

## **MINUTES OF COMMUNITY BOARD #16 – DECEMBER 22, 2020**

### Attendance

David Alexander	Genese Morgan
Lorenzo Andrews (A)	Rosa O'Neill (A)
Cynthia Bannister (A)	Deidre Olivera-Douglas (A)
Margaret Brewer	Busayo Olupano (A)
Dr. Cleopatra Brown (A)	Ariel Perry-DeCamp (A)
Kaseem Clark-Edwards (A)	Anita Pierce
Adrainer Coleman	Marie Pierre
Norman Frazier (A)	Linda Rivera
Danny Goodine (A)	Shaneek Samuel
Chanel Haliburton	Joann Sexton
Sarah Hall	Dr. Sonia Smith
Balinda Harris (A)	Keturah Suggs
Zalika Headley	Beverly Tatham
Michael Howard	Rev. Eric Thompson (A)
Carl Joseph (A)	Brenda Thompson-Duchene (A)
Leticia Knowles (A)	Christopher Toomer
Dr. Bettie Kollock-Wallace (A)	Rev. Miran Ukaegbu
Charles Ladson (A)	Deborah Williams (E)
Digna Layne	Pat Winston (E)
Kelly Lee-McVay	Viola D. Greene-Walker, District Manager
Albion Liburd	Jimmi Brevil, Community Assistant
Deborah Mack (A)	Hon. Alicka Ampy-Samuel
Yolanda Matthews (A)	Hon. Inez Barron
John McCadney, Jr.	Hon. Latrice Walker
Andrew McCoy (A)	Malcolm McDaniel for Hon. Eric Adams
Melanie Mendonca	Karen Cherry for Hon. Dharma Diaz
Shemene Minter	

### PUBLIC MEETING HELD VIA WEBEX

Chairperson Genese Morgan called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m. and an invocation was said by Mr. John McCadney, Jr.

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

Captain Birchwood stated that for the month of December, the 73<sup>rd</sup> Precinct is up slightly in felony assaults, burglaries and grand larcenies and have taken five non-fatal shootings. They are down in robberies.

Chairperson Morgan opened the floor to questions for Captain Birchwood.

Ms. Adrainer Coleman commented that she is appreciative of the Precinct's deployment of additional patrols in the area of Howard Avenue and Dean Street.

Captain Birchwood stated that a young man was killed there and they have since made that a priority post.

Ms. Kelly Lee-McVay asked if they are going to start enforcement of the parking violations?

Chairperson Morgan stated that is a matter that should be brought to the attention the Department of Sanitation. They have the authority to write tickets if people do not move their vehicles.

She suggested that if people are not moving their cars for street cleaning, the Board's office be contacted and the matter be brought to the attention of the Department of Sanitation Superintendent for resolution.

Mr. David Alexander asked what are the comparisons in the crime upticks?

Captain Birchwood stated that burglaries are up 28%.

Mr. John McCadney, Jr. stated that he is concerned about two specific incidents that took place in the Precinct. One, the robbery and shooting of a FedEx delivery driver at Livonia

Avenue and Junius Street, and the luring and robbery of an EMS crew at the Seth Low Houses. Does the Department see this as a pattern of crime?

Captain Birchwood stated that in the first incident, they have the perpetrator in custody and it appears to be a case of mistaken identity. In the case of the robbery of the EMS workers, a similar incident took place in the 94<sup>th</sup> Precinct. The Department does see it as a possible emerging trend and will act as escorts for EMS crews on future calls of this nature, whereas they have not in the past.

Ms. Keturah Suggs complained about the telephone not being answered at the police station. She had to go to the police station to follow up on a police report filed on December 9<sup>th</sup> and it was only yesterday that she was able to verify and get the report number. She called multiple times every day and was not able to get anyone.

Captain Birchwood stated that he will look into the issue. They always have someone stationed on the phones and have units that do quality checks to make sure they answer the phone. He will start calling himself, if necessary, to make sure the telephones are being answered.

Chairperson Morgan recognized Councilmember Alicka Ampy-Samuel.

Councilmember Ampy-Samuel thanked the audience for their support and condolences while she and her family mourn the passing of her beloved mother, Ernestine Turner.

2020 has been a tough year for the world because of COVID-19. She asks that we continue to remain vigilant and encourage others to wear face coverings, maintain social distancing, and wash their hands often in dealing with the virus. Her office has been distributing food, masks, and other resources during the pandemic and will continue to do so.

Legislation was introduced and not voted on that would have extended tax lien sale program beyond its scheduled December 31, 2020 sunset date. Attorney General Leticia James wrote to the Mayor and City Council stating that the program should be eliminated because of the harmful effects on so many families.

As we enter the new year, she wants the community to think about Rank Choice Voting, the new system of voting approved by voters in 2019. Expect to hear from advocates and elected officials on how the system will be rolled out for the 2021 elections.

Mr. David Alexander asked what is the source of the resources that she distributes?

Councilmember Ampy-Samuel stated that they come from various sources from the United States Department of Agriculture to community-based organizations.

Chairperson Morgan recognized Councilmember Inez Barron.

Councilmember Barron offered holiday greetings to everyone and condolences to Councilmember Ampy-Samuel.

She stated that Community Board #16 and the Borough President's Office recently supported a proposal for a project at 803 Rockaway Avenue. The full body of the City Council has approved the proposal. She is also in favor of the proposal as it will bring affordable housing for many underserved populations such as veterans and formerly homeless individuals and families. It will also have space on the ground floor for light manufacturing which can help local entrepreneurs get established.

While she believes everyone deserves decent housing, she will not support any proposal with income levels that favor gentrification.

Mr. David Alexander asked if the vetting process would offer priority to the homeless population of the Brownsville community?

Councilmember Barron stated that they will have first priority through preferences, and she would like to make use of community partners to help spread the word and have as many people from the community as possible apply for the units. It will also be important that the applications be completed properly to avoid being rejected for things such multiple

applications from one person or completing one for yourself while being named as a prospective tenant on someone else's application.

Councilmember Barron stated that some changes have been made to the middle school enrollment process this year. This year's middle school application will open the week of January 11. New York City Department of Education (DOE) middle schools will not use academic records, auditions, or other screens or assessments to evaluate or admit students this year. Schools will maintain priority for students living in the district because they heard from families across the city that they want to attend middle school closer to home. If a school has more applicants than available seats, offers will be made using a random lottery.

Chairperson Morgan recognized Assemblymember Latrice Walker.

Assemblymember Walker stated that one of the earliest legislative bills that she presented when she was first elected was signed into law by Governor Andrew Cuomo yesterday. Under Automatic Voter Registration, eligible voters are automatically registered when they engage with government agencies such as the Department of Labor, Department of Motor Vehicles, the State University of New York (SUNY), the City University of New York (CUNY), or the Department of Health, provided they do not opt out.

She is hopeful that a voting rights act will soon be passed as redistricting will soon take place. Community Board #16 had an extensive census outreach program to try to ensure as many people as possible were counted during the census. This will hopefully lead to the community keeping as many of our institutions of importance and other resources to keep the community whole.

She heard from the Brownsville Multi-Service Family Health Center that the COVID-19 infection rate of our community was at 10% versus a 4% statewide rate. There are a number of robo-calls targeting the community and encouraging people to get tested. Knowing your status can help reduce the rate of infections.

As the holidays approach, she reminds everyone that they should avoid travelling and gathering together, wear masks, maintain social distance, wash your hands, and to the extent that you do not follow these rules, please at least resist the urge to post videos of yourself breaking rules on social media.

Chairperson Morgan recognized Ms. Elana Martins of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

Ms. Martins stated that she is joined by her colleagues Ms. Joanna Alexis, Ms. Jennifer Pierre, and Ms. Shelby Boyle.

Ms. Boyle stated that she is a Data Analyst for the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, located in the Bureau of Brooklyn Neighborhood Health in Bedford Stuyvesant. Ms. Pierre is their Director of Research and Evaluation, and they are both working on the data for Brooklyn and specifically Brownsville, Bedford Stuyvesant, parts of Canarsie, as well as parts of East Flatbush and Bushwick.

The Department of Health is working on preventing and reducing COVID-19 transmission. One of their goals is to prevent and rapidly address a resurgence of COVID-19 infections. As was mentioned by the elected official on tonight's video conference, we are experiencing an uptick, not only across the city, but also locally.

They are recommending some steps to reduce transmission: stay at home if you are sick, practice social distancing if possible, wearing a face covering when outside and if you have people in your physical space, as well as practicing good hand hygiene. Ms. Martins and her team have been working with businesses in the Brownsville and Bedford Stuyvesant communities.

There are two main types of COVID-19 tests – diagnostic tests and antibody tests.

A diagnostic test can show if you have an active coronavirus infection and should take steps to quarantine or isolate yourself from others. Currently there are two types of diagnostic tests—molecular tests, such as RT-PCR tests, that detect the virus's genetic material, and antigen tests that detect specific proteins from the virus. An antibody test looks for antibodies that are

made by your immune system in response to a threat, such as a specific virus. Antibodies can help fight infections. Antibodies can take several days or weeks to develop after you have an infection and may stay in your blood for several weeks or more after recovery.

How often should you be tested? It is recommended that all New Yorkers get tested for COVID-19. You should get tested immediately if you have symptoms, have been within 6 feet of someone who has COVID-19 for 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period, or are returning to New York after traveling to most other states or countries. For some essential workers, there may be additional guidance that should be observed.

Testing is available to everyone at no cost regardless of immigration status. You can find testing locations by visiting [nyc.gov/covidtest](https://nyc.gov/covidtest).

Should you test positive, you should immediately isolate yourself. If this is not possible, New York City offers free hotel stays for those who cannot isolate. According to the Center for Disease Control, isolation is now 10 days and you should continue best practices such as wearing a mask, social distancing, and washing your hands frequently.

This season might be one of the most important in which to get a flu vaccine. This is especially true for those who have underlying conditions, are pregnant or are elderly. While the flu shares symptoms with COVID-19, they are different viruses with different genomics. Their research shows that communities of color are particularly susceptible to strong adverse reactions to the COVID-19 virus, especially when there is an underlying condition. They therefore highly recommend that they get a flu vaccine.

She presented several slides showing statistics worldwide, nationwide, and locally. The data show stark differences when comparing death to cases nationwide. Kings, Queens, and Bronx counties while not in the top 10 in cases, all are in the top five in deaths.

Data on COVID-19 can be found at [nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-data.page#7day](https://nyc.gov/site/doh/covid/covid-19-data.page#7day). She displayed the website and demonstrated how it may be used to extract data.

Ms. Monique Chandler-Waterman stated that she is the new Brooklyn Outreach Director of Health and Hospitals' Test and Trace Corp. They focus on community stakeholders and partner with them to amplify the message that was heard from her colleague, Ms. Boyle.

Tonight, she will focus on the 4 cores - making sure to cover your face properly, maintaining social distancing of at least 6 feet, washing your hands frequently, and staying home if you are not feeling well.

They recommend that everyone be tested for the COVID-19 virus frequently and should you test positive, isolate yourself. If you cannot isolate at home, the Test and Trace Corps offers their Take Care Package which can include things from hotel stays to walking your dog to getting medication or food delivery to help you isolate.

As the holidays approach, they recommend virtual events instead of in-person gatherings. Try to shop online instead of in malls. If you go out, wear facial covering and maintain social distancing. If you must travel outside the state, make sure you have a negative test within 72 hours, then quarantine for 4 days, take another test that needs to be negative and then you can be out of quarantine. If you do not do either one of those, or you do not have a negative test result, you will need to quarantine for 14 days. There are fines and penalties that come along with that and the goal is not to get people fined. It is just to show you care about others want to protect yourself and protect others as well.

The Test and Trace Corps wants to use everyday language about the behaviors and the need to follow-up on testing, reduce the stigma that comes along with someone having tested positive or people feeling that stigma.

Mr. Michael Howard asked what is the most effective test?

Ms. Chandler-Waterman stated that the PCR test is considered the best test to determine if someone was recently infected with the virus. However, a negative test does not necessarily mean you have not been infected. It takes a couple of days before you will test positive. Therefore, they recommend being tested multiple times a month or at least once a month. It is not like if you take a test today, you are good forever.

Chairperson Morgan thanked the presenters for the information they provided.

District Manager Viola Greene-Walker read the report of the Equity Planning Work Group. A copy of the report is on file in the Community Board's office. The report calls for a presentation on a proposed complex at 2435 Pacific Street. She turned the floor over to the developers for the presentation.

Mr. Michael McCarthy of Alembic stated that they are the co-developers of the proposed project at 2435 Pacific Street, along with Love Fellowship Tabernacle and Brooklyn Community Housing and Services. The property is currently owned by Love Fellowship Tabernacle. He displayed a slide presentation indicating the following: the site was purchased back in 2002 by Love Fellowship Tabernacle and is currently vacant. The church identified affordable and supportive housing as the best use for the site to benefit the neighborhood. It is part of the East New York Rezoning Plan which allows for larger buildings with mandatory requirements for deeper affordability with which they will comply. They are proposing a 10-story building with approximately 214,000 square feet of residential space to be developed as-of-right.

Schematic drawings of the building show the cellar to have bicycle storage, an exercise room, building administration, and the super's office. On the ground floor, the property will include approximately 7,000 square feet of commercial space, community rooms, a children's playroom, a library, computer rooms and a laundry room. Additionally, the 1<sup>st</sup> floor will house the social service suite for the support of housing tenants to include clinical and counseling spaces as well as the rear yard, which will be landscaped, and a few residential units. A typical floor, which will be 100% residential, on floors 2 through 10 totaling 63 studios, 72 1-bedrooms, 73 2-bedrooms, and 28 3-bedrooms. They came up with this unit mix based on feedback they received from Equity Planning Work Group in previous meetings. The project will have a 60% supportive housing that is about 142 based on the 236-unit scheme. Income for tenants will be anywhere between 30% of Area Median Income (AMI) to 80% of AMI.

The property will have 24-hours/7-days-a-week front desk coverage and security. It will be built to Enterprise Green Community Standards and will have onsite staff. They are currently assuming there will be 4 full-time employees, and a property manager. In terms of local hiring, they are engaging Central Brooklyn Economic Development Corporation. They have executed a community benefits agreement with Community Board #16 and can share with everybody that in that letter they commit to hiring 50% of new hires from the catchment area.

Their goals are approximately 32% of their financing from the state and 25% of the financing from the city will be going toward minority women owned firms and 6% of the state financing will be going toward disabled veterans. They are also committing to hiring 25% of the minority women owned businesses from the local community.

They are hoping to close on construction financing in December with construction starting immediately afterward. Based on that timeline, they expect to be fully built and fully leased by the middle of 2023.

Ms. Keturah Suggs asked what is the total development cost for this project?

Mr. McCarthy stated that the last budget he saw was about \$135,000,000.

Ms. LaShawn Muhammed, Director of the Central Brooklyn Economic Development Corporation, stated that she looks forward to working with the developers in meeting their hiring needs.

Ms. Zalika Headley read the report of the City Services Planning Work Group. A copy of the report is on file at the Community Board's office. The report calls on the Department of Transportation to give a presentation and the floor was given to representatives from the Department of Transportation (DOT).

Ms. Rochelle Brahalla displayed a slide presentation for Street Safety Improvements Along Eastern Parkway between Lincoln Place and Pacific Street. The project is being implemented under the Vision Zero program. Vision Zero is a multi-agency effort to eliminate traffic fatalities in New York City. This part of the corridor is what DOT calls a Vision Zero Priority Corridor and these are streets that alert the School Safety Team to look closely at safety and potential

safety improvements along the corridor. The goal is to keep students safe on their way to and from school.

When there's a street in proximity to many schools, it alerts DOT to pay attention to the street and to try and propose solutions that will improve safety. The corridor is also located within the Brownsville Senior Pedestrian Area which again tells DOT that a high number of seniors live in the area, and that they need to make sure that they can access the corridor safely.

Many of the side streets intersect with Eastern Parkway at skewed angles and this creates long crossing distances. They are looking at student safety along the corridor. When they see long crossing distances, they look for solutions to shorten those distances and increase student visibility as they are crossing the street.

She displayed a slide which indicated that there were a high number of injuries, severe injuries, and fatalities along the corridor in recent years. To battle this, they are proposing adding median tips at Howard Avenue and Eastern Parkway. At the complex intersection of Mother Gaston Boulevard, Pacific Street, and Eastern Parkway, they are proposing to convert Mother Gaston Boulevard to one-way northbound-which simplifies the complex intersection, install new median tip extensions to shorten crossing distances, and install new concrete and painted curb extensions to improve pedestrian visibility. They will ban low-volume turns to allow for greater pedestrian refuge at the following intersections:

Eastern Parkway and Pacific Street, Eastern Parkway and Park Place, Eastern Parkway and Saint John's Place, and Eastern Parkway and Howard Avenue. New concrete curb extensions that will improve pedestrian visibility and reduce pedestrian crossing distances will be installed at 6 intersections along the corridor: Howard Avenue, Saint John's Place, Park Place, Prospect Place, and the triangle formed by Thomas S. Boyland Street, Prospect Place and Eastern Parkway, and at Pacific Street and Mother Gaston Boulevard, they are also proposing painted curb extensions because they are unable to be built in concrete at the moment as there are some drainage issues that prevent DOT crews from building them out in concrete.

Mr. David Alexander asked if DOT reached out to School District #23?

Ms. Boyle stated that they have not. However, if he is recommending that they do, they will.

Mr. Albion Liburd asked what is the net effect on traffic with these changes? Secondly, is the only reason to make the changes because of the number of schools and senior citizens in the area? Finally, can DOT make safety changes by just changing the timing of the lights?

Ms. Boyle stated that they have been working with their Analysis and Signals Team to make sure that there is no effect on traffic. They acknowledge that it is a very congested corridor, and they are adjusting the signal timing plans to accommodate for these changes. It is a priority for DOT to make sure that traffic moves. They are adjusting the signal timing plans to accommodate for these changes. They are paying attention to that and they will continue to monitor it after the project is completed. When they look to install these projects, they are looking at proximity to schools. The changes not only make it safer for pedestrian students and seniors, but also for drivers and anyone else who is accessing the corridor.

Councilmember Ampry-Samuel asked Ms. Boyle to clarify the changes being proposed at Howard Avenue.

Ms. Boyle stated that they are suggesting no left turn from Eastern Parkway onto northbound Saint John's Place so that they can add a median tip extension to shorten the crossing and traffic will instead be diverted from Eastern Parkway onto Howard Avenue.

Councilmember Ampry-Samuel stated that she thinks that it would be helpful to figure out something to do with the triangle at Thomas S. Boyland Street, Prospect Place and Eastern Parkway which is a dangerous location that is not maintained and is overgrown with vegetation. Complaints are constantly made about the location.

Ms. Ronda Messer of DOT asked who has control of the property?

District Manager Greene-Walker stated that DOT does.

Ms. Messer stated that she will investigate it and work to resolve the complaint.

Ms. Adrainer Coleman suggested that a left turn signal light be considered to allow northbound turn onto Howard Avenue from eastbound Eastern Parkway.

Chairperson Morgan thanked everyone for their participation in the discussion. She thinks that there were many concerns raised and that it would be helpful to have another discussion with the Committee and create a plan which includes the community's feedback.

Ms. Boyle expressed agreement with the request.

Ms. Linda Rivera read the Fiscal and Policy Work Group report. A copy of the report is on file in the Community Board's office.

Mr. David Alexander read the Community Resident Work Group report. A copy of the report is on file in the Community Board's office.

District Manager Viola Greene-Walker read highlights from her report. A copy of the report is on file in the Community Board's office.

As required by the Board's bylaws, Chairperson Morgan made an initial reading of proposed changes to the bylaws.

7.3. The Secretary [**with the assistance of the staff of the Community Board**] shall cause the minutes of meetings and public hearings of the Board to be recorded and the records of the Board, including minutes, notes, resolutions, reports, communications and correspondence to be maintained in an orderly manner. The Secretary [**with the assistance of the staff of the Community Board**] shall cause records to be maintained showing the attendance of all members at meetings and the recording of all votes. In addition, the Secretary shall have such powers and perform such duties as shall be assigned to the Secretary by the Chairperson of the Board. In the absence of the Secretary, the Chairperson may designate any officer of the Board to act as secretary on a temporary basis.

8.1. The following standing committees shall be established:

- (1) Economic Development
- (2) Environmental and Sanitation
- (3) Health and Human Services
- (4) Land Use, Planning and Zoning
- (5) Legislative
- (6) Parks and Recreation
- (7) Personnel, Budget and Finance
- (8) Public Safety (Police and Fire)
- (9) Senior Citizens Affairs
- (10) Transportation and Franchises
- (11) [**Education and**] Youth Services Planning

(12) Veterans' Affairs

(13) Women's

**[8.2(a) The following standing work groups shall be established:**

**(1) Equity Planning**

**(2) Community Resident Planning**

**(3) City Services Planning**

**(4) Fiscal and Policy**

**Committee chairpersons may elect to work collaboratively on issues as follows:**

**A) The Economic Development Committee and Land Use, Planning and Zoning Committee as the Equity Planning Work Group**

**B) The Education and Youth Services Planning Committee, Women's Committee, Senior Citizen's Committee, Veterans' Affairs Committee, and Health and Human Services Committee as the Community Resident Planning Work Group**

**C) The Public Safety Committee, Transportation and Franchises Committee, Parks and Recreation Committee, and Sanitation and Environmental Protection Committee as the City Services Planning Work Group**

**D) The Legislative Committee, and Personnel, Budget and Finance Committee as the Fiscal and Policy Work Group]**

Chairperson Morgan opened the floor to questions and comments. Hearing none, she stated that the proposed changes will again be read at the Board's meetings in January and February 2021 before being adopted.

She recognized Ms. Karen Cherry.

Ms. Cherry stated that she is the Chief of Staff for newly elected Councilmember Dharma Diaz who now represents the 37<sup>th</sup> City Council District. They are meeting with constituents virtually and will reach out to the Board to setup a meeting to discuss issues of concern to Community District #16.

Mr. Malcolm McDaniel, representing the Office of Borough President Eric Adams, reminded Board members who have expiring terms to submit their applications for reappointment. He also encouraged everyone to visit the Borough President's website ([Brooklyn-usa.org](http://Brooklyn-usa.org)) for up-to-date information about Borough Hall.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 9:56 p.m.