

February 2005 Minutes

Full Board Meeting Hope Cohen, Chairperson

February 1, 2005 7:00 PM

School at Columbia

Hope Cohen called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm.

The January full board minutes were approved (19-0-2).

Chair's Report: Hope Cohen

Hope Cohen discussed the sad loss of Barry Rosenberg. He will be sorely missed by the Board and the community.

Deputy Mayor Dennis Walcott, will speak on education and affordable housing on Wednesday, February 16th, 7 PM, at The Universalist Church on Central Park West and West 76th Street.

The Transportation Committee will be held at the West Side YMCA, 5 West 63rd Street, on February 8th. Discussion will address a mid-block pedestrian crossing on West 65th Street, Broadway-Amsterdam Avenue, in conjunction with the Lincoln Center West 65th Street Project.

Board Members who are up for re-appointment and public members interested in joining CB7 should submit their applications to the Manhattan Borough President and/or their Council Member within the next two weeks. Application form link available at www.cb.org.

District Manager's Report: Penny Ryan

Thanked School at Columbia for hosting the meeting.

The Board Office is working through the District Service Cabinet to address vendor regulations, graffiti, and commercial bike regulations. The community's help is needed. Information will be sent out in the next few weeks and be posted at www.cb7.org.

Reports by Legislators

Council Member Gale Brewer reported that:

- Addendum I of the OST RFP will enable schools located next to housing projects to now have a better chance of getting out-of-school-time funds; in addition, several of our district schools are added to the DYCD priority list.**
- The Manhattan delegation met to review the city budget and develop a common strategy to retain important budget items. Hearings will soon be held to discuss budget issues with non-profit organizations.**
- The solid waste plan for West 59th Street is not yet well defined. Hearing will be held in March.**
- She continues to work to preserve West Park Presbyterian Church.**
- She advocates "roof-to-cellar" inspections of buildings by all relevant agencies.**

Public Session

Sue Calvin, representative of Council Member Philip Reed, discussed legislation that will curb the inappropriate sale and advertisement of non-government school loans.

Danielle Podlucky, representative of NY Senator Tom Duane, announced two town hall meetings: one on Safety at Amsterdam Houses and one on Bars and Nightlife.

Jason Haber, representative of NY Assemblymember Scott Stringer, announced a tsunami benefit on February 16th. He reported on legislative reforms, including open seat voting and standing committee assignments.

Christina Harvey, representative of NY Senator Eric Schneiderman, request for office interns, volunteers for education fairness. She referred to legislative reform announcements on the Senator's website.

Omi Perez, of Our Firefighter Children Foundation, introduced his non-profit organization.

Lisa Guggenheim, of American Museum of Natural History, introduced the new Director of Government Affairs, Daniel Slippen.

Phyllis Gunther, of CB7, announced a meeting about the proposed West Side stadium on February 7th at City Hall.

Sheldon Fine, of CB7, reported on legislation that will reimburse attorneys who provide public interest legal services.

Business Session

Health & Human Services Committee

Barbara Van Buren, Chairperson

The committee will have a special presentation on Social Security at the February 15, 7 PM meeting at 1865 Broadway.

Lincoln Center Task Force

Lawrence Horowitz, Chairperson

1. Applications to the Department of City Planning related to The Lincoln Center West 65th Street Project. (Approved 32-0-0-0)

Action #1 Changes in the City Map (Approved 31-1-0-0)

A) A city map change to convey two segments of West 65th Street between Broadway and Amsterdam Avenue to Lincoln Center, one a twelve-foot demapping on the south side of the street to allow a widened sidewalk and to create a spacious streetscape environment and the other a five-inch demapping on the north side of the street to correct an anomaly from when the building and bridge were originally constructed

B) A modification to the public place designation covering Lincoln Center's North Plaza. The agreement will guarantee public access in perpetuity to the roof lawn.

C) Deletion of references to a pedestrian overpass from the City Map which refers to the removal of the Milstein Bridge, to open the street to light and air.

Action #2 Modification of the special permits previously approved for the Rose Building A) to allow the enlargement of the Juilliard Building and Alice Tully Hall and B) to change the location of reservoir spaces and allow connection to the Lincoln Center Garage from the public parking garage. (Approved 32-1-0-0)

Action #3 Zoning text amendment to the Special Lincoln Square District to allow permitted signs along West 65th Street and on North Plaza up to a height of 40 feet from street level (allowed by the underlying zoning district C4-7, but not the Special District), and up to a height of 60 feet along the Broadway frontage between West 66th and West 65th Streets to permit an identification sign on the Juilliard extension. (Approved 32-0-0-0)

Action #4 Revocable consent allowing installation of a series of informational signs along the south side of West 65th Street to enliven the streetscape and provide information about Lincoln Center events. (Approved 32-1-0-0)

Action #5 Acquisition of several easements by the City to accommodate the landings of a new city-owned pedestrian bridge as well as fire egress from the tunnel proposed to connect the Rose Building Garage and the Lincoln Center Garage. (Approved 30-3-0-0)

Rebecca Robertson, of Lincoln Center, presented a brief overview of proposed renovations to Lincoln Center at West 65th Street. She noted that she represents 7 constituent organizations, including the NY City Ballet, NY Chamber Society, Metropolitan Opera, Lincoln Center Theater, Juilliard School of Music, Film Society of Lincoln Center, and NY Philharmonic. In general, the renovations will open West 65th street to light and air, relocate garage entrances, create open space and walkways for pedestrians, improve signage, add a restaurant, and modernize entrances to various performance venues.

Public Speakers:

Margorie Van Der Cooke, of the School of American Ballet, discussed how the proposed renovations will improve the school's identity and provide a safe campus for students.

Joanne Koch, of the Film Society of Lincoln Center, discussed how two proposed new theaters will allow for expansion of various programs.

Derek Gordon, of Jazz at Lincoln Center, spoke about the importance of new facilities to performing arts organizations.

Monica Blum, President, Lincoln Square Business Improvement District (BID), affirmed support of the BID for proposed renovations. She urged continued improvement to the north side of West 65th Street.

Shirley Jones, President, Amsterdam Residents Association, discussed how the proposed transparent walls, light, and trees would at last remove and/or soften the seemingly divisive opaque walls of Lincoln Center.

Stephanie Pinder, Director, Lincoln Square Neighborhood Center, noted her support for the project.

Mae Robinson, of Amsterdam Housing, spoke of her support for the beautiful plan proposed by Lincoln Center. She is hopeful that new trees, lights, and sidewalks will also improve her neighborhood.

Kate Wood, of Landmark West!, spoke against the proposed renovations on the grounds that de-mapping of the north plaza will allow for radical changes to Lincoln Center, including those not consistent with its historical design.

Arlene Simon, for landscape architect Ken Smith, discussed how the current design of the north plaza demonstrates a mature and consistent design that warrants preservation.

John Colligan, Director, American Bible Society, spoke in support of the proposed renovations, especially regarding the transparency of walls that "expose the institution, turning it inside out."

Simeon Bankoff, of Historic Districts Council, discussed his opposition to the plan based on changes to the north plaza.

Simon Fenster, of La Guardia High School, spoke in favor of the renovation plan. He noted that the restaurant/green space would be wonderful for students.

Ric Bell, of the American Institute of Architects, discussed the strong support of the AIA for the proposed renovations, especially regarding the many "pedestrian-friendly" improvements.

Keelia Wright, of the New York Landmarks Conservancy, submitted a general letter of support for the project.

John Arbuckle, of Docomom US New York/Tri-State, spoke against the project because it changes significant aspects of the original design, especially in the north plaza.

Benjamin Sosland, of Julliard School, discussed the "institutional" nature of the campus and praised the new design as worthy and highly amenable to its uniquely qualified and dedicated students.

Richard Appelbaum expressed his opposition to the plan based on the loss of public space from the restaurant and harms pedestrian circulation.

Stephen Clapp, of Julliard, discussed how the renovations will make performances more visible and accessible to the public.

Rebecca DeMarini, of the Lincoln Square Business Improvement District, submitted a letter of support for the project.

Page Cowley discussed her opposition to the project and its departure from the original design by Dan Kiley.

Jacques Boubli expressed his support for the project, calling vibrant, romantic, alive, and happening.

Jerry James, of Julliard, discussed his delight that the planned changes reflect the school's teaching philosophy.

Gregory Dietrich spoke against the plan because it changes the pool in the original design.

Alan Flacks wondered where the litter baskets would go. He expressed enthusiasm about changes that would free students from being cloistered. He argued for a 24-hour token both at West 66th Street.

Michael Gotkin, landscape architect, expressed disappointment that the resolution doesn't more thoroughly address preservation issues related to the project. He urged CB7 to hold off on approving changes to the north plaza. He lamented the potential loss of public space.

The Board asked/discussed several issues with Rebecca Robertson:

1) Public space. 14,000 sq. ft of public space (Millstein Bridge) will be replaced by 11,000 sq ft of lawn with a restaurant underneath. The restaurant would also act as a noise buffer from West 65th Street. Overall, the plan will create more usable space.

2) Traffic flow. The plan would divert garage-bound traffic to Amsterdam Avenue.

3) Improvements and maintenance on Amsterdam Avenue. Lincoln Center is committed to helping the community to further beautify and maintain the street.

4) Construction. Construction will range from June/July 2006 to early 2009.

5) Donor names. No new donors will be included in the public signage.

6) Pedestrian Bridge. A mid-block crossing was never considered a safe alternative for students. A new, smaller bridge is still needed to serve the students.

7) Preservation. The new design respects the modernist nature of the original design, but makes it more transparent and accessible. Discussions with Landmark West! will continue in good faith.

8) Materials. Lincoln Center will continue to work with the CB7 Task Force to select material, but Travertine will likely be used.

The Board decided to empower the Steering Committee, via friendly amendment, to change the resolution (after the vote) to reflect a pending agreement between Lincoln Center and Landmarks West regarding preservation of the north plaza.

Provided further that all members of the Board attending the February 22, 2005 Steering Committee meeting of CB7 are authorized to adopt further conditions to this section of the resolution based on continuing good faith discussions between Lincoln Center and preservationists.

The resolution was amended accordingly.

The Board asked that Lincoln Center write a letter of commitment to help the community acquire and maintain trees, lighting, and pavement on Amsterdam Avenue.

Transportation Committee

Andrew Albert, Chairperson

Joint with Parks & Preservation Committee

Lenore Norman, Chairperson

2. Resolution to approve certain Department of Transportation bike rack locations on West 72nd Street and disapprove others was adopted. (30-0-0-0)

Transportation Committee

Andrew Albert, Chairperson

3. 225 Columbus Avenue (West 70th-71st Street.) Resolution to approve the renewal application DCA#0982077 to the Department of Consumer Affairs by Mare Mare, Inc., d/b/a Bruculino Ristorante, for a two-year consent to operate an unenclosed sidewalk café with 6 tables and 14 seats was adopted. (30-1-0-0)

4. 485 Columbus Avenue (West 83rd-84th Street.) Resolution to approve the renewal application DCA#0907226 to the Department of Consumer Affairs by Franco-Iano, Corp., d/b/a Isola Restaurant, for a two-year consent to operate an unenclosed sidewalk café with 8 tables and 16 seats was adopted. (30-1-0-0)

5. 718 Amsterdam Avenue (West 94th-95th Street.) Resolution to approve the renewal application DCA#1099811 to the Department of Consumer Affairs by Iano Corp., d/b/a Aqua, for a two-year consent to operate an unenclosed sidewalk café with 12 tables and 40 seats was adopted. (30-1-0-0)

Parks & Preservation Committee

Lenore Norman, Chairperson

6. Resolutions to approve improvements to playgrounds in Riverside Park

A) Hippo Playground at West 91st Street and B) Dinosaur Playground at West 97th Street.

were adopted. (31-0-0-0)

7. 421 Amsterdam Avenue, d/b/a Café Monaco (West 80th Street.) Resolution to approve some parts and disapprove other parts of application #04-5353 to the Landmarks Preservation Commission to legalize a storefront installed without Landmarks Preservation Commission permits was adopted. (30-0-0-0)

Community Development, Marlene Guy, Chairperson

Joint with Strategy & Budget Committee, Helen Rosenthal, Chairperson

8. Resolution to approve resolution on City's Out-of-School-Time Request for Proposals (OST RFP) was adopted. (31-0-0-0)

Present: Hope Cohen, Barbara Adler, Andrew Albert, Linda Alexander, Annette Averette, Sheldon Fine, Georgette Gittens, Victor Gonzalez, Phyllis Gunther, Marlene Guy, David Harris, Larry Horowitz, Ulma Jones, Barbara Keleman, William Meyers, Klari Neuwelt, Lenore Norman, Sharon Parker-Frazier, Luis Reyes, Oscar Rios, Michael Roberts, Helen Rosenthal, Ethel Sheffer, Charles Simon, Elizabeth Starkey, Patricia Stevens, Steve Strauss, D. Maria Watson, Melanie Wymore, George Zeppenfeldt-Cestero, Dan Zweig.

Absent: Janet Alvarez, Richard Asche, Guillermo Gonzalez, Jean Green-Dorsey, Douglas Griebel, Robert Herrmann, John Howell, Joyce Johnson, Bobbie Katzander, Eric Nelson, Chris Policano, Melanie Radley, Freddie Richardson, Sean Small, Thomas Vitullo-Martin.

On Leave: Betty Katz.

Steering Committee

Hope Cohen, Chairperson

February 22, 2005

Hope Cohen, called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM.

1. Vice-Chair Sheldon Fine, who attended the monthly Manhattan Borough Board meeting reported that a resolution concerning Emergency and Safety Preparedness was unanimously adopted. A resolution concerning how City Planning interacts with Community Boards on 197-a was also adopted with only one dissenting vote.

2. Richard Asche presented, for final review, the resolution on Lincoln Center's West 65th Street Project. The committee approved subject to one change in language, one deletion and a transmittal letter which will include several other more general comments. Kate Wood of Landmark West! spoke at length in opposition to several of the design plans for the area.

3. In the absence of the Chair of the Membership Committee, Hope Cohen reported that the team-building event for all board members, with a Facilitator, will take place on May 16th. It will run from 6:30 to 9:30 PM and start with a quick 45-minute supper. A questionnaire will be sent to all board members prior to the event and it is hoped that all board members will attend.

Submitted by Bobbie Katzander, Co-Secretary

Present: Hope Cohen, Andrew Albert, Richard Asche, Sheldon Fine, Bobbie Katzander, Lenore Norman, Helen Rosenthal.

Non Committee Members Present: Victor Gonzalez, Klari Neuwelt, Madge Rosenberg.

District Manager Penny Ryan

Absent: Marlene Guy, Larry Horowitz, Barbara Van Buren.

Community Development Committee

Marlene Guy, Chairperson

Joint with

Strategy & Budget Committee

Helen Rosenthal, Chairperson

February 14, 2005, Minutes

Update of DYCD's Out-of-School Time RFP and CB7 Resolution.

Letters of Support for CD7 after school programs have gone out.

Next step is to update CB7 District Needs Statement with the new status of after school programs.

Want to track how our after school programs do in getting DYCD contracts.

Want to track the process for how the contracts are awarded.

Ask Board office to set up an evening meeting with city officials to follow up on the CB7 resolution.

Head Start and day care in CD7: Marlene's Committee will take the lead on this issue.

Helen will collect the data we have and bring to the next meeting.

Marlene will follow up with ACS.

Marlene will contact Susan Feingold from Bloomingdale to learn about the status of her program.

Beacon Program at Goddard Riverside

Roy Baptiste, the Youth Director, gave status update on the Beacon. The Beacon has a DYCD contract to serve 1850 clients: 300 are adults and 1550 are middle school youth. The program is going well. The biggest issue is scheduling problems for space with the School.

Sharon Parker-Frazier reported on a lottery that will be implemented as a pilot for Region 10. The lottery is in response to PS87 that chose high-income families over others. Also, the City is implementing a Community Education Council. CB7 would like to have a representative on the Council.

The Community Development Committee will take on uniform services issues.

Georgette Gittens will be the liaison to District Services Cabinet meetings.

Sheldon Fine suggested that the Committee invite someone from the uniformed services area to report on current issues; this will be coordinated with Penny Ryan.

Sharon Parker-Frazier noted that there have been multiple brawls at the 59th Street and 66th Street subway stations. She would like us to look into the one on February 10th at 3:30. Marlene will speak with Penny about the 20th precinct attending the next meeting to discuss this issue.

Budget cuts in the Department of Education. Luis Reyes will follow up with Noreen Connell, the Director of Education Priorities, to get their take on the Preliminary Budget.

Community Development Committee Members present: Marlene Guy, Sheldon Fine, Georgette Gittens, Sharon Parker-Frazier, Luis Reyes. Absent: Guillermo Gonzalez.

Strategy & Budget Committee Members present: Helen Rosenthal, Sean Small.

Absent: Janet Alvarez, David Harris, Bob Herrmann, Elizabeth Starkey and Melanie Wymore.

Community presence: Roy Baptiste, Youth Director, Goddard Riverside Community Center.

Minutes will be uploaded as they become available.

Transportation Committee

Andrew Albert, Chairperson

February 8, 2005

1. Discussion of installation of mid-block crossing on West 65th Street, Broadway-Amsterdam Avenue, in conjunction with the Lincoln Center West 65th Street Project.

Robecca Robertson, Executive Director, Lincoln Center Development Project, and Lee Eastmond of the Department of Transportation were present. Ms. Robertson giving the rationale for a mid-block crossing. Lincoln Center is waiting to do traffic counts with their traffic consultant, Philip Habib, and expects to have them sometime in the Spring.

The Committee opted to take no action pending the results of those surveys.

2. 245 West 104th Street (Broadway-West End Avenue.) New application DCA#1187714 to the Department of Consumer Affairs by Broadway 104, LLC, d/b/a Café Du Soleil, for a two-year consent to operate an unenclosed sidewalk café with 20 tables and 38 seats.

Matthew Tivy, Chef and Owner, spoke on behalf of the restaurant. They plan to open April 1st. They provided an artistic rendering of the proposed unenclosed cafe. The proposed cafe would have approximately 65-70 seats inside and 38 in the outdoor café. Letters of support were presented from the Coop Board of 245 West 104th Street, and from the 102nd and 103rd Street Block Associations. Some neighbors of the proposed café voiced opposition to the ambient noise that would be produced by the café, and objected to the late closing, cigarette smoke, and early breakfast noise that might be generated. Dan Zweig proposed that the 11 ft. wide café be reduced to 9 ft., per CB7's Guidelines. This would eliminate the outer-most row of tables. The owner agreed, and said a new set of plans would be produced for the committee prior to the full board meeting.

RESOLUTION: BE IT RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7/Manhattan approves of Cafe du Soleil's application for an unenclosed sidewalk café at 245 West 104th Street (Broadway side), provided that the applicant provide the Committee with new plans showing a 9ft wide cafe, prior to the full board meeting of Community Board 7 on March 1, 2005.

Vote: Committee: 4-0-2-0. Board Member: 0-0-0-1.

3. 584 Columbus Avenue (West 88th Street.) Renewal application DCA#0851262 to the Department of Consumer Affairs by New Bella Luna, Inc., d/b/a Bella Luna, for a two-year consent to operate an unenclosed sidewalk café with 13 tables and 35 seats.

The owner, Turget Balikci, appeared for the restaurant. This is a renewal of Bella Luna's unenclosed cafe, at 584 Columbus Avenue.

RESOLUTION: BE IT RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7 approves of Bella Luna's application for a renewal of their unenclosed sidewalk cafe.

Vote: Committee: 6-0-0-0.

4. 1018 Amsterdam Avenue (West 110th Street.) Renewal application DCA#1133929 to the Department of Consumer Affairs by Skipwell Corp., d/b/a Bistro Ten Eighteen, for a two-year consent to operate an unenclosed sidewalk café with 12 tables and 26 seats.

Carol Weissman appeared for Bistro 1018, which is located at 1018 Amsterdam Avenue (110th Street.) This is a renewal of their unenclosed cafe. The Committee had no objections.

RESOLUTION: BE IT RESOLBED THAT Community Board 7 approves of Bistro 1018's application for a renewal of their unenclosed sidewalk cafe.

Vote: Committee: 6-0-0-0.

5. 971 Columbus Avenue (West 107th-108th Street.) Renewal application #B01760 to NYC Taxi and Limousine Commission by New Special Inc., at 971 Columbus Avenue for a For Hire Base Station license.

Gary Gelin of New Special appeared for the renewal of their for-hire car base at 971 Columbus Avenue (107th-108th Street). As there were no objections from anyone, the following resolution was passed:

RESOLUTION: BE IT RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7 approves the renewal of a for-hire car base for New Special Inc. at 971 Columbus Avenue (107th - 108th Street.)

Vote: Committee: 6-0-0-0.

6. 229 Columbus Avenue (West 70th-71st Street.) Petition to modify DCA#1186113 by FLEJ Inc., d/b/a Pomodoro Restaurant, to the Department of Consumer Affairs and obtain a two-year consent to operate an unenclosed sidewalk café with 8 tables and 16 seats, instead of the current 6 tables and 8 seats.

Eric Machado appeared for Pomodoro. They are asking to modify their existing unenclosed outdoor cafe to allow 8 tables and 16 seats, instead of the current 6 tables and 12 seats. The new configuration would maintain the current 9 ft. depth. Bobbie Katzander raised the issue of menu signs being outside the 9 ft. limit of the cafe. The owner agreed to bring the signage within the confines of the cafe.

RESOLUTION: BE IT RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7 approves Pomodoro's application for an unenclosed outdoor cafe consisting of 8 tables and 16 seats.

Vote: Committee: 5-0-1-0.

7. Request to the Mayor's Office of Street Activity Permits by Council on the Environment to operate a Green Market on the north sidewalk along West 97th Street, Columbus-Amsterdam Avenues, from January 7-December 30, 2005.

The Council on the Environment's Greenmarket on West 97th Street, west of Columbus Avenue, appeared for a renewal for the 2005 growing season. While they originally wanted to begin operations immediately, it was felt that they

should not begin until full Board approval. Gabrielle, of the Greenmarket, appeared and took questions.

RESOLUTION: BE IT RESOLVED THAT Community Board 7/Manhattan approves the application of the Council on the Environment's Greenmarket to operate for the 2005 season, commencing as soon after approval as they deem appropriate, with an end date of December 30, 2005.

Vote: Committee: 6-0-0-0.

8. Application to the Department of Consumer Affairs by James Garretson to construct and operate a newsstand on the southeast corner of Broadway and West 67th Street.

Mushtaq Ahmed appeared speak for the application of James Garrelson to operate a newsstand at the SE corner of West 67th Street & Broadway. The applicant's letter, and subsequently public notices announcing the application, gave the wrong location of the newsstand. The committee was loathe to hear the application, considering potential interested parties were not informed of the correct location of the newsstand. The applicant was told to post correct notices, and re-appear before the committee next month.

The Committee adjourned at 8:55 P.M.

Committee Members Present: Andrew Albert, Bobbie Katzander, Barbara Keleman, Eric Nelson, Oscar Rios, Charles Simon.

Commerce Committee

George Zeppenfeldt-Cestero, Chairperson

February 9, 2005

The meeting began at 7:02 PM.

Valley Restoration.

Ms. Lillian Rydell, Executive Director of Valley Restoration Local Development Corporation (VRLDC), expressed her concern about not being allowed a permit for this year's multi-block street fair. She mentioned her longevity with these fairs and felt she was being treated unfairly and unjustly. She introduced her street fair's promoter, Joseph Giovanni of Mardi Gras Festival Productions, Ltd. He also expressed his concern. The Commerce Committee chair immediately stated that this was not a personal decision but rather the decision was based on CB7's Street Fair Guidelines that state, in part, that the sponsor, or their representative, must be present at the scheduled meetings to review street fair permits. The applicant/promoter was not present which resulted in the street fair application not being approved. The chair further made it clear that there

was no prejudice against VRLDC and the Board was just adhering to the guidelines. VRLDC stated that 20% of profits went to local community-based non-profit organizations.

Planning April forum, co-sponsored with Council Member Gale Brewer, on impact of chain stores in CD7.

The committee moved to a discussion of the format for the planned forum with Council Member Gale Brewer, who arrived for this portion of the meeting. The May (tentative) forum will examine the impact of national chain stores on the community. The committee decided to address community concerns on this issue through a forum which would convene representatives of all the NYC agencies involved, such as City Planning. Some initial names were suggested, but additional planning is needed. Victor A. Gonzalez suggested that giving the community the information as to where to go to resolve their problems would be more effective approach so that the proper agencies could guide them as to any restrictions and existing regulations. Dialogue ensued, examples were given.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 P.M.

Submitted by Victor Gonzalez

Committee Members Present: George Zeppenfeldt-Cestero, Victor Antonio Gonzalez, Doug Griebel and Ulma Jones.

Parks and Preservation Committee

Lenore Norman, Chairperson

February 10, 2005

1. Central Park. Presentation by Central Park Conservancy on restoration of the Minton tile ceiling at Bethesda Terrace.

Presentation was made by Ed Benson, Director of Community Relations; James Reed, Director of Capital Projects; and Chris Nolan, Vice President of Capital Projects.

The purpose of the project is to restore the ornamental ceiling within the Arcade. There will be repairs to the Arcade including reinforcing the composite deck and waterproofing the structure. Much of the deterioration is due to water damage. The Arcade has been the subject of previous restoration projects.

The scope of work includes waterproofing the structure, replacing the asphalt pavement with asphalt pavers, installing a new circular skylight, installing new

cast iron bollards, demolishing nonstructural brick arches that are not visible. All removed materials will be documented.

The restoration of the tile ceiling includes: Conservation of historic tiles, manufacture of new encaustic tiles to match the existing, replacement of the deteriorated iron frames and panels (which hold the tiles).

The Bethesda Arcade is the only known structure in the world where encaustic tiles were used as a suspended ceiling element. There are two patterns of tiles, and those that need to be replaced are being replicated in a very good facsimile.

In summary, this is a technical project that is being thoughtfully accomplished and which builds on previous restoration projects.

The Committee voted to approve the project 3-0-0-0; Public Member 1-0-0-0.

2. Discussion of Intro 327 - Returns Parks Department generated revenue back to the parks for maintenance and operations.

Everyone agreed this was a great idea, but expressed skepticism as to whether this could ever pass. Nevertheless, it was enthusiastically received by the Committee. We agreed to write a letter supporting the bill.

Committee Members Present: Lenore Norman, Phyllis Gunther, Michael Roberts. Public Member: Michelle Kidwell-Cohen. Committee Members Absent: John Howell, William Meyers, Klari Neuwelt, Patricia Stevens. On Leave: Betty Katz.

Strategy and Budget Committee

Helen Rosenthal, Chairperson

See Community Development above.

Health and Human Services Committee

Barbara Van Buren, Chairperson

February 15, 2005

The meeting was chaired by Barbara Van Buren

The topic for discussion was "Is the Social Security System really in danger?" A presentation was made by Lani Sanjek, the NYC representative for New York Statewide Senior Action Council, and the New York Network for Action on Medicare and Social Security.

The presentation was both reassuring and frightening. The frightening part was the lack of real information presented by those proposing a change from the present system to one of privatization. Although the present system has eliminated the fear of poverty in old age for seventy years, no concrete plan has been presented for the change which could be scrutinized and analyzed item by item. Many statements have been made without any data to back them up, or with only partial information being given. There have been many scary sound bites repeated over and over, until people assume they must be true, and little attention is given to what the actual situation is.

The reassuring information was that there is no crisis, or even difficult to solve problems. There is only the problem of getting accurate information out to the public, and getting people to ask questions as to what consequence any changes will have on them and their families.

Some of the areas which are never mentioned are: what are the plans for the Social Security for the one of every three recipients who is under 65, - survivors of the dead taxpayer, the disabled; what cuts would there be in benefits to make up the trillions which would be needed to implement any change.

According to "intermediate" projections of the Social Security Trustees, beginning in 2018, payments to beneficiaries will exceed payroll tax collections. At that time the trust fund reserve, which consists of U.S. Treasury Bonds, will start to be used to make up the difference. By 2042 this reserve would be used up, and tax collections would finance only 73% of benefits. According to the Congressional Budget Office, the reserve will last until 2052, and payroll taxes will then fund 81% of benefits. The "crisis" is 37/47 years away. Yet people are given the impression that immediate steps must be taken which would result in destroying the safety net which has functioned well for seventy years, and are given the impression they will never see the money which they are paying in taxes today.

Already various ways have been suggested to plug the shortfall.

Raise the payroll tax cap from \$90,000 to \$140,000

Do not phase out the tax on inherited estates of \$3.5 million or more after 2010 and dedicate it to Social Security

Bring 4 million state and local government workers into Social Security to expand the payroll tax base.

Design a small payroll tax increase that would trigger-in during the 2050s to plug the rest of the shortfall, if needed.

And there are many years ahead for other suggestions to be made.

In regard to the privatization, or "personal accounts" in a changing Social Security system, much of the details have been left out of the sound bites. By 2075,

Initial Social Security benefits would be 54% of the current benefit level, due to a change in the formula determining the retiree's first year benefit. The personal accounts will have to be paid into a limited number of government selected stock and bond funds run by private firms. When they retire, the benefits would be reduced by the amount placed in the accounts plus what the government calculated as a 3% return above inflation. Retirees would be required to use the account to purchase a lifetime annuity.

Many more details were presented, which are included in the attached material from the Grey Panthers.

A major concern of the Committee was the lack of public debate, and the bombardment of the public from one side of the issue. Information was given as to groups which are trying to have a public dialogue on the issue, - Move On, Acorn.

Recognition was given to the highly skilled communicators advancing the personal accounts program.

It was felt that this issue did affect everyone, and that it was a human services issue. In considering the role the Board might play, getting information out at our own meetings, and urging our legislators to carefully scrutinize any legislation presented, instead of succumbing to the temptation of not reading closely- printed fat proposals, were suggested. It was agreed that we would consider a possible resolution at our next meeting.

Lani agreed to look out for material we could distribute to the public.

Meeting was adjourned.

Committee Members Present: Barbara Van Buren, Joyce Johnson, Barbara Keleman, Freddie Richardson. Absent: Annette Averette, Christopher Policano.

On Leave: Jean Green-Dorsey

Board Members present: Hope Cohen, Lenore Norman