



CITY OF NEW YORK  
**MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 10**  
215 West 125<sup>th</sup> Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor—New York, NY 10027  
T: 212-749-3105 F: 212-662-4215

**CICELY HARRIS**  
Chairperson

**SHATIC MITCHELL**  
District Manager

**Health & Human Services Committee**  
**Monday, November 18, 2019 6:30PM -8:30PM**  
**Chair, Hazel Dukes**  
**Vice-Chair, Michelle Booker**

**Attendees:** Hazel Dukes, Michelle Booker, Karen Dixon, Donna Gill, Cheryl Smith,

Deborah Yates, Christina Curry

**Absent:** Marcia Awobuluyi, Joshua Clennon, Troy Gethers, Makeda Thompson,

**Board Members Attendees:** John Lynch, Mari Moss

**Presenters:** Hondo Martinez, (FACES NY), West 135<sup>th</sup> Street Harlem Block Association

**Presentations**

**❖ Hondo Martinez – NYC Council 1025-2019 Resolution**

Mr. Hondo Martinez is an advocate of the New York City Council's 1025-2019 Resolution. This resolution was introduced by NYC Councilwoman Farah Louis from the Committee on General Welfare. This resolution is calling upon the NYS Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign, legislation to opt into the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to permit Restaurant Meals Program to aid the disabled, elderly and homeless SNAP recipients to use their benefit to get hot meals and other prepared foods at grocery stores, delis and restaurants. (<https://legistar.council.nyc.gov/Legislation.aspx>) Currently, the following councilmembers are sponsoring the bill: Ben Kallos, Margaret S. Chin, Diana Ayala, Vanessa L. Gibson, Antonio Reynoso, Brad S. Lander, Keith Powers, Justin L. Brannan, Helen K. Rosenthal, Adrienne E. Adams, totally 11 members. The overall impetus of this resolution is to address the food needs for this population who lack access and/or capacity to cook hot meals for themselves. This is the rationale behind this resolution. However, board members had the following concerns:

- The resolution does not have any measure to address supplemental increase in SNAP benefits for those who need to purchase hot meals, especially since ordering food out is more expensive than cooking at home.
- The Restaurant Meals Program is for a limited population, instead for any person who is a SNAP recipient

- There is not enough support for this resolution as there are only 11 City Councilmembers who have signed onto this bill. Why haven't more members signed on, what are their concerns.
- Although other states have similar measure for SNAP recipients who are disabled, elderly or homeless-
  - **California:** has the CalFresh Meals Program for them to buy lower cost prepared meals at approved restaurants in certain counties;
  - **Arizona:** has the DES Restaurant Meals Program for the same demographic and its state-wide
  - **Florida:** has a Restaurant Meals Program that is only approved for homeless residents of Alachua county
    - **In contrast NYC has 1.8 million** people who are SNAP benefits recipient, which is a much higher population that these other states that has similar programs. Therefore, due to the larger number of recipients this would demand a much higher allocation of funds to support the restaurant meal program.
- According to 2017 NYC data, the poverty rate was 19%. In West Harlem the poverty rate was 20.1% and in Central Harlem it was 20.2%. Also, in Central Harlem the unemployment rate is 32.7%. Due to the high concentration of poverty in the greater Harlem community, the committee members understand just how vital SNAP benefits are for families and individuals who need this assistance.

### ❖ **West 135<sup>th</sup> Street Block Association (WSBA)**

Ms. Rose Seabrook, representative from WSBA and Ms. Kim M. Parker, Board of Strivers Gardens, provided a presentation illustrating the more than 2- decade deterioration of the sidewalks along 135<sup>th</sup> Street from Adam Clayton Powell to St. Nicholas Avenue. Originally, in 1993, the 135<sup>th</sup> Street Streetscape Project had the following goals: to designate a Walk of Fame, create tile for famous residents, build wider streets, add new benches, extend lighting, link to City College, decorate pavers and primarily beautify 135<sup>th</sup> St. from ACP Blvd to St. Nicholas. However, from 1997-98 the sidewalks began to deteriorate and the homeowners along 135<sup>th</sup> Street have been systemically responsible for repairs (paying out of pocket), which is a huge financial burden for these homeowners. Strivers Garden

spent \$10k on repairs. The pavers materials used, were not for long term wear. As of this year the following conditions exist: unsafe walking condition, pavers are in disrepair, asphalt repairs, concrete patches, missing pavers and plaques, uneven surfaces and dreadful eyesore. These conditions are far from the original street beautification goal as well as create hazardous conditions for thousands of pedestrians, especially for children and the elderly. 135<sup>th</sup> Street also attracts high foot traffic from tourists, school children attending Thurgood Marshall Academy, and 32<sup>nd</sup> police precinct.

The WSBA and Strivers Row experiences with the deteriorating sidewalks and with the imposed DOT violations has led to hardship for the homeowners.

Therefore, they were requesting from the city:

- that all the tiles are replaced with a concrete slab with matching tint
- “Walk of Fame” modeled after the Apollo where only the name of the famous person is mentioned
- Satisfaction of DOT violations received
- Financial and coordination assistance
  - The Public Design Commission granted approval for \$1million to do the entire street
  - Have to coordinate with DOE and NYPD since they are on the Street

Old Business: Resolution for the E-cigarettes was approved by the committee. See committee report.

Submitted by Michelle Booker