

FULL BOARD MEETING MINUTES

January 5, 2021 at 6:30pm

Mark N. Diller, Chairperson

Present: Barbara Adler, Jay Adolf, Andrew Albert, Linda Alexander, Richard Asche, Steven Brown, Elizabeth Caputo, Josh Cohen, Christian Cordova, Ken Coughlin, Page Cowley, Louisa Craddock, Catherine DeLazzero, Mark Diller, Robert Espier, Shelly Fine, Paul Fischer, Julian Giordano, Madelyn Innocent, Audrey Isaacs, K Karpen, Natasha Kazmi, Doug Kleiman, Blanche Lawton, Sara Lind, Ira Mitchneck, Klari Neuwelt, William Ortiz, Michele Parker, Jeannette Rausch, Seema Reddy, Andrew Rigie, Rich Robbins, Madge Rosenberg, Melissa Rosenberg, Peter Samton, Meg Schmitt, Susan Schwartz, Roberta Semer, Ethel Sheffer, Polly Spain, Howard Yaruss, Doug McGowan, Bev Donohue, Rosa Arenas, Erana Stennett, Courtney Clark Metakis

Mark Diller called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm after the Secretary confirmed the existence of a quorum.

Mark Diller stepped down as Chair of Community Board 7. Andrew Rigie, the First Vice-Chair, chaired the meeting going forward.

Andrew Rigie thanked Mark for his service to the Board and committee.

Report from NYPD 20th and 24th Precincts

Deputy Inspector Naoki Yaguchi, 24th Precinct

Deputy Inspector Yaguchi thanked Mark for his service. He shared that the 24th Precinct has reported 922 index crimes for the year, compared to 1,019 in 2019. Crime was up in murder and burglaries categories (burglaries almost doubled) and vehicle thefts were also up. Robberies and grand larcenies were down and shootings were up. The Precinct is still seeing an increase in burglaries due to package thefts.

Captain Neil Zuber, 20th Precinct

Captain Zuber thanked Mark. He shared that, this year, the 20th precinct has seen a significant decrease in crimes, but the last week of the year had some significant increases. In one night there were four interior burglaries. Two had security cameras and two didn't. For those with security cameras, arrests were made by the end of the day, for the other ones the search is ongoing. Having interior/exterior cameras for your building/business is very helpful to deter and solve crime. There were a couple of increases in crimes, notably package thefts.

Courtney Clark Metakis noted that there have been several shootings in the past few weeks. She recalled that when there was an increase in violent incidents last fall, the 20th Precinct developed a strategy to respond to them. She asked Captain Zuber why he thinks there are increases and if there are any plans to respond?

Captain Zuber replied that last year, students were robbing other students after school and that the police officer deployment was put back in place this fall, and it is still in place. He noted that the silver lining of the two shootings in the Amsterdam houses is that they are not related, just two terrible incidents in close proximity. They have arrested the first shooter and now have cause to arrest the second. About an hour ago, the third incident of a knife-point robbery in a localized area took place. Captain Zuber explained that they have received scooter and bike units and that omnipresence is going to play a key part in making arrests.

Deputy Inspector Yaguchi added that shots were fired on 92nd Street and Broadway on December 22nd and that they have recovered the gun and arrested the individual.

Audrey Isaacs shared that she has been personally menaced by mentally ill people on the street and subway both in and out of the Upper West Side. She also noted that the newspaper coverage is very distressing. She doesn't hold the police accountable and instead points to the need for criminal code changes in the state legislature.

Erica Gerson asked about the state of cameras on the streets of the neighborhood and whether or not the city can put them. She also asked how more police can be put on the street and if Captain Zuber is satisfied with the way the DA is making prosecution decisions.

Captain Zuber replied that cameras are helpful, and that they can use traffic cameras, previously installed NYPD cameras, and NYCHA cameras, but that the most helpful cameras are those on private buildings. In terms of prosecution, he noted that he is personally very vocal with the DA's office and that the Precinct is always frustrated when criminals they arrest with probable cause are not prosecuted. That said, he doesn't know what the DA's mindset is.

Jackie Moffat shared that she is concerned about homeless encampments that she thinks are taking over the neighborhood. She noted that they are very unsanitary and that she has seen crimes committed. She asked if there is anything that can be done to help these people.

Captain Zuber replied that the homeless population has been the number one concern since he got to 20th Precinct and has only grown. He explained that the NYPD has been taken out of dealing with the homeless with budget cuts and policy changes. He advised that if you see a crime committed you should call 911. Otherwise, DHS is the relevant department.

Megan Martin stated that the violent crime and daily theft the community is experiencing in drug stores is very disturbing, as are the robberies on Riverside, the two shootings by the schools, and the stabbing at the 96th Street subway station. She noted that this has significantly increased over the past few months and that she is hearing a more reactive stance. She asked how the community can be more proactive to prevent these incidents from happening, and if there is anything to ask from the City Council and Borough President.

Captain Zuber replied, explaining that for the bank robbery, the person was arrested out of state and seems to be somebody who has done this in the past. He added that it's important to note that no weapons were involved. In terms of deployment, he shared that all of the officers are out, and so what can be changed is where they're put. He explained that part of that decision is judged from historical

trends, and this year there is nothing to compare to. The ordinary triggers aren't there, but the Precinct is constantly reevaluating. He noted that there is a new class of officers coming in, but the Precinct still needs more. Since the overtime budget was cut, parades and protests must be staffed by officers from the precinct. He also added that the Neighborhood Coordination Officers are constantly working with the public.

Megan Martin asked Captain Zuber to comment on the permanent police presence outside the Lucerne and asked if it drains from other areas.

Captain Zuber answered that it does not drain resources. He shared that the narcotics team did several sweeps in early autumn and made numerous arrests which stemmed a lot of complaints. He explained that the biggest drain of resources is Duane Reade and Target, where police are constantly being called for theft or robbery.

Melanie Wesslock, the parent of a teen who was mugged by a group of ten other teenagers last year, shared her concern that teen on teen crime will increase once schools reopen. She also asked what the Community Board can do to budget cameras or create a neighborhood crime watch.

Deputy Inspector Yaguchi shared that they have a funding mechanism in place to install NYPD cameras., and they're currently trying to get them for Riverside Drive with Helen Rosenthal's office. He said that community members can help by pushing for more cameras in the area.

Katie Sheehan, who lives on 96th and Amsterdam, expressed that her intersection seems to be very dangerous for pedestrians, especially the left-hand turn lane, where pedestrians have almost gotten hit by cars and trucks. She asked what could be done to address traffic issues.

Deputy Inspector Yaguchi replied that there is a dedicated traffic team that looks at collisions. He explained that, from a traffic engineering standpoint, it's problematic, and that he will speak to the executive officers in charge of those issues and will step up in that area.

Special election of Board Chair for January through October 2021. Joshua Cohen, Chair, Elections Committee

Josh Cohen explained the procedures for voting and candidate speeches.

Roberta Semer withdrew her candidacy.

Richard Asche and Steven Brown read their statements before answering Board members' questions.

Michele Parker asked Richard how he would ensure the Board is fair and impartial to the community given that Transportation Alternatives has been campaigning for him.

Richard replied that he thinks public transportation is the most important issue facing the transportation committee this coming year and stated that he would not come down on either side of the bikes vs. cars issue.

Madelyn Innocent shared that she spoke extensively with both candidates. She stated that she doesn't know what Richard has done in the community for public housing and that Steven is kind of a newbie, but that he gave her some answers and knew about the NYCHA taskforce, whereas Richard did not make any references to public housing.

Richard replied that public housing is one of the most important issues we face as a Board. He noted that while it hasn't been a focus of his in the past, it would be a priority if he became Board Chair.

Robert Espier shared that an experiment was conducted in Brooklyn last week where a district tried no policing, using community organizations instead. He asked what the thinking is from both candidates on such an experiment in our neighborhood.

Steven replied that we're in a challenging time and a balance needs to be met. He stated that he thinks a realistic goal is to find what the middle ground is.

Richard responded that he is skeptical of the concept if taken literally, and would like to see results. He clarified that this doesn't mean police need to be doing what they're doing today. He noted that there are a lot of things like social work and parades that auxiliary police can do. He also added that in Europe there is widespread CCTV, which reduces privacy but can be effective.

Since there were no further questions, voting was conducted virtually.

The vote was announced by the Elections Committee. Steven Brown was elected chair of Community Board 7 and assumed Chairing responsibilities from Andrew Rigie for the remainder of the meeting.

Business Session

Steering Committee, Mark Diller, Chairperson

Resolution Re:

1. Permanent exhibit to capture the experiences of the Exonerated Five to be located in Central Park.

Linda Alexander asked if the presentation given at Steering will be shared and Mark said he would send it to the board.

The vote was taken by a show of hands: 35-0-4-0. The resolution carried.

Land Use Committee, Richard Asche, Chairperson

Resolution Re:

2. Coastal Flood Resiliency Text Amendment.

The vote was taken by a show of hands: 37-0-0-0. The resolution carried.

Transportation Committee, Howard Yaruss and Andrew Albert, Co-Chairpersons

Resolutions Re:

3. **908 Amsterdam Avenue** (West 104th – 105th Streets.) Application #B02782 to NYC Taxi and Limousine Commission by New App Car & Limo, Inc. for renewal of their For Hire Base Station license.

The vote to approve was taken by a show of hands: 41-1-0-0.

4. Ending Taxpayer Support for Marketing of Helicopter Tours Over Manhattan.

Erana Stennett shared her support for the resolution and added that in her experience, the helicopters appear to be flying in the morning to watch the sunrise.

Linda Alexander asked how one can discern the difference between the tourist and news helicopters.

Andrew Albert replied that they are separate issues that both need addressing, but this resolution only focuses on tourism.

Klari Neuwelt stated that this resolution should have been joint with the Parks & Environment Committee. She also suggested that the resolution be amended to add that pollution is an issue in addition to noise.

Andrew Albert accepted the amendment as friendly.

The vote was taken by a show of hands: 45-0-0-0. The resolution carried.

5. Need for a Safe Route for Westbound Cyclists on West 100th Street.

William Ortiz shared his concern that the creation of a safe route for cyclists could infringe on parking space for police officers and firefighters. He noted that he thinks that the street should first become a two way street before the question of creating a cyclist route is considered.

Jay Adolf agreed with William and added that although this resolution only calls for a study, it was taken as a matter of faith at the committee-level that parking spaces would have to be removed. He stated that he thinks it would be totally inappropriate for the Community Board to support this, and will thus be voting no on the resolution.

Ken Coughlin noted that this resolution defers to the DOT to decide what to do, at which point they will return to the Community Board for further input.

Susan Schwartz echoed Jay and William's points and added that given all of the other priorities at the moment, this seems like a nice-to-have but not a need-to-have.

Jeanette Rausch shared her experience riding around that neighborhood and stated that the street should be thought of as a whole, and so DOT should be thus asked to use a "complete

streets” approach.

Howard and Andrew took Jeanette’s comments as a friendly amendment.

Erana Stennett noted that this is the second time in recent months that the Transportation Committee has asked the DOT for a study without engaging with and consulting community members. She stated that she hopes the Community Board can think about how the community can be engaged from the beginning.

Audrey Isaacs shared that she will be voting no because this is a dangerous street for cyclists.

Melissa Rosenberg shared her experience using the street and suggested that the Board ask for a complete streets study to accommodate all users.

Andrew Rigie noted that it appears that many Transportation committee issues are focused on localized areas, and suggested that the Community Board engage in larger conversations about how we want the community to look as a whole.

Ethel Sheffer agreed with Jeanette and Erana. She added that this street has developed in a different way than the surrounding ones and that it needs to be addressed collaboratively between the DOT and community.

Roberta Semer stated that she thinks we need an overall plan for the Upper West Side.

Jonathan Lindenbaum, a member of the public, stated that he doesn’t understand what the problem is since everyone seems to agree with the idea of a study.

Jay Adolf stated that a cyclist route should not be included in the resolution if it is intended to be open-ended and inclusive of all users.

Rich Robbins stated that we need to ask DOT if there is a better solution, and the way to do that is via this resolution, which wouldn’t make sense to send back to the committee.

The vote was taken by a show of hands: 24-16-4-0. The resolution carried.

**Business & Consumer Issues Committee, Linda Alexander and Christian Cordova, Co-Chairpersons
Resolutions Re:**

6. **434 Amsterdam Avenue (West 81st Street.)** New application to the SLA for a two-year On-Premises liquor license by Jugaad LLC d/b/a Laut.

The vote to approve was taken by a show of hands: 40-0-0-0

7. **Multi-block street fairs.** Applications to the Street Activity Permit Office for multi-block street fairs in 2021.

Erana Stennett asked if the fairs will be affected by the COVID-19 protocol.

Christian Cordova clarified that the fairs must submit applications each year to keep their spot, but that the fairs will not go on if COVID-19 continues.

The vote to approve was taken by a show of hands: 37-2-1-0.

Preservation Committee, K Karpen and Michele Parker, Co-Chairpersons

Resolutions Re:

8. **2109 Broadway aka 230 West 74th Street, Ansonia.** Application to the Landmarks Preservation Commission for the replacement of the existing entry doors.

Klari Neuwelt was in favor of the resolution but noted that there's an enhanced standard for individual landmarks, and the resolution does not characterize the degree of appropriateness. She shared that when she was Preservation Chair, categorizations such as minimally appropriate, totally appropriate, etc would be used. To her, this was minimally appropriate.

Madge Rosenberg replied, explaining that one door is 1.5 inches different from the other, solely for wheelchair accessibility. She added that the architects seem to have bent over backward to accommodate style. She would say this is more than minimally appropriate and a job well done.

The vote to approve was taken by a show of hands: 36-1-0-0.

9. **451 Columbus Avenue** aka 76 & 78 West 82 nd Street. Application to the Landmarks Preservation Commission for the legalization of railings replaced without a permit.

The vote to approve was taken by a show of hands: 36-0-1-0.

10. **140 Riverside Drive, PHC** (West 87th Street.) Application to the Landmarks Preservation Commission for a proposed alteration of a masonry window opening.

The vote to approve was taken by a show of hands: 36-0-0-0.

11. **110 West 88th Street** (Columbus Avenue.) Application to the Landmarks Preservation Commission to facilitate the construction of a new four-story (plus penthouse) rowhouse.

Melissa Rosenberg stated that it seems silly not to approve this because it would be like approving a vacant lot.

Peter Samton shared that the committee was largely turned off by the bricks and their color.

Page Cowley clarified that vacant lots are still considered landmarks and subject to that regulation.

Robert Espier asked what the applicant shared with the committee about their process.

K Karpen and Jay Adolf explained that the applicant did not explain or reason with the committee about their decision.

The vote to approve was taken by a show of hands: 33-3-0-0.

12. **375 Riverside Drive** (West 110th Street.) Application to the Landmarks Preservation Commission for a new window master plan.

The vote to approve was taken by a show of hands: 37-0-0-0.

Directed by the City Charter mandate that Community Boards review matters prior to consideration by the Landmarks Preservation Commission, the Preservation Committee reviews the “appropriateness” of proposed changes to individually designated landmarks as well as to properties listed within the Upper West Side’s Historic Districts.

Approval of minutes from the previous full board meeting. Minutes were approved with a voice vote.

Community Session

We welcome all members of our community (residents, businesses, CBOs) who would like to speak on issues of interest to them. Members of the community are granted time to speak as determined by the Chair, and we will also accept a written copy for the record.

Manhattan Borough President’s Report

Borough President Brewer began by noting that she counted 25 city agencies that might be on 100th Street. She stated that we need a citywide public realm effort. She acknowledged the Lucerne decision allowing the men to stay at the Lucerne or go to the Radisson, and she noted that Goddard riverside has employed a lot of these men, so she hopes they have the availability to stay. She acknowledged that she has received a lot of complaints about crime on the Upper West Side. Her office released the police reform toolkit yesterday, which is relevant to the Governor’s announcement that by April 1st he wants a plan to reform policing from the Mayor. In terms of grocery stores, she said that Western Beef was the main store for Amsterdam Avenue residents and that it was responsive with prices. With Brooklyn Fare moving into the location, she stated that we have to be sure it is a store that is responsive to the community. She noted that she is sick of talking about helicopters, which she’s been working on addressing since de Blasio came to office with only minor improvements. She shared that there was an amazing Zoom meeting with stakeholders recently where they learned how people are going to New

Jersey to get helicopters. She will be meeting New Jersey officials to discuss. She added that she is pushing to have a Manhattan discussion on vaccines. 24/7 access is crucial. She also shared that her office's capital funding applications have been released. Finally, she reminded community members that the Community Board application is due February 1st.

Reports by Elected Officials

Councilmember Mark Levine, District 7

Councilmember Levine thanked Mark and congratulated Steven. He noted that the vaccination program is way behind where it needs to be and that we need to be at ten times our current level: 400,000 people per week. That would get us to herd immunity by the middle of this year. He added that we need to take vaccinations beyond the hospitals and into NYCHA centers, school gymnasiums, and houses of worship, which need to be open 24/7. And there needs to be a little more flexibility in the prioritization of vaccines so that extra doses at the end of the day can be used. He noted that we're seeing over 5,000 new cases today and over 3,000 people hospitalized tonight. We should assume the UK variant of the Coronavirus is in NYC already.

Councilmember Helen Rosenthal, District 6

Councilmember Rosenthal thanked Mark Diller for his leadership and congratulated Steven Brown. She stated that she supports the helicopter resolution and shared the advocacy work her office has done in that regard. She thanked Mark Levine for his work pushing the city in the Covid-19 fight. There will be a housing clinic next week that will explain new moratoriums at the federal and local levels. Sign-up for her newsletter for more updates.

State Senator Brad Hoylman, District 27

Senator Hoylman congratulated Stevens and wished everyone a healthy New Year. He shared that the session will resume in Albany tomorrow and that there was a meeting on vaccine distribution with the health commissioner, Dr. Zucker, today. He also noted that he will be focusing on a variety of traffic safety measures this session, as well as supporting small businesses. He ended by sharing information on upcoming testing centers and blood drives.

Reports by Elected Officials' Representatives (One-minute remarks)

Michelle Booker, Congressman Adriano Espaillat, District 13

Michelle Booker thanked Mark Diller and said she looked forward to working with Steven Brown. She shared that Congressman Espaillat is serving on the appropriations committee now. She also stated highlights of the PPP from Congress and wished everyone a healthy and happy new year

Luke Wolf, Comptroller Scott Stringer

Luke Wolf wished everyone a happy new year. The comptroller proposed recommendations to expedite vaccine rollout. These are: 1) create a list of high-risk individuals to prioritize distribution when faced with bottlenecks/delays, 2) develop a database to allow hospitals and other providers to gauge demand and ensure effective distribution, and 3) double down on outreach to New Yorkers with messaging.

Shana Harmongoff, State Senator Brian Benjamin, District 30

Shana Harmongoff congratulated Steven Brown and thanked Mark Diller. She noted that the Covid-19 rent relief program has reopened with a February 1st deadline. She reminded the public that Senator Benjamin's office is working remotely can be reached for support by email and phone

Liam Galligan, Assemblymember Daniel O'Donnell, District 69

Liam Galligan shared that the legislature extended the moratorium on evictions until May. He also noted that unemployment insurance applications are still having difficulties being processed and that Assemblymember O'Donnell's office is helping people. He wished everyone a happy new year.

Hannah Weinerman, Congressman Jerrold Nadler, District 10

Hannah Weinerman added more information on the PPP bill as well as on unemployment benefits through the SAVES act. She shared that the education department suspended loan payments and there is expanded eligibility for loans. Constituents can learn more on Congressman Nadler's website.

Suad Hassan, State Senator José Serrano, District 29

Suad Hassan thanked Mark Diller and wished Steven Brown good luck. Senator Serrano was re-appointed Chair of the majority conference and committee on Cultural Affairs, Tourism, Parks, and Recreation. She wished everyone a happy new year.

Bryce Peyre, Assemblymember Dick Gottfried, District 75

Bryce Peyre thanked Mark Diller and congratulated Steven Brown.

Erica Overton, Assemblymember Linda Rosenthal, District 67

Erica Overton thanked Mark Diller and congratulated Steven Brown. She stated that constituents can reach out to Assemblymember Rosenthal's office for help dealing with evictions, which have been put on hold until May 1st. The moratorium for foreclosures is also May 1st, and the office is helping small landlords with that. She shared that the Assemblymember testified at an MTA hearing on fare hikes and that more funding is needed from the federal government. She also noted that Assemblymember Rosenthal testified at an NYCHA hearing on the annual draft plan. Finally, she stated that they will be meeting with Brooklyn Fare and the new property owner of the former Western Beef location to ensure it is an affordable replacement.

Public Comments

Zach Campbell, the community liaison from the AMNH, congratulated Steven Brown and thanked Mark Diller. He provided his monthly update on the Gilder Center and shared that the superstructure at the cellar level has been completed, and the first floor is practically done. They continue to anticipate averaging up to 30 trucks per day and around 100 workers on site.

Olivia Killingsworth responded to discussions in the chat about ambulances outside the Lucerne and explained a DHS rule that requires EMS to be called when a resident needs medical attention. She also shared that at least one resident has expressed that he is wary of asking for medical help out of fear that

photos of him will be shared on the internet and that certain community members will interpret that the ambulances are a sign of issues with drugs and violence at the Lucerne.

Megan Martin replied, noting that ambulances are seen at least once a day if not twice. She stated that to call an ambulance to take the residents to the hospital is deeply concerning and should raise questions for a run of the mill medical problem. She added that there have been three deaths since the men moved in, if not more and that this is critical and needs to be addressed.

Meeting adjourned at 11:02 pm.

COMMUNITY BOARD 7/MANHATTAN
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

JANUARY 19, 2021 at 6:30pm

Steven Brown, Chairperson

Steering Committee Members Present: Steven Brown, Richard Asche, Andrew Rigie, Mark Diller, Doug Kleiman, Julian Giordano, Beverly Donohue, Christian Cordova, Linda Alexander, Sheldon Fine, Louisa Craddock, Melissa Rosenberg, Klari Neuwelt, Michele Parker, K Karpen, Andrew Albert, Howard Yaruss, Roberta Semer

Steven Brown called the meeting to order at 6:31. He expressed the goal of having an efficient and informative meeting,

Chair Update

He first delivered a general update. He has had a busy time since his election having virtual meetings with committee members, agency officials, and elected officials and their representatives. He thanked all those who have helped with the process of getting him up to speed. When he announced his candidacy, he talked about focusing on three things--advocacy, maximizing participation and being efficient in how we work as a board. To make progress on all three, in conversations with members and electeds, he has focused on identifying things we can actively do. He will be working to fill open co-chairs and wants to hear from members who wish to switch committees. He has had meetings on data and on the website and a good conversation with Penny Ryan. Zoom usage has been a big topic. He is still sharing responsibilities with Mark and thanked Christian for his help. He is planning optional webinars on Zoom use, one for co-chairs and one for members. He announced that he has asked Richard Asche to serve as parliamentarian and thanked him for running for chair.

Committee Updates including any Agenda Items for Full Board

Housing: Melissa Rosenberg stated that there were no items for the full board meeting. Steve noted that at the Housing meeting, the committee talked about two to three months of meeting agendas going forward, a good practice for other committees to follow.

Transit: Howard Yaruss noted that the committee talked about the perils of cars turning left. They plan to have speakers on the issue. Andrew Albert then provided an update on MTA news. The subway fare will not be raised at the next MTA board meeting. However, fares will go up on bridge tolls. Subway fares will likely go up in the fall. The MTA just received an innovation grant. They will be testing an innovative filter system on the LIRR. New R179 cars are coming to the subways. Polly Trottenberg, former NYC transportation commissioner, has been nominated to be second in command at federal DOT; she is a friend to mass transit. The Transportation Committee will be having a presentation on subway cleaning in the context of how to get back to 24-hour service. Robert Espier stated that subways to the Bronx have been very crowded, leaving 96th Street between 3:00 and 5:00 and returning about 6:30. Andrew noted that on Thursday he would learn more about the MTA's plan to right-size subway service to avoid crowding.

Preservation: K Karpen noted that the only matter before them is the southern facade of the Metropolitan Museum.

BCI: Linda Alexander stated that this was the first time in a year that the committee had no applications before it. Their meeting focused on what the community board can do to support small business. They decided to put together a town hall. They have received requests to put together a Restaurant list. They do have one last liquor license renewal for Trump International Hotel banquet groups. Since there have been no complaints from the community, they agreed that the regular process would take place.

Land Use; Richard Asche stated that there were no resolutions. They are about to embark on a process of “planning together” as requested by a City Council proposal. This densely written proposal is intended to make land use more democratic. They will start looking at it tomorrow. George James will come to the next meeting to discuss the topic. There are available grant funds to pay him for his time. Kick-off on the topic is on 1/20.

Parks: Klari Neuwelt stated that the committee is meeting on the 25th. They are considering the following items: 1. A simple resolution to renovate several Riverside Park paths. 2. A broad discussion on helicopters 3. Potential installation of security cameras in Riverside Park where there are none now. The cameras would be investigated as a possible way to combat crime in the park, which has included graffiti and two armed robberies at knifepoint. John Harrold, the park administrator, will appear at the meeting to start the discussion. She will notify a Central Park representative in case they wish to join.

Health and Human Services: Sheldon Fine announced that the committee meeting this month will focus on vaccine distribution. Attending will be City Test and Trace staff, Mark Levine, and others from health agencies. He requested that anyone with questions should send them to sfine50@aol.com. He expects a lively discussion and it is likely that there will be a resolution on the subject for the next full board meeting,

Budget: Roberta Semer noted that the budget committee should meet soon and start scheduling conversations with committees on next year’s budget.

Full Board Meeting Format Discussion

Steve Brown announced that we may add time constraints to items for the full board to use time more efficiently. There are a number of concerns that have been raised about the Chat function on ZOOM. We are looking for a solution to the negative tenor of cross conversations among members of the public. He hopes to make recommendations at the next full board meeting.

Richard Asche stated that there is no way to pay attention to the large number of entries when the chat is fully open. He likes the tool for input but it has been impossible to make it work. He asked whether it could be set up so the public could talk to Board members but not to each other.

Sheldon Fine suggested doing away with it

Barbara Adler agreed with Shelly and stated that chat should be available only for sign-in.

Louisa Craddock expressed that we should try to mimic an in-person meeting. Members of the public would not be shouting out in a real meeting.

Klari Neuwelt agreed with other members. While there were incidents at in-person meetings where people denigrated each other, chairs had to bring those situations under control. Having that behavior in the Chat is inconsistent with the best substitute for an in-person meeting process.

Andrew Rigie noted that the public feel they are not always being heard. If comments are directly related to a discussion, perhaps we could have a separate function so people feel they can communicate.

Ken Coughlin's view was that the Chat is unnecessary, an invitation to inflame passions. It has been useful to provide links to resources. Perhaps it could be turned on and off.

Julian Giordano noted that it was possible to keep the chat open for the public to speak to board members and open to provide resources without enabling conversation between members of the public.

Linda Alexander noted that it is now an unusual time; the Steering Committee, which used to be a simple planning meeting with few attendees has now become almost like the full board meeting. We need a sign-in person to organize the meeting so everyone can speak who wishes.

Roberta Semer agreed with Linda. In the past, the board would request a show of hands to assess what people were there to say. While the chat is very confusing, it is important to have input from the community.

Steve Brown concluded the discussion by stating that we will decide this issue but not in a silo. He will seek input from the Borough President's office. He stated that it is not our role to facilitate communication between members of the public. If people have opinions on the issue they should email them to office@CB7.org

Single Adult Women Shelter at 537 West 59th Street: Status Update

Steve Brown asked Mark Diller to provide the facts on what the Community Board has learned about the City's plans for a new women's shelter. Mark stated that he had received a letter from the Department of Homeless Services (DHS) at the end of December and then a phone call. No information was provided on fair share analysis, only a general sketch of the population--single women. He then asked for more information so the board would know what committee to bring in for further review. The shelter is scheduled to open in 2024--half way through the administration of the next mayor, so there is plenty of time to weigh in. He noted that the district had lost a shelter on 107th Street for employed women.

Steve then made clear that DHS has not reached out to the community board for comment. Our next step is to gather information by writing a letter. He solicited input on ideas to include in the letter and had already had a quick conversation with Shelly on HHS committee involvement. Currently, the board is starting a long journey to gather information in a thoughtful manner. He noted that CB7 does not have a formal role in approving the shelter.

Doug Kleiman noted that, unlike the process for opening temporary shelters, in this letter DHS encourages the formation of a community advisory board.

Klari Neuwelt requested that the letter be posted on the CB7 website. Steve responded that it would be.

Michele Parker suggested asking Project Renewal, the proposed service provider, to come to a board or committee meeting.

Roberta Semer expressed that it was good that DHS contacted the board early in the process. They will be tearing down a building and erecting new construction on the site. At the 107th St shelter, they had built up good services.

Ethel Sheffer suggested that now that the board has received notice, we could ask for a small meeting with Project Renewal, a group that is well known in the district. It is worth responding quickly to develop a process for on-going communication.

Courtney Clark Metakis asked what the board could do immediately so we don't receive information after the West Side Rag.

Robert Espier stated that he supports the immediate formation of a workgroup and would like to be a participant.

Louisa Craddock raised a point of information, asking how a community advisory board works.

Sheldon Fine noted that community advisory boards are very common, though they are usually formed when a shelter opens. They tend to meet monthly and gather information to serve the community's interests and promote communication. Local groups participate and speak to issues in the immediately surrounding area--playgrounds, schools, recreation centers, etc. He suggested that it was important to check on where the funds came from to build a new building.

Page Cowley posed a number of the questions to which the board needed answers: Where did the project come from? Is it owned by the City in perpetuity? Will they dispense medications? Is there an ambulance bay? Where will the trash go? She noted that the board has developed a "shopping list" for these projects in the past.

Michele Parker announced that she was available to help.

Steve Brown then opened the meeting for community comment.

Megan Martin stated that she wished to comment on both the chat function and the proposed shelter. For the public, there is a sense of a lack of transparency. Limiting public comment to two minutes when other topics have 45 minutes seems unfair. She is concerned about the relation between shelters and the mental health crisis. She noted increased crime in the subways, including the man who was electrocuted. She is a little suspicious that Project Renewal was awarded this project. The community can do better and should be involved. Steve Brown responded that we want to be part of the process but haven't been and encouraged Megan to go to committee meetings where there is more in-depth conversation. In response to Megan's question, Mark suggested that advocacy was best directly to the Mayor.

Genna commented that she has heard people in the community refer to items they have seen in the chat. She asked whether the shelter letter was a 30-day notice. Sheldon Fine responded that it is not, but was an opening for the beginning of a conversation. Roberta Semer commented to Genna that it would be great if the community were to advocate for community board involvement. The Mayor has a program to create a certain number of shelters and DHS does what it wants. The West Side Rag has information that is different from what the Community Board has. The Board needs to be part of this project to shape it. Mark Diller added that it was prudent to use a little time to learn the facts.

Jackie Moffett noted that there were a lot of shelters on the Upper West Side. She inquired whether the Board was ready to reconsider its support for a Safe Haven in the district.

Melinda Thaler mentioned that there was some problem in posting agendas for the full board meeting; they have not been posted timely for seven months. If the board wants participation, she noted, the public needs to see the agenda more than 20 hours ahead.

New Business

Steve Brown reminded members whose terms were expiring to apply for renewal. The application is on the Borough President's website.

Linda Alexander announced that BCI will provide information about the proposed town hall.

At 8:09, the meeting was adjourned.

BUSINESS & CONSUMER ISSUES COMMITTEE MINUTES

Linda Alexander and Christian Cordova, Co-Chairpersons

January 13, 2021

Business & Consumer Issues Committee of Community Board 7/Manhattan met via the Videoconferencing application Zoom. The meeting was called to order at 6:30 pm by Co-Chairperson Christian Cordova.

Present: Linda Alexander, Christian Cordova, Barbara Adler, Joshua Cohen, Madelyn Innocent, Doug Kleiman, Paul Fischer, Seema Reddy, Andrew Rigie, Erana Stennett. **Chair:** Steven Brown. **Non-Committee Members Present:** Mark Diller, Natasha Kazmi, Sara Lind and Michele Parker.

The following matters were discussed:

1. Discussion Panel: **Challenges facing retail, restaurant & property owners: Before, During and Post Pandemic.**

Panel Members: Michael Nerenberg, Borah, Goldstein, Nahins & Goidel, P.C. - mnerenberg@borahgoldstein.com; Committee Member Andrew Rigie, Executive Director NYC Hospitality Alliance; Committee Member Doug Kleiman, Retail Broker).

- **Michael Nerenberg:** represents property owners primarily on landlord/tenant matters, sales and acquisition, and leasing. Major current concern of property owners is not being able to plan properly because the future is so uncertain (not knowing when we go back to “normal” and what that “normal” will be) due to the current pandemic. Knowing when everyone over 65 years old will be vaccinated could provide more certainty. Also knowing when the commercial eviction moratorium will end would provide more certainty. Lately has helped renegotiate short term leases, where the landlords take a loss of revenue to help restaurants survive through the winter up to March when they can have outdoor dining again.
- **Andrew Rigie:** agreed that the uncertainty is a major challenge to restaurants including the frequent changes in regulation and the failure of the Federal Government to provide adequate financial support to businesses. If the Federal Government does not provide adequate support soon, many businesses will end up defaulting their rent payments, which will lead to landlords defaulting their mortgages, which will lead to economic chaos in the banking industry. Hopes that the oncoming Biden administration will provide proper PPP (Paycheck Protection Program) support to the industry.
- **Doug Kleiman:** represents both landlords and tenants. Has helped renegotiate many leases, several more than once. Landlords that are highly leveraged in their mortgages lack flexibility in renegotiating leases, while those landlords that are not highly leveraged have been able to take some loss of revenue in renegotiating their leases. In some instances, the provisions of the bank loans limit the ability of the landlord to be flexible. He believes that the oncoming Biden administration will be more business and NY friendly.

Comments:

- **Josh Cohen:** his restaurant is struggling but they have been able to keep employees in the payroll. It has been difficult to stay in compliance with the Open Restaurant guidelines of the street enclosures when you see other restaurants breaking the rules. He mentioned that the lack of enforcement has led to the lack of compliance by many restaurants. Can't wait for things to go back to “normal” to be able to go out and openly socialize with people.

- **Linda Alexander:** indicated that at last Full Board meeting there was community concern as to what can CB7 do to help businesses. She asked the attendees for input on this topic.
- **Christian Cordova:** indicated that we can post resources on the CB7 website to help out businesses, for example, a list of restaurants that are currently open, and resources offered by the NYC Small Business Administration like how to file a PPP application.
- **Steven Brown:** agreed with Mr. Cordova and encouraged the committee to use the CB7 website to list any resource that may help businesses like different financial loans that may be available.
- **Madelyn Innocent:** we need to put many ideas together that can be used to put into action once we know what kind of financial support the oncoming Biden administration will provide.
- **Luke Wolf:** CB7 liaison from Comptroller Scott Stringer's office. The Comptroller published a plan to help insure that NYC businesses get their fair share on the new round of PPP loans, <https://comptroller.nyc.gov/newsroom/comptroller-stringer-unveils-plan-to-ensure-fair-distribution-of-ppp-to-new-york-city-small-businesses/>.
- **Michele Parker:** said that businesses and restaurants need to plan for once the pandemic is over which sector of the public will return to buy retail and eat at restaurants since we will have a new "normal". Also asked if there was any truth to having empty store locations turned into housing. Several attendees responded that the actual plan is to turn empty office spaces from businesses that will remain working remotely into affordable housing.
- **Linda Alexander** felt that there will be a shift in the city's demographics in favor of younger people. They will be the ones to revive retail and restaurants.
- **Ashley Fischer:** resident of the Upper West Side (UWS). Said that many millennials like her are moving uptown because of the parks and new anticipated lower rents this coming March and April. Suggested that CB7 advertises for those restaurants that are on the brink of failing to help them out.
- **Erana Stennett:** supported the idea of having a resource page for businesses and restaurants in the CB7 website and to promote this information through LinkNYC. She suggested that CB7 can work with the city to have a campaign to promote restaurants. Also suggested that the committee can partner with the Comptroller's Office to offer a virtual informational event for businesses about the new round of PPP. She felt that it is unfortunate and unfair to the restaurants following the rules, that people will gravitate to those restaurants offering "indoor dining" on the streets because they are warmer.
- **Barbara Adler:** her 20 years' experience as the director of the Columbus Avenue BID demonstrated that many of her merchants were their own worst enemies because they failed to participate on the BID's events. She mentioned that many of the "pods" that some of the restaurants use are dangerous.
- **Natasha Kazmi:** asked who is responsible for the street structure left behind by a closing restaurant. It was explained that the NYC Departments of Transportation and Sanitation are ultimately responsible for removing the abandoned structure. She also asked if it was possible for CB7 to facilitate the use of kitchen in failed restaurants to be used by groups to provide take out food. Linda Alexander explained that it was not possible for CB7 to do this. Doug Kleiman explained that for this to happen someone has to lease the space.

2. New business.

- **Background:** currently all the SLA license renewals are processed directly by the CB7 office. The BCI committee only reviews the new SLA applications. On occasion, if there are complaints by the community, the committee reviews a particular SLA license renewal.

- The CB7 office brought to the committee's attention for possible review the upcoming SLA license renewal by the Trump International Hotel and Tower at 1 Central Park West. After discussion the committee decided not to review the application in favor of the current procedure of the CB7 Office reviewing the SLA license renewals.

The meeting ended at 7:44 pm.

Youth, Education & Libraries Committee Minutes

Thursday, January 21, 2021

The Youth, Education & Libraries Committee of Community Board 7 / Manhattan met on Thursday, January 21, 2021, using the Zoom platform. The meeting was called to order at 6:35 by YEL Chair Blanche Lawton and CB7 Chair Steven Brown. YEL Committee Members Catherine DeLazzer, Paul Fischer, Natasha Kazmi, Sara Lind, Doug McGowan, Ira Mitchneck, Erana Stennett and Mark Diller, as well as non-Committee Board Members Doug Kleiman and Roberta Semer also participated. The following matters were discussed.

Discussion of Youth and Children's Programming available through Goddard-Riverside Community Center (including the Lincoln Square Neighborhood Center)

Presentation by Susan Matloff-Nieves, Deputy Executive Director for Goddard-Riverside Youth and Aging Programs

- Youth programs at Goddard-Riverside include the following:
 - a Beacon program at the Joan of Arc Campus (154 West 93rd Street);
 - Star Learning tutoring program, currently 100% remote serving 133 children with a 7-day per week program;
 - Afterschool programs at the Bernie Wohl Center serving youth from the Wise Towers and the West Side Urban Renewal Brownstone buildings;
 - Afterschool programs at the Lincoln Square Neighborhood Center serving youth from the Amsterdam Houses and Amsterdam Addition;
 - College Options, providing college readiness, test preparation, application assistance and college counseling to between 500-800 students whose high school guidance counselors cannot meet that need (recently expanded to include continuing support during the first years of college to ensure students served by the Options program remain in college and are successful);
 - Learning to Work at Reynolds/Westside High School, providing teens with paid internships that include gainful paid employment, counseling on job readiness and support to understand and meet expectations, and assisting students to make achievable goals for post-secondary education;
 - Drop-In Center at LSNC, providing STEM problem-solving assistance.
- Goddard-Riverside has a loose cooperative relationship with other youth service providers in the area, including:
 - The Dome Project;
 - Stryker's Bay programs;
 - Westside YMCA teen programming;
 - Children's Aid
- As it has for everyone, Covid made 2020 a difficult year – children have been particularly affected by the denial of education content and socialization due to the closing of schools and the transition to remote learning and the subsequent attempts to re-start in-person learning.

- The shutdown has been particularly hard on low-income families.
 - Child care has not been available unless the parents/guardians are recognized as essential workers, forcing many parents and guardians to choose between returning to in-person work or supervising children learning from home.
 - Accessing relief programs such as food stamps can be time-consuming and challenging under the best of circumstances, and while certain requirements were relaxed under the lockdown, not all families could meet the requirements.
 - Families have sometimes been forced to quit jobs because the parent or guardian could not care for ill family members or supervise children and youth at home.
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- Another reason the Covid-related closing of in-person classes and the transition to remote learning have had a disparate impact on students and youth in poverty is the unequal access to devices with which to access remote learning. City-provided tablets don't always work as intended - City provided technology, but problems requiring repairs could result in a prolonged delay during which the student could not access remote learning.
 - In addition, while their more affluent counterparts with access at home to laptops, tablets or other devices could switch to remote learning immediately, many students had to wait 5-6 weeks for delivery of a WiFi-enabled tablet or other device, and District 3 Principals report significant numbers of students who still did not receive devices by the Fall 2020 semester – some 6 or more months after the switch to remote learning.
 - City-provided tablets included a direct internet connection, but many students in older buildings – especially including aging NYCHA campuses and other older buildings – did not have adequate reception leaving children unable to access remote learning content and lessons.
 - Even if the internet were available in such buildings, the WiFi often was not stable
 - Even in District 3, we continue to hear reports of families provided only one device for multiple children in a household, preventing all but one of them to access remote learning at any one time.
 - Principals also advise that tablets are not appropriate devices for middle-school and high school level work due to the cumbersome task of typing longer documents such as essays and lab reports on a tablet surface.
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- Covid has been especially devastating to special needs students.
 - Despite the best efforts and intentions of teachers and service providers, online or remote learning platforms simply are no substitute for special needs in-person instruction.
 - Special needs are generally hard if not impossible to provide remotely, with the result that realistically those services are not being provided.
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- Socialization should be one of the goals of in-person learning, even when offered only one or a few days per week.
 - Yet for the part of the Fall 2020 semester during which in-person learning was offered to high school students, socialization was not realistically achieved since the high school students were in the classroom, but were being taught by a teacher who was teaching remotely and present in the classroom via a laptop or similar device.
 - The result is that those students who were participating in in-person high school did have some opportunity for socialization, it was circumscribed, and in any event often did not include the cohort or kids with whom they have relationships or with whom they were in school pre-Covid.

- Among the social issues with which students – especially students of poverty and of color on whom and whose families Covid has had a disproportionate impact is the stigma attached to having been infected or having had a family or household member be infected.
- While working families with jobs that had to be performed in-person experienced higher rates of exposure, and as a result higher rates of infection, students confronted the unrealistic but apparently widespread presumption that if there was Covid in the house, those involved must have done something wrong to contract it.
- Students also had to confront fears based on assumptions that certain families must have been infected based on the income or race/ethnicity.
- These stigmas and presumptions compound the already-prevalent stigma associated with living in NYCHA/Public Housing, as to which many peers and others associate with violent crime and drug activity. These assumptions in turn compound assumptions of shop-keepers and others who view NYCHA youth with suspicion and expectation of being prone to violence, theft or other crimes and aggressive behavior.
- One result of the Covid lockdowns has been that some of the stigma from association with NYCHA has been transferred from public housing kids and visited upon homeless people, but lately that trend is showing signs of reversing and seems to be coming back to kids.
- Goddard-Riverside is seeking to stem all these tides. LSNC and G-R are particularly concerned with families and households falling behind from grade-level – Hence offering even more robust homework help to kids, plus assistance to parents, who confess that they are not able to support their own kids especially re homework due to language access issues and the complexity of their children's schoolwork.
- Trying to create safe spaces for in-person gatherings of kids – who need social contact.
- NYC eliminated most summer programs for the summer of 2020 during the lead-up to the budget at the end of June, then partially restored several of the programs virtually at eleventh hour (on June 30th, the day before the fiscal year and the traditional summer programs start).
- The net effect of uncertainty and chaos of whether or not summer Beacon, SONYC, Cornerstone and Compass is that the service-providers such as Goddard-Riverside and LSNC had no time to plan to offer those programs, and indeed based on cuts announced to the Mayor's Executive Budget, had to lay off workers needed to make those programs successful.
- In addition, once a family or household is turned away or advised that no program would be available, it is incredibly difficult to locate and renew interest in such programs once they were restored at the 11th hour – and the same goes for the hourly workers (many themselves still teens or young adults).
- So relationships were lost because of the rupture of trust from defunding and re-funding these programs.

Community Board Questions and Comments:

Blanche Lawton:

- Q: Mental Health connection
- A: Depression is rampant and is now so much a part of the landscape of working with children and youth of poverty that one almost doesn't see it.

- A: Death rate from Covid exposure among families, guardians and neighbors of poverty and of color has been significantly disproportionately very high – so children are coping with devastating loss while separated from social contact needed to abide those losses.
- A: Trauma and post-traumatic distress.
- A: Children lack experience to cope – “loss is a skill” and kids haven’t learned how to grieve/cope.
- A: Tremendous mental health needs -- very little that is free or affordable.
- Q: Do agencies get together to share resources etc.?
- A: Don’t have a local network. Citywide Neighborhood Social Services, of which Children’s Aid is a member, is one exception. Service providers on the UWS have been more isolated because keeping up locally with tons of needs is overwhelming.
- A: CB7 providing a platform for regular meetings and sharing among service providers could be useful but it would be one more meeting – many service providers are already programmed on Zoom to the minute.

Roberta Semer:

- Q: Certain programs are not funded. While CB7 doesn’t have a budget, we can advocate for funding in our District Needs Statement and Budget Priorities.
-- please share needs and those areas where cutbacks have had the greatest impact -- e.g. mental health resources.
- A: Summer Youth Employment Program proved remote that remote summer employment was in fact possible. SYEP was cut from the Executive Budget for summer 2020 on the assumption that remote SYEP would not be possible – the partial restoration of SYEP was spectacularly successful.
- A: Discord Channels – chat rooms in which youth and teens could safely talk without interruption were also very successful – filled in part a need for socialization.
- A: Art projects – such as beautifying areas in view of prisoners.
- A: Most students and youth need help with outdoor activities – devastating for kids and staff who were laid off.
- The continuity of funding is especially important – can’t keep laying people off and expect to bring them back like a yo-yo.

Doug McGowan:

- Own family’s experience with remote learning is that K kids can’t focus online, so his Wife had to give up her job to ensure that their child could have some sort of school experience during the lockdown.
- Post-traumatic stress is as relevant a concept for students during remote-learning and the pandemic as it is a part of many veterans’ experiences.
- In working with returning military veterans, learning to turn PTSD into “Post-traumatic Strength” – to make something positive with which to lever difficult reactions.
- Q: How can CB7 support?
- A: Continue to advocate early and continuously for baselined funding so that service providers and students/families and guardians can make plans and stick to them.

- Need to keep summer programs alive.
-- be ready to write letter during throes of budget crunch – writing in January is not effective.
- Veteran orgs have resources/materials that help with making PTSD can be a source of strength and become a part of

Peter Arndtsen –

- Youth shelter at Trinity Lutheran (West 100 Street) is at risk of losing space due to C of O problems.

Mark Diller:

- Q: Uncertainty can more devastating than cuts. How to address especially with teen-focused programs such as Learning to Work.
- A: Learning to work is a partnership with schools – focused on students who dropped out and then enrolled at transfer high schools.
-- approach is that the school failed the kid, not the other way.
-- Some students transfer to transfer schools such as Reynolds High from schools where no faculty or administration member even knew their names.
- A: Learning To Work requires private sector partners -- Always looking for new community partners/employers – when it is safe to return to in-person participation, will need “employers” to take on kids to give a chance to develop.
- A: Learning To Work includes teaching kids how to dress/comport themselves in a business or office setting – new to many of the students with very different expectations.

Natasha Kazmi:

- Concern about teen crime – kids looked at with suspicion. Contrast with knife-point robberies by 14-16 year-olds; and last year’s murder of a Barnard student in Morningside Park.
Q: What can we as a society be doing to prevent crimes or behavior that effectively end a 14 year old’s life?
-- seems like more of these incidents are happening or more prominent during the pandemic.
- A: can’t comment on specifics
- A: Added shock to the community when violent crime is committed by youth; hence headline includes the word “youth” in reporting on such incidents.
- A: Major driver of youth violence is family and spousal violence. Violence is learned behavior and most often learned in the home.
- A: G-R doesn’t have a specific program to address these incredibly complex issues, although they arise in other contexts.
- A: We are a violent society – rooted in American culture from the days of the old west. Also a gentle –nurturing culture – society of contrasts.
- SYEP – Chicago study – no difference in employment outcomes later in life, but much lower rates of arrest and conviction.
- Violence bred of hopelessness – if a youth feels as though his/her life is over anyway, that youth won’t treasure life. Answer is providing opportunities and a sense of purpose.

Courtney:

- Underscored need for WiFi and devices for youth. CB7 needs to re-emphasize in our budget comments.
- Q: Private partnerships – should explore opportunities for private partnerships. Giving people a chance to help is critical too.
- A: Partnerships develop organically based on synergy.
- A: Could also welcome support for the Goddard-Riverside “direct relief” fund (direct cash assistance for specified needs such as new apartment expenses for homeless) – getting depleted.
- A: NYS proposal for low-income internet access based on the correct realization that broadband internet access is now a necessity for school or business. Some NYCHA developments have been wired. Policy should be to support in NYS Senate.

Rosa Arenas:

- Q: Can Goddard-Riverside make any productive use of used devices from the public?
- A: If in working order, G-R could make some use – inviting to deliver to Susan’s attention. Need to be wiped. Of all existing documents and content.
- Q: Grief counseling is so important – hope is an essential part of any recovery.
- A: Unfortunately G-R can’t offer – can refer.

Bev Donohue:

- Great admiration for College Options program
- Q: HS Seniors – experiences must be challenging. City is claiming that college readiness has gone up in pandemic – hard to believe.
- A: Fan of New Visions program.
- A: Tremendous fall-off in applications to college among HS Seniors.
- A: No Regents exams help.
- A: Certain cohorts did not see a fall-off in attendance and participation because the students in the cohort self-selected to participate.
- A: DID see fall-off in College Success – those who went to college and then went remote, cutting off living situation and food – huge loss for those enrolled in college.
- A: Options program still working.
- A: transition from 9th to HS – even harder a transition remotely. Hard even in person. Most 9th graders really do need to be in person – kids disconnecting before even had an opportunity to engage in the first .

Kim Watkins (President of District 3’s Community Education Council):

- Transitional years have proved particularly difficult in pandemic – applications, tests, grading, isolation.
- D3 lucky to have great schools, Superintendent, principals.
- DoE hyper-political in everything it does. Information is shared at Friday at 4 pm; principals get instructions via Twitter. DoE doesn’t have the political courage to have good communication.
- Disconnect –Middle School students have been told it is not safe for them to go to in-person school, but then told to take the SHSAT in person.

- Screens still in place for HS, but no clear way to navigate this year on how to meet those screens.
- Transition to MS – eliminating screens means that admissions will be based solely on lottery results plus the individual student’s ranking of the school. This procedure is creating new types of fears among some parents.
- The D3 Superintendent and CEC3 Middle School Committee have been doing a great job sharing what information is available.
- The recent G&T announcement that the testing will be suspended next year has been incredibly frustrating. The announcement left open huge questions. The Spring of 2021 will be the last year the G&T test will be administered. If no G&T for Sept 2022 admissions, the CEC3 will need to start talking about rezoning right now – if no elementary school G&T then some schools will be overwhelmed (based on the experience that a huge portion of the potential overcrowding at traditional elementary schools is self-diverted to G&T programs for K admissions). If the diversion of in-catchment students to G&T does not occur, presumably the overcrowding will need to be corrected through realigning the elementary school catchment areas.

Doug Kleiman:

- For anyone who receives SNAP or Medicaid, a sensible reform would be to automatically qualify and enroll that person / family / household for free or reduced price WiFi as well – just as much a necessity for students and their families / guardians.
- A: Linda Rosenthal now Chair of the NYS Assembly Social Services Committee – well-positioned to advocate for free WiFi.

Peter Arndtsen:

- Trinity Lutheran threatened by DoB re C of O – important respite place for LGBT youth. Received Violation.
- A: G-R would want to be helpful.

Erica Overton (Deputy CoS to A-M Linda Rosenthal):

- Will follow up on bill re Verizon/Spectrum access.

Julian Giordano:

- Should share resources to promote more youth participation on CB7. Students will pay attention to and assist with programs that are accessible and welcoming.
- Plan now to be effective in advocacy in budget discussions.

Ira Mitchneck:

- Verizon, Spectrum etc. have franchise deals with City that require the company to support the local community.
- Verizon supposed to wire areas that are underserved, but that includes places that the company believes are not profitable.
- Many schools are experiencing enrollment registers that are down by large numbers. When return to in-person schooling, may have surplus.

- At PS 9 – discontinued G&T – managed to make it work.

Erana:

- Concern for Trinity Shelter – express concern to DHS?
- A: Not a DHS shelter – a church ministry.
- A: Roberta and Susan will investigate and advocate, and advise CB7 how to support that advocacy.

New /Old Business

Ideas for Next Month's agenda:

- Youth service resources from Precincts re youth crime.
- NYPD funds supposedly have been diverted to social service – worth exploring how that has worked out and its effectiveness.

Adjournment: 9:15 pm

PARKS & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Klari Neuwelt, Chair

January 25, 2021

Present: Chairperson Klari Neuwelt (KN), Barbara Adler (BA), Ken Coughlin (KC), Natasha Kazmi (NK), Doug McGowan (DM) and Susan Schwartz (SS). **Transportation Committee Members Present:** Barbara Adler (BA), Jay Adolf (JA), Co-Chair Andrew Albert (AA) and Ken Coughlin (KC). **Chair:** Steven Brown (SB). **Non-Committee Board Members:** CB7 Board Chair (Doug Kleiman (DK), Michele Parker (MP), Polly Spain (PS). Mark Diller (MD)

Meeting on Zoom was called to order at 6:30PM.

Item 1. Discussion with advocacy group New Yorkers for Parks.

Presentation by Emily Walker, Director of Outreach and Programs, New Yorkers for Parks, about this Not-for-Profit organization, founded over 100 years ago, which protects and promotes open space across New York City, championing quality open space for all New Yorkers. NY4P conducts research and develops tangible policy recommendations around findings related to park development, management and sustainability and uses the research as a foundation for advocacy campaigns, driving immediate actions and long-term policies that protect and enhance the city's vast network of parks, ensuring adequate and equitable distribution of open space resources to all neighborhoods, and informing and empowering communities throughout New York City to advocate for their open space needs. NY4P builds and maintains strategic partnerships with government officials and agencies, local parks groups and conservancies, academic institutions, and other key stakeholders in the public and private sectors. Their signature public program, The Daffodil Project, has planted over 7 million bulbs across the city as a living memorial to the victims on 9/11. More information about this organization can be found at their website www.ny4p.org. Ms. Walker noted that while parks are 14% of NYC land, they account for only .59% of the city's expense budget. NY4P receives no public funding; it is funded through private and corporate funds. No resolution was proposed on this agenda item.

Item 2. Discussion with advocacy group Stop the Chop about issues relating to commercial helicopter flights affecting the Upper West Side. Joint with Transportation Committee, Andrew Albert and Howard Yaruss, Co-Chairpersons

Presentation by Melissa Elstein, Secretary, and Andy Rosenthal, President and Treasurer, of Stop the Chop NYNJ, a 501(c)(3) tax exempt grassroots organization formed to ban nonessential helicopter flights over NYC, the NY Metropolitan Area and NJ. Following the presentation, there was a lengthy discussion about this issue. Proposed legislation in the United States Congress, sponsored by Representative Nadler, which CB7 supports by a prior resolution, and in the New York City Council, was discussed. SS asked if Stop the Chop was opposed to use of helicopters by the film industry, which is a significant economic driver for NYC. Per the discussion, it did not appear that the use of helicopters for commercial filming in NYC is significant in volume. The Stop the Chop website defines "essential" helicopter flights as "law enforcement, emergency response, disaster response, medical services, or for the public interest; does not affect military aircrafts". More information about this organization and its work can be found at www.stopthechopnynj.org. No resolution was proposed on this agenda item.

Item 3. Discussion with John Herrold, Riverside Park Administrator, regarding possible installation of security cameras in Riverside Park.

KN presented examples of recent criminal vandalism in Riverside Park including major parkwide graffiti and disruption and destruction of bike barricades, as well as two recent robberies at knifepoint at about 74th Street on the park side of Riverside Drive. There was a discussion about the possibility of installing security cameras in Riverside Park at at least some targeted locations. Detective McDonnell from the 24th Precinct and John Herrold, Riverside Park Administrator and Senior Advisor to Riverside Park Conservancy, also joined the conversation, which was far-ranging. The NYPD agreed to look into deployment of emergency phones and Cindy Cardinal, Chief of Staff for CM Helen Rosenthal, agreed to look back at discretionary spending requests to follow up on past spending requests related to safety issues in Riverside Park. After a lengthy discussion, it was agreed that the topic would be discussed further at a future date with involvement, if possible, from law enforcement and administrative representatives from Central Park, in order to provide a broader view of the need for security measures in all of the district's parks. No resolution was proposed on this agenda item.

Item 4. Presentation by Margaret Bracken, Riverside Park Landscape Architect, of plans to reconstruct the existing asphalt paths in Riverside Park at West 82nd to West 83rd Street and at West 97th Street near the Dinosaur Playground.

Margaret Bracken, Riverside Park Landscape Architect, presented plans for renovation and reconstruction of these two areas as part of the SOGR (State of Good Repair) program. This project will cost approximately \$920,000, mostly funded by NYC, but with a significant private donation through the Riverside Park Fund. The privately funded work, to the west of the River Run Playground, will be done first and with fewer administrative requirements than the work to the east of the River Run Playground and the work near the Dinosaur Playground. The privately funded work will be less extensive than the SOGR work in the other two areas. In each case, the work will take approximately one month to complete. The repaved asphalt surfaces are expected to last 15-20 years. A resolution in favor was passed unanimously:

Committee: 5-0-0-0. Non-Committee members: 3-0-0-0.

4a. Brief discussion of recently completed restoration work on Cherry Walk in Riverside Park.

KN led a discussion about the recently completed Cherry Walk renovation project, which was hailed as a great success. Herrold and Bracken explained that NYC was able to deploy contingency funds allocated to the project to supplement the work on the rip rap that had been financed by FEMA, allowing it to repave numerous sections of severely subsided pathway. Members of the Committee had suggestions for improving the process for detour signage on future projects; the detour issues and signage had been particularly troublesome with this project. Riverside Park Administrator Herrold said that there are no immediate plans to restore lane markings (which have mostly disappeared over time) on the Cherry Walk. He noted that the original lane markings, which called for all pedestrians in both directions to adhere to the western section of the pathway and all cyclists in both directions to adhere to the eastern section, had been implemented before several sections of the Hudson River Greenway existed. KN noted that that division was counter-instinctive and different from the designated divisions between pedestrians and cyclists on other shared paths in Riverside Park. Herrold committed to involving CB7 and the community in decisions about new markings as part of a more substantial repaving project for the Cherry Walk planned to take place within the next few years. No resolution was proposed on this agenda item.

5. Updates on committee business.

- Bull Moose Dog Run: per BA, samples for new surface material have been provided and are being reviewed; the project is ongoing.

- Per John Herrold, Soldiers' & Sailors' Monument is still in need of funding for renovations.
- CB7 resolution asking for NYC Council legislation making parks completely smoke free: KN said that while CM Levine had said that he would support this and work with CB7 on it, it had turned out that the CB7 proposal was a subpart of legislation already introduced by CM Koo and could therefore not be introduced independently. However, we have learned that CM Levine, as Chair of the Council Health Committee, hopes to include the Koo bill of one of several health-related bills to be heard by his committee, possibly before the end of February.
- Per SB: Agendas for future meetings are due to the District Office by the last Thursday of each month in bullet point format suitable for cutting and pasting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50PM.