

Brooklyn Community Board 9
890 Nostrand Avenue
Brooklyn, New York 11225

ULURP/Land Use Committee Meeting Minutes
January 13, 2026

Attendance (Board Members): Suwen Cheong, Theresa Westerdahl, Max Davidson, Benny Rosenberger, Joshua Thomas Serrano

Attendance (Community Resident Members) Nichola Cox, Cheryl Bernard, Esteban Giron, Hector Robertson, Janice Grannum

Absent (Board Members) None

Absent (Committee Resident Members) Hector Robertson

Guests: Adam Cusher; Adin Feder; Rod Herbert; Isaiah Pecou; Felice Robertson

CB9 Staff: Mia N. Hilton, Assistant District Manager

1. Committee Updates

a. 73-99 Empire

- i. Lawsuit by two area residents, Alicia Boyd and Lashaun Ellis, continues
 1. Proper environmental impact study was not done as part of rezoning
 2. Temporary restraining order on development remains, motion for discovery filed; court hearing on Jan 21
- ii. New developers, Galaxy LLC, have filed with HPD for MIH permission.
 1. New building designs
 - a. Commercial is substantially reduced from 90k sf commercial to 9k
 - b. Residential increased from 285 units to 400 – will this affect environmental impact statement?
 - c. 4 buildings of 99 units each
 2. MIH – 80 affordable units at 40% AMI. 20% studios, 28% 1 bedrooms, 52% 2 bedrooms. No 3 bedrooms

b. Kingsbrook North site

- i. Kingsbrook south site is already being developed with senior housing as part of Vital Brooklyn Kingsbrook Estates
- ii. Historic shul located here has been closed. Lawsuit filed by Congregation Chaim Albert to establish a charitable trust to prevent demolition. The shul

was always part of the original plans for Kingsbrook which was established to combat anti semitism in healthcare

- iii. Announcement from Governor Hochul recently that she is “stepping in to stop the demolition of the shul” and wants all parties to work it out.

c. Vital Brooklyn Kingsboro Psychiatric site

- i. Douglaston Development has sent notice of excavation to neighbors
- ii. AM Cunningham says Atty General James will hold community impact hearing
- iii. CM Josephs office is looking into whether the public is entitled to a hearing in order for the city to waive the reverter right in the deed for ownership of site to return from state to city if land is no longer used for hospital purposes.
 - 1. The existence of the deed reverter was mentioned in the RFP
 - 2. Tish James office says they cannot advise community on the deed reverter issue because they are counsel to the state so it would be a conflict of interest
 - 3. She still needs to sign off on the transfer so she can hold community impact hearing.
- iv. Why is Empire State Development treating Creedmoor (former psych hospital) site differently? (much less dense to begin with and size of project reduced by 850 units at request of community and elected officials. Most of the units are homeownership, only a small percentage are supportive housing)
- v. Even though there was no community impact hearing, ESD held General Project Plan public hearings

If the city declines to waive the deed reverter, the site would need to go through ULURP to rezone. It is currently zoned R5 which is not enough to build so many units. ULURP would give our community more of a say in the project

- vi. Why not have some of the housing be for hospital workers – nurses, resident physicians etc.
 - 1. My cousin is a nurse at Kings County and has to commute from Harlem – sometimes she doesn’t get off work until 2am. It would help her to have housing on site – Cheryl
 - 2. Years ago, these buildings were used for hospital worker housing
 - 3. 1199 healthcare workers union is getting an office on the site. Will their workers get housing?

d. Pinnacle owns 5000 rent stabilized apartments in the city including several buildings in our district.

- i. Pinnacle wasn’t paying their mortgage, the lender filed to foreclose, and Pinnacle filed for bankruptcy to stop the foreclosure. A bankruptcy auction is being held on Thursday for all the buildings. The only bidder is Summit,

which has close ties to Pinnacle, so it isn't an arm's length sale. The lender won't be getting all their money back and the city and tenants don't believe Summit can clear all the housing violations and maintain the buildings. The Atty General has filed a motion to oppose the sale. – Esteban

e. **350 Troy Avenue** had initial hearing at BSA

- i. There was some opposition to the expansion from neighbors on President Street at the general board meeting. Although there was a lot of support from the community at the hearing we held, they were mostly from Carroll Street. It's important in land use to talk to all the neighbors
- ii. Commissioners wanted applicant to put in writing that if there was a further need for expansion, they would look for another building
 1. There is a big drop off in the number of new students projected from toddler daycare to nursery. Why?
 2. Chabad community gets many new young families with preschool age children but the community tradition is for them to leave as the children get older to live in Chabad sites around the world. Also, boys and girls are combined until nursery when boys go to different schools.
- iii. Commissioners asked for more details on construction safety plan, pick up and drop off plan to prevent traffic and parking issues, no amplified sound on rooftop play area, and trash plan
- iv. Asked if more of the bulk could be moved to the basement because it's a pretty big building (6.0 FAR). Applicant said this would cause more disruption to school activities because of the need to work on basement
- v. Next hearing should be in 6 weeks to 2 months

f. **Prospect Park RFP**

- i. Neither the Mamdani transition team nor the EDC replied to our request for a delay and did not answer all the questions about the need to comply with ULURP process for sale of city owned sites.
- ii. EDC responded to CM Josephs office to affirm that the site was owned by the city, not the MTA. However, any construction would have to be approved by the MTA; there is a potential to disrupt subway service because the tracks run directly under the site and are pretty shallow.
- iii. The Mayor has issued a new executive order creating a group of agencies to review all public sites for potential housing development

g. **Fair Share Study** by NY community foundation intern

- i. Mayna, Suki and Dante have been working with intern to compile profile of community district 9. Has the district built our fair share of housing over the last 15 years?
- ii. Will present to housing/ULURP committees jointly in March
- iii. It would be good to have data on supportive housing units

- h. Invite Department of City planning to present on city of yes zoning changes and ULURP changes from charter amendments
 - i. Housing committee needs to focus on other housing issues including housing preservation and enforcement of tenant protection and fair housing rules. Zoning and new construction cannot be the primary solutions to affordability. Most of our housing units are rent stabilized units. This is different than many Brooklyn districts.
- 2. Zoning and Land Use Town Hall
 - a. It's a technical subject - how can we make this interesting and engaging to the public? How can we get people to discuss this proactively before it becomes a problem when it's very contentious and it may be difficult to help?
 - b. We can't do zoning in a vacuum – we should first hear peoples concerns. How do we solve for the housing affordability problem? How did this big building go up and how can I prevent that?
 - i. First half should be an open town hall on concerns; second half can be a zoning 101
 - c. Community boards don't reach every cross section of the community – why not create a series of focus groups on land use issues?
 - d. Interactive component
 - e. We should do a zoom/hybrid meeting to allow more people to attend
 - f. Two hybrid workshops – one in April, one in June/community fair
 - g. Should invite subject matter experts
 - h. Create social media video about why land use issues matter to help promote the workshops