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08/02/2022

My name is Arona Testamark I am currently the President for the Board of Directors at Woodstock Terrace Coop.

I am here to testify on the character and the greatness of Bronx Council Woman, Ms Althea Stevens from in 16th District. Woodstock Terrace Coop have been served by the 16th District for several years; back when Ms. Vanessa Gibson who is now our Bronx Borough President was our Council Woman. I met the leaders of the 16th District while attending many community events. I spoke to various leaders in the community trying to get someone in the district who would involve Woodstock Terrace Coops as part of the community. Woodstock Terrace is one of the Coops that is in the South Bronx. Woodstock Terrace population is mostly Seniors. Most of the times we heard about Budget that are allocated to different projects and communities for upgrade, but when I asked if we can be included in those upgrades, we were always told that Coops are considered private. My Board and I would reach out to the 16th District and invite them to our Board meetings to listen to our complaints. We would invite them to our Woodstock Terrace Coop Family Day event so they can meet with the Shareholders and speak with them. Ms. Gibson, Ms. Stevens, and other community leaders would show up.

For the first time we felt like part of the community and not like private citizens. Ms Gibson and Ms Stevens as well as the other community leaders came and made themselves comfortable. They mingled with the Shareholders as if they knew them. The leaders from the 16th District spoke to everyone about their issues and concerns on what is happening in our community. As we all raised questions and stated our concern on what we were facing and our concerns. They promised us that they would work with us and try to address some of our concerns.

We now have a new Council Woman, Ms Althea Stevens who is a very smart and caring individual did not forget Woodstock Terrace. During the year, she knew what was needed; she has the eyes, to spot issues and always find the time to come to any function that we invited her too.

School time they would provide the kids in Woodstock Terrace Coop with back-to-school supplies and speak to the children about their future.

During the Covid outbreak I was kind of concern about our community receiving the COVID-19 Vaccine. I spoke to District 16th office, and by the end of that day, I received a response from the office. They were able to get about 30 qualify individuals from Woodstock Terrace appointment for the Vaccine.

This year Woodstock Terrace Coop was included in the Budget for the first time in our existence. All of this is because of District 16. We are pleading to the commissioner to not rezone us from District 16

Arona Testamark

Board President for Woodstock Terrace.

Districting Commission, 253 Broadway, 3rd Floor, New York, NY 10007 Re: Proposed Council District 12 Maps (June-July 2022) To the Members of the Districting Commission, Greetings, my name is _____ and I have lived/worked in the _____ neighborhood of the Bronx for ____ years. I am requesting that you reconsider the boundary lines to help keep my community unified. Our community in _____ has shared values and as such there should be shared access to services. Dividing the district along _____ will require a further distance to municipal government services – and in most instances, double the travel time (particularly via public transportation) to access such services. The 12th Council District as it stands is a close-knit community, with shared values. This district also holds a unique population as a majority Black community, with a higher average of homeownership. The Neighborhood Tabulation Area (NTA) for Williamsbridge-Olinville has 60% Black residency and EastchesterEdenwald-Baychester has 68% Black residency, compared to the Borough which has 28% percent Black residency. In 2019 via the Census' American Community Survey, it is estimated that the region has a homeownership rate of 39.1% with 60.2% of homeowners identifying as Black compared to the Borough which has 18.9% homeownership with 29.0% of homeowners identifying as Black. To divide this community would be to frankly, disenfranchise the community and weaken political power.

As a result, I _____ am compelled to testify to the Commission and ask that they reconsider these district lines and re-consolidate Gun Hill & The Valley. Generations of families have grown up together in this community and I would like to continue to build with my neighbors as a consolidated entity. We attend the same schools, faith institutions, and senior centers and are now finding ourselves, and subsequently our resources immensely divided. We have spent decades fighting for adequate funding for our community and especially our schools, such as Evander, and alongside our Council representation we were able to finally secure 778K for capital improvements for the Evander High School Campus. This school is an absolute institution, with generations of residents in this community attending this school – and a Beacon program where we can all send our kids. These programs require adequate funding, and the neighboring council districts already have existing commitments and institutions, such as the Columbus Campus in District 13 and the Roosevelt Campus in District 15, and it may take away resources from other districts to ask them to carry this charge. In conclusion, as a longstanding resident/employee in/of Council District 12, I implore the Commission to keep our families together and restore the original district boundary lines. Our generation was able to succeed due to the resources we were able to access and we would greatly appreciate being able to offer the next one the same access and resources. Thank you for your time, and have a great day. Best,

[REDACTED]

From: Luke Szabados [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, August 15, 2022 5:35 PM
To: Public Testimony
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Keep Gun Hill Road contiguous in District 12

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Hello,

As a proud resident of Council District 12, I know that East Gun Hill Road is a vital thoroughfare that makes up the northeast Bronx. In the proposed plan, it has been chopped up into 3 separate districts. This is very frustrating because improvements of this roadway should be address as a contiguous region, and that is more difficult when it's segmented into various jurisdictions.

We fought long and hard for a busway on Gun Hill Road, a victory which would have been more difficult had it been accomplished with so many more council members having to weigh in.

Please keep Gun hill road within District 12. At the very least please keep the MTA bus depot in district 12. The depot is located at 1910 Bartow Avenue.

All the best and thank you
Luke Szabados