collaboration with Assemblywoman Walker, Councilmember Ampy-Samuel, and New York Police Department Chief Terence Monahan, will also host a Community Conversation on Marijuana Decriminalization and Policing on Tuesday, October 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. at the Greg Jackson Center, located at 519 Rockaway Avenue.

Lastly, Senator Myrie will host a Senior Resource Fair on Tuesday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Seth Low Community center, located at 137 Belmont Avenue.

Chairperson Morgan recognized Ms. Venus Watson who announced that Wednesday, September 25<sup>th</sup> is National Gun Violence Awareness Day. Congresswoman Yvette Clarke and Borough President Eric L. Adams are sponsoring buses that will leave Borough Hall at 4:00 a.m. to bring people to Washington, D.C. to rally for additional resources and demand passage of legislation to address gun violence. She asks that the word be spread to the community about the trip.

Chairperson Morgan recognized Ms. Ethany Uttech of IOBY.

Ms. Uttech stated that IOBY (In Our Back Yards) is a nonprofit crowdfunding platform for projects that improve community life. Anyone with a great idea for their community can collect tax-deductible donations, find volunteers, and access one-on-one customized fundraising coaching on their website: [ioby.org](http://ioby.org). IOBY's services are available nationwide to individuals, informal groups, schools and other nonprofits working to make their communities stronger, greener, more equitable and more vibrant.

They currently have a special funding opportunity called the Healthy Neighborhood Challenge which is available to the Brownsville neighborhood. Through the Healthy Neighborhood Challenge, if you fundraise money on their platform to raise the money you need to launch a project that boosts the community's health, IOBY will double your donations dollar-for-dollar up to \$10,000.

Any project that helps to create a culture of health in the community can be eligible. These can include projects that improve access to affordable healthy food, add greenery, promote walking, biking, or exercise; or educate your neighbors about healthy choices. Any good idea to boost health in the neighborhood can be funded.

IOBY has been working with the Brownsville community for several years and some of the projects that they are involved with can be seen by visiting [ioby.org/brownsville](http://ioby.org/brownsville). There you can see the projects, get inspiration for your project, or perhaps donate towards one that interest you.

IOBY, in collaboration with the Brownsville Partnership, will host a workshop on the Partnership's Hope Summit on October 19<sup>th</sup> to learn all about community crowdfunding in Brownsville. You can register for the workshop at [ioby.org](http://ioby.org).

Chairperson Morgan recognized Sgt. Kerrissa Michael of the New York Police Department.

Sgt. Michael introduced her partner P.O. Howard Dy and stated that the first NYPD Community Center will soon be opening at 127 Pennsylvania Avenue (former PAL building at the corner of Liberty Avenue), the center will occupy 17,000 square feet across three floors. For the last three years, the building has been undergoing a \$10 million makeover with funds provided by the City Council as part of the 2016 East New York rezoning plan.

Geared toward youth ages 12 to 19, the center will feature a gym, basketball courts, music and dance studios, and classrooms for after school programs and other recreational activities provided by the Child Center of New York. The Center will be open Monday to Saturday from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Youth will be able to access the facility any time after 3:00 p.m. and there will be activities for seniors during the morning hours. The facility is slated to open sometime in October, but an exact date is not available at this time. Follow them on Twitter @nypdcommunityaffairs for updates. They can also be reached by calling (718) 312-5079.

Chairperson Morgan asked if youth under the age of 12 will be serviced?

Sgt. Michael stated that they service youth under the age of 12, however, they will not be able to obtain a membership to the Center.

Chairperson Morgan recognized Mr. Michael Matthews of D.U.E.C.E.S. who announced that they will be conducting a voter registration drive and can goods give-away on October 14<sup>th</sup> from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. They are accepting donations of can good through a drop off at the Office of Assemblywoman Latrice Walker at 400 Rockaway Avenue.

Chairperson Morgan recognized Ms. Sheila Felix of BIVO (Brownsville In Violence Out).

Ms. Felix stated that BIVO works with youth from 16-years old to 24-years old to reduce gun violence. The program provides participants with a variety of supportive services, including job training programs and access to employment, legal and therapeutic services, conflict mediation, drivers ed, health awareness and public safety seminars.

Mr. Malcolm McDaniel, representing the Office of Borough President Eric L. Adams, stated that Borough President Adams' office offers a variety of services from obtaining assistance in landlord / tenant disputes to guiding individuals through obtaining municipal resources. Please feel free to call him at (718) 802-2681 or email him at [mmcdaniel@brooklynbp@nyc.gov](mailto:mmcdaniel@brooklynbp@nyc.gov). Fliers of upcoming events at Brooklyn Borough Hall can be found on tonight's distribution table.

Someone asked where dues for the Nehemiah Homeowner's Association are paid.

Mr. Marvin King stated that owners of Nehemiah Homes are automatically members of the Association and assesses dues which cover the maintenance of a common sewer system which services the homes. The dues should be sent to the Association's office, located at 551 Vandalia Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11239.

Chairperson Morgan reported that a job fair will be held on Friday, September 27<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Powerful Praise Tabernacle, located at 2140 Bergen Street. You may register for this job fair at [www.powerfulpraise.org](http://www.powerfulpraise.org). There will also be a job fair tomorrow, September 25<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Grace Deliverance Tabernacle Church of God, located at 650 Remsen Avenue.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.