

BROOKLYN COMMUNITY BOARD 6
**ECON/WATERFRONT/COMM DEV & HOUSING COMMITTEE, TRANSPORTATION/
PUBLIC SAFETY, YOUTH/HUMAN SERVICES/EDUCATION COMMITTEES**
NOVEMBER 20, 2014

ECONOMIC/WATERFRONT/COMM. DEV. & HOUSING ATTENDANCE

PRESENT:

N. BERK-RAUCH	A. DEVENING	A. KRASNOW
P. LI	R. LUFTGLASS	D. MAZZUCA
D. RAMOS		

EXCUSED:

A. ANANTHARAMAN	R. BASHNER	
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ABSENT:

E. ANDERSON	R. CERVONE	K. DEGEER
E. FELDER	V. HAGMAN	V. HERAMIA
F. JEAN	A. KOZYR	M. RACIOPPO
A. SHEFRIN	M. SILVERMAN	D. WILLIAMS

TRANSPORTATION/PUBLIC SAFETY ATTENDANCE

PRESENT:

W. BLUM	D. GORDON	R. GRAHAM
A. KRASNOW	E. MCCLURE	M. SILVERMAN
J. SMITH		

EXCUSED:

D. ABRAHAAM	J. ARMER	J. COHN
D. DECOSTANZO	S. LONIAL	T. MISKEL
M. MURPHY	R. SLOANE	

ABSENT:

D. GIULIANO	S. MATHEWS-NOVELLI	G. REILLY
R. RIGOLLI	J. THOMPSON	U. ZIMMERMAN

YOUTH/HUMAN SERVICES/EDUCATION ATTENDANCE

PRESENT:

P. BELLENBAUM	R. CERVONE	R. FREEMAN
T. JACKSON	F. JEAN	P. LI
D. RAMOS	B. SOLOTAIRE	S. TURET
R. UNDERWOOD		

EXCUSED:

A. ANANTHARAMAN	F. BROWN	E. FELDER
C. PETERSEN		

ABSENT:

E. CAUSIL-RODRIGUEZ
L. HILL

K. ENO
M. SCOTT

A. FAIOLA
A. SHEFRIN

GUESTS:

O. JONAS – REP. FOR HON. VELMANETTE MONTGOMERY, STATE SENATOR
J. MILEA

*****MINUTES*****

Review and discussion of information related to the development of a New York State Department of Corrections and Community Supervision (DOCCS) borough-wide parolee reporting center at 15 2nd Avenue (between 6th Street/Gowanus Canal).

Matthew Silverman: Learned of DOCCS borough-wide Parolee Reporting Center several months ago. Had an initial meeting with DOCCS and sent about 60 questions to follow up. DOCCS has declined to answer questions or attend this meeting on advice of counsel because of lawsuit by Gowanus United.

- May concerns around safety, traffic, etc. and wisdom of concentrating all parolee reporting in one somewhat inaccessible location.
- Most troubling aspect is that CB6 learned about the project from a third party, not from government actors.

Benjamin Solotaire: Draft motion is not official, just a starting point for discussion outlined by Matt Silverman.

M. Silverman: DOCCS has said they are going ahead with the project regardless of CB6 input.

- Goal is to have something in front of the full board in December, go on record with CB opinion before its opening.
- No opportunities for public comment.

David Mazzucca: Did we invite DOCCS back? Did they decline?

M. Silverman: They were invited, not returning due to lawsuit.

Noel Berk-Rauch: Do we know what elected officials' positions are?

M. Silverman: Borough President Eric Adams opposed. Other electeds expressing concerns.

Benjamin Solotaire: Did anyone attend rally?

Andrea: SWBIC – attended 11/19 protest. BP Eric Adams, AM Felix Ortiz, CM Brad Lander representative were present. Fair number of residents. Kept it short due to the cold weather.

M. Silverman: the press reported about 100 people.

Joanne Smith: Is this unprecedented? Has DOCCS ever built a borough-wide center?

B. Solotaire: This is the new model. There were three related facilities in downtown Brooklyn. But not a new model.

J. Smith: Do we know what social effects have been in other areas?

B. Solotaire: We don't really know.

Paige Bellenbaum: There was a shooting in Brooklyn outside of one of their reporting centers, but we do not know if it was related to the center.

Adine Pusey, with Gowanus United: There were a lot of electeds represented. AM-elect Joanne Simon, Comptroller Scott Stringer, etc. City hasn't weighed in very much – that's next step. Mayor DeBlasio is named in the lawsuit. Stringer may be interested in.

Eric McClure: What's the parking situation?

M. Silverman: A couple of dozen spots for staff.

B. Solotaire: Part of the controversy is that 96 spots or so were waived.

Douglas Gordon: Any request to DOCCS for shuttle service to transit, a la Methodist Hospital?

M. Silverman: Believe that was previously asked to DCCS. No response.

Adine: Rumor is that there will be shuttles.

M. Silverman: The fact that we're dealing with rumors is at root of problem.

Rachel Freeman: There is precedent for state offices (DUMBO) to provide shuttles for staff.

Adine: Neither of the nearby subway stations (Smith-9th St and 4th Ave) are handicap accessible.

Bill Blum: Total frustration with lack of information and terrible process. We're going to be stuck with this facility. All we can really do is express our anger. Agree with some aspects of the motion. Not productive to deal with rumors.

M. Silverman: No motion yet. These are just areas of concern that need to be further explored.

R. Freeman: Where do things stand on an advisory group?

P. Bellenbaum: DOCCS agrees in principle on a CAG.

R. Freeman: Are they going to wait for facility to open before answering questions?

Adine: December 12th is the hearing date on the lawsuit.

J. Smith: What's the distance to subways?

P. Bellenbaum: 7 minute walk from Smith-9th Street.

D. Gordon: Issue is its just F, G and R trains.

T. Jackson: Do the parolees have a voice in this? Is location a problem?

B. Solitaire: Vocal NY has been talking to parolees. They're concerned with accessibility. No statement yet.

T. Jackson: Does it make sense to work with affected client community?

P. Bellenbaum: City has tried through best practices to locate within communities of parolees. Less recidivism when parolees are more connected to their communities.

T. Jackson: Can we bring those points into the motion?

B. Blum: Motion – DK. Community Board should write to Governor Cuomo and appropriate officials expressing the board's and community's dismay with the process. Legislation decentralizing siting of parole facilities in NYC.

The motion was seconded by Eric McClure.

P. Bellenbaum: There should be a target elected for intro of legislation.

Ariel Krasnow: Most potent part is the recommendation for a CAG. Trying to change legislation may be a step too far. I like the points the way they were written.

B. Solitaire: I'd prefer we refer to "people on parole" rather than parolees.

B. Blum: I do think we should call for legislation. The Board has taken positions on wars.

B. Solitaire: Amend to "policy or legislation" agreed to by Bill.

M. Silverman: Legislation for community notice good; on decentralization maybe should be a conversation with elected.

J. Smith: We need numbers on recidivism rates to make informed decisions (diffuse centers vs. centralized).

B. Solitaire: When board discussed recovery center in Red Hook.

B. Blum: Restated motion, accepted all friendly amendments.

M. Silverman: Friendly amendment – add sentence stating that scope of facility raises concerns of public safety, traffic and IBZ.

A. Krasnow: Takes issue with wording. Board approved Whole Foods with much greater traffic concerns. Issues raised reflect nature of people, not the number of people.

M. Silverman: I think it's important that we state our concerns.

Suzanne Turet: What we wanted was for DOCCS to come and address our concerns and they haven't.

Lisa Collins: I know a ton of people who live and work there and their concerns are very much about public safety.

M. Silverman: We don't know what public safety issues are in other areas.

D. Gordon: We should be careful about language. People coming to parolee appointments are trying to go straight. Focus should be on process.

D. Mazzucca: It all comes down to lack of accessibility. That's what we should address.

E. McClure: The issue is, because of absence of process and lack of communication, we don't know enough to know what to be concerned about, including public safety, traffic, accessibility, and effect on industrial business zone.

A. Krasnow: We should ask for follow up study on traffic – a la Whole Foods. To make the motion strong, I think we should look for actionable items.

B. Solotaire: Parking waiver was a key item. We need to follow that up.

J. Smith: We need an on-site ombudsman.

Robert Underwood: Yes, we need someone acceptable on the ground.

B. Solotaire: Re-evaluate traffic and parking analysis and report back to the Board within six months of opening.

Daniel Ramos: Why not ask for a community member to be at the facility to be community's eyes and ears?

R. Freeman: Most such facilities have security teams.

M. Silverman: There will be metal detectors and cameras.

T. Jackson: Should we include language about accessibility?

E. McClure: Call the question. Unanimous assent.

Bill Blum: Motion read again

CB6 should write to Governor Cuomo and appropriate State Representatives and DOCCS, expressing the Board's and community's dismay with the process leading up to the placement and opening of this facility, and ask that.

1. A community advisory group be assembled and meet before parolees begin reporting to the facility. This group should include DOCCS, NYPD, CB6, people on parole, elected officials and representatives of local organizations and other interested members of the community.
2. As legislators to take all actions possible to obtain further info about this facility including traffic, environmental issues, accessibility, public safety and zoning and to disseminate that information as broadly as possible and as publicly as possible so that the community can be fully aware of the impact that the proposed facility will have.
3. The state should reconsider and fully assess through policy and legislation whether serving all people on parole in Brooklyn at this facility benefits the state, the community and people on parole.
4. Legislation be introduced to require DOCCS to obtain community input prior to locating and opening such facilities in the future.
5. DOCCS should reevaluate the traffic and parking analysis and report the results to CB6 six months after opening.

MOTION APPROVED: UNANIMOUSLY

Minutes submitted by Eric McClure.