

## Community Board 12, Manhattan

### \*\*Minutes for the Housing and Human Services Committee Meeting\*\*

October 2, 2014 – Main Meeting Space

530 West 166<sup>th</sup> Street – 6<sup>th</sup> Floor

New York, NY 10032

**Committee Members Present (9):** Richard Lewis (Chair), Yahaira Alonzo (Asst. Chair), Lorena Jiménez-Castro, Osi Kaminer, Jay Mazur, Ayisha Oglivie, Felipe Wityk Sanchez, Alyce Smith, and Christina Burgess (Public Member).

**Committee Members Absent, Not Excused (0):**

**Board Members (1):** Steve Simon.

**Public Speakers List (1):** Christopher Thompson (Executive Director, Community Options Inc.),

**Public (2):** Shylik Millin (Community Liaison, Community Options, Inc), Jung Hsiang Bruce Hwang

(CEO/President/Property Owner Gleam Development Consultants Inc. and Edgecombe Parc Condominium) and Mrs. Hwang, and Martin Collins.

**Staff:** Paola Garcia.

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**Welcome, Opening Remarks, and the Agenda.** Richard Lewis as Chair called the meeting to order at 7:20pm. Meeting was set to record to a digital audio file. Board Members introduced themselves as did members of the public present. A quorum was present during the entire meeting. Topics for tonight's agenda were outlined.

#### HHS Committee Chair's Report/Announcements

- Tabled Number 4 & 8. There will probably be a guest speaker from OPWDD to discuss these issues in more detail. We need an extended time to discuss the Mental Health Law and "minimum areas" issues, sometimes referred to as oversaturation.
- There is a RENTERS MARCH and rally for affordable housing being organized under the leadership with Senator Adriano Espaillat on October 25<sup>th</sup> with heavy sponsorship by housing/tenant advocates, CBO's and other electeds.
- The 552 Academy Street building has been finally renovated. HPD has apartments available. Deadline is Nov. 24. 50% of the units have been set aside for CB12M residents (both former occupants and new applicants) for a total of 40 renovated units. And some units for accessibility challenged individuals. Whether previous residents will be given priority to the units is being looked into. See more: **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE - Friday, June 22, 2012. "HPD COMMISSIONER WAMBUA, COUNCIL MEMBER RODRIGUEZ, CLOTH, ALEMBOIC, ENTERPRISE, CAPITAL ONE BANK & CHASE ANNOUNCE \$21.1 MILLION FOR REHAB OF INFAMOUS INWOOD BUILDING."** <http://www.nyc.gov/html/hpd/html/pr2012/pr-06-22-12.shtml> and **APPLICATION INFO** <http://www.nyc.gov/html/hpd/downloads/pdf/552-academy-street.pdf>
- Affordable housing is needed for 21 Arden Place and 2110 Amsterdam Avenue, two boarded-up HPD properties. Meetings on agency and community planning needs to take place.
- The rules of behavior for the Public Hearing were read aloud. The overall goal is to maintain order, allow each party an opportunity to speak on the facts within reasonable time limitations, present counterclaims and responses without personal or character attacks or value judgments. These expectations will allow the committee to make its finding and determinations at a fair hearing to all present.

#### Concern of the Committee

- Concern by board members was expressed over whether the previous residents of the Academy Street building will be given a priority to the 40 renovated units. The residents have been dispersed to various locations in the community and elsewhere, and they should know whether or not they will be able to still return as promised in 2012.

### Source Documents Released at the Meeting.

The following source documents were distributed or made available at the meeting:

- Public Hearing Notices in English and Spanish for 456 West 167<sup>th</sup> Street – Posted ten days in advance in all the building apartments, at the front desk and mailed to management and owners.(Available in the CB12, M Office)
- Public Hearing Rules of Conduct (Available in the CB12, M Office)
- Feasibility Study and Architectural Renderings (pre and post) for the proposed placement units (2E and 4E) at 456 West 167<sup>th</sup> Street (Available in the CB12, M Office)
- Community Options OPWDD Placement Request Letter – Re-submitted on September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2014
- Condominium Unit - Contract of Sale (Each for Units 2E and 4E at 456 West 167<sup>th</sup> Street) (Available in the CB12, M Office)
- Certified Homes in District#12 – Submitted by Community Options – September 10<sup>th</sup>, 2014 request letter and IR's and CR's submitted by OPWDD (Available in the CB12, M Office )
- Official CB12, M OPWDD PLACEMENT- INFORMATION REQUEST FORM [Co-op Condo] form OPWDDC-101 form OPWDDC-101 – Two Forms Answered and Submitted and Notarized from Community Options, Inc - dated 09/03/2014. (Available for inspection only with redacted personal and medical information in the CB12, M Office).
- Electoral District and US Census District Tracking Maps for Washington Heights.
- Mental Health Laws (Sections 33.02 and 41.34)

### Public Hearing on the OPWDD Placement Requests.

This public hearing is required by Mental Health Laws (Sections 33.02 and 41.34) to determine the potential issues of saturation and the safety and sanitary condition of the requested placement living spaces in the unit and the property, as well as protect the rights of these individuals within other laws. Although due diligence is expected by all parties to the lease or contract of sale, the committee cannot place the community board in a position to approve a defective and potentially unlawful placement requests.

### *Testimony of Community Options, Incorporated*

Community Option, Inc. (COI) wants to place 6 individuals (three males in one unit and three female occupants in another) who have developmental disabilities in two residential apartments in community district #12. The two condo units under consideration are at 456 West 167<sup>th</sup> Street d/b/a Edgecombe Parc Condominium - Apartments 2E and 4E. The developer is Gleam Development Consultants, a subsidiary of Gleam Realty, Inc. Both units have 2 bedrooms and 2 bathrooms. Each unit will house three individuals. The ages of the individuals are between 19 to 23 years old, are either in school or work, and none are dependent on wheelchairs. All of them are able to effectively communicate most of their needs to maximize their independence, but they need some assistance: like reminders to pay bills, go to medical appointments, do laundry, etc. Therefore, these individuals will receive assistance throughout the whole day. There will be a part-time nurse that will visit in the mornings for a total of 10 hours a week. The nurse will ensure the proper dosage and usage of medications.

COI will also train and hire 6 Community Support Staff (CSS) members. Their role is similar to that of a home attendant or home aid. They don't reside in the unit, but they will be on shift. They show up throughout the day and assist with any living situation. During the week, their shifts will be from 6am – 10am; 3pm – 11pm; and 11pm – 6 or 7 am. No one is scheduled Monday thru Friday from 10am – 3pm because the individuals will be at work or at school. During the weekends, there will be 3 shifts: 7am- 3pm; 3pm – 11pm; and 11pm – 7am. The personnel will have 1 rotating copy of the keys. Hence the COI individuals will be receiving almost around the clock assistance. A final copy of these work shifts will be sent to the Community Board.

There was some concern over the key situation. It was also brought up in discussion that the bedroom doors will have key locks due to a legal requirement concerning privacy. Mr. Thompson was not 100% sure, but he did say that all the bedroom doors will have a key lock and that the CSS will not have a copy of the keys to those door locks. The CSS will have a copy to the keys to the front door and to the apartment door.

Committee member Jay Mazur asked for clarification as to how many support staff people will be employed? How many will be full-time and part-time? And what sort of training and background do these employees have? Mr. Thompson stated that there will be two full-time, and 1 part-time employee per unit and the

nurse will be shared with both units The CSS members are required to have either a high school with 4 years of experience or a BA in human services with 2 years experience. They then undergo extensive training with more experienced CSS members at another location so that they are ready when they are transferred to a given location.

There was also concern about the intrapersonal relationship among the individuals being placed. Mr. Thompson informed the committee members that CSS employees for this location are well trained and ready to take on the responsibility. Moreover, the individuals being placed in these units have been living together for some time. They have even made their own sleeping arrangements already. Basically, this is relocation for these individuals so that they can be closer to their family.

Mr. Jung Hsiang Bruce Hwang, the condominium president and developer, said that he and many of the owners are concerned about the noise level that may arise from having young adults living together. The owners do not want these units or any unit in their condominium to become party hubs or host quasi frat/sorority parties. Mr. Thompson stated that there will be a Residential Director which will be available 24/7 to the owners should a problem arise. This Residential Director will hold monthly meeting with the owners in order to discuss any issues or matters. The Residential Director will provide her/his contact information to the owners so that the owners can contact him 24/7.

Committee member Felipe Wityk Sanchez and Osi Kaminer reminded Mr. Thompson of the possibility of placing individuals of our community in this program. Mr. Thompson said that while none of the individuals are from this community, they have family members in this community and/or nearby. Furthermore, Mr. Thompson explained that if members of our community were to choose COI, they would do whatever is possible to place the individuals in our community. But the people have to choose COI. As they move forward in Manhattan there will be greater outreach or even a program targeted to people in Washington Heights/Inwood. The HHS Chair encouraged Mr. Thompson to bring brochures about COI to our board meetings and to place this information on COI's websites.

Their clients are given choices where they wish to live. He stated that the organization follows their potential clients and their needs. These properties were chosen because the individuals have a connection to the area.

Committee member Ayisha Oglivie asked if the committee could recommend some kind of preference given to people from our community in the resolution. HHS Chair agreed that it could be entered in the resolution. And it is something that can be discussed during the mental health discussion. Jay Mazur expressed he shared the same disappointment as the rest of the committee in that people from the community are not considered for these services.

#### **Open Discussion on the Testimony.**

Ayisha Oglivie recommends drafting a resolution to the policy so that not only COI but all agencies give people from our community a priority. That cannot be done since we must consider each applicant on a case by case basis at each public hearing.

It was also decided to include a later discussion on how OPWDD certified agencies place individuals and/or provide services to individuals of the community. HHS committee would like to make it possible for individuals from our community who can benefit from these services to be considered first.

A discussion concerning over-saturation will take place in November. This meeting will help determine the 'minimum area' as prescribed by law that the agencies can use for placement of their clients. This will help us visualize how many mental health or OPWDD sites or residences are providing this service or similar services in our district.

## Findings and Determinations.

After a thorough open discussion amongst committee members and review of the findings presented it was determined that:

- One resolution for both apartments 2E & 4E.
- COI agreed to give future preference to an individual from our community should a vacancy occur.
- COI agree to establish advisory committee composed of a Residential Director who will meet with the owners on a monthly basis regarding concerns about their OPWDD occupants and other building problems.
- Accordingly, the HHS agrees to the current OPWDD Placement Requests by Community Options for the two units in 456 W. 167<sup>th</sup> Street located in CB12, M.
- There is no physical evidence of over-saturation in this location
- The noise concern raised by one of the owners is beyond our scoop but will be included in the resolution because COI agreed to help ease concerns by providing a Residential Director and hold scheduled meetings.

One resolution for both units was voted on and approved the OPWDD Placement to either unit with no objection: **HHS Committee (Y-N-A = 9-0-0) Public (Y-N-A = 3-0-0)**

**Discussion on the Resolution Recommending the Rehabilitation of 21 Arden Street & 2110 Amsterdam Avenue. HHS Committee (Y-N-A): (9-0-0) Board Member: (1-0-0) Public: (1-0-0)**

### Preliminary Discussion on the NYC budget for FY2016.

- Insert under capital item of affordable housing new construction include funding to rehab two HPD owned affordable housing units at 21 Arden Street and 2110 Amsterdam Avenue, both in CB12M.
- Strengthen the expense item for more agency inspectors by providing information of all the building violations that exists in our community.

## Final HHS Committee FY 2016 Capital and Expense Budget Rankings

### HHS COMMITTEE CAPITAL BUDGET RANKINGS – FY 2016\*

#### ITEMS (New and Old) - DESCRIPTION

#### EXPLANATION

- 1 Affordable Housing (Construction) - Build 20,000** apartments/housing units with immediate priority given to CB12M in the Mayor's Ten Year Plan as no new affordable housing has been constructed in this district since 2001.
- 2 NEW ITEM Affordable Housing (Preservation) – Immediate** priority given in CB12M for the rehabilitation of some 2,000 units in current rent regulated and aged properties with excessive and long standing code violations through the expansion and increase funding of HPD's AEP, PPI and similar private or city owned multi-family Class A building rehabilitation programs.
- 3 Large Centralized Non Profit Facility.** Funding the establishment a large multi-story space in a centralized building for existing and legacy Housing and Human Service Organizations and CBO's in CB12M so that their support services can be housed, shared and operate in one location or hub thereby reducing costs and duplication and afford community access.
- 4 NEW ITEM- Vertical Urban Farms.** Funding for a detailed feasibility study on building of these structures or incorporating them into affordable housing units or buildings in CB12M and construction of a demonstration project.

This item was ranked Number One by the Committee and the Board for FY 2015, FY 2014 and FY 2013. Since 2001, 228 Nagle Avenue, 440 West 163<sup>rd</sup> Street and 2142 Amsterdam Avenue are the only new affordable housing built in this district

Most residential buildings in CB12M were built after the early 1900's. Many have not been maintained well are in rapid decay. CB12M has 40% of the code violations in Manhattan according to the recent 2014 Worst Landlord's List and the fewest number of housing units rehabbed in the Alternative Enforcement Program since its inception in 2007. 552 Academy Street is one of the few apartment buildings preserved by NY C in Washington Heights-Inwood. There is a strong need to expand HPD's Alternative Enforcement Program (AEP) and rehab programs.

Sufficient space for many of these types of organizations is a very scarce resource. The cost and time spent to move and relocate due to organization growth or even funding to lease current space is a serious hardship. Today, the movement is towards Non Profit Clusters akin to popular Info Tech Hubs where capital resources are shared and leasing is low cost.

It is estimated that by the year 2050, close to 80% of the world's population will live in urban areas and the total population of the world will increase by 3 billion people. A very large amount of land may be required depending on the change in yield per hectare. There is a scientific concern and forecasts that not enough farmland may be available to farm.

HHS COMMITTEE EXPENSE BUDGET RANKINGS – FY 2016\*\*

ITEMS (New and Old) - DESCRIPTION

EXPLANATION

- 1 Provide sufficient funding for CBO's in CB12M that provide legal and or administrative assistance, heavy attorney representation, advocacy or intervention beyond the pro bono or current non-attorney *Guardian Ad Litem* programs for CB12M residents.
- 2 Funding to expand Online Agency Information Systems, make their databases more user friendly, for searches, apps, or visual mapping of data with community drill downs. to permit joint certification of violations cured for transparency and public oversight, and provide seamless linkage to DOB, HPD, DOF, EPA, Planning and ACRIS databases.
- 3 Funding for more inspectors and more building inspections by HPD, DOB, and DEP.
- 4 Funding to help initiatives lower energy costs, produce savings through weatherization, efficient boiler/heating systems and retrofits.

There is extremely limited funding to help clients in housing and human services who need legal assistance with filing documents as well as direct attorney representation or advocacy. Recent studies on *pro se* representation have shown a heavy eviction rate for families in housing courts.

At present there is no online means for a global search of all buildings in our community district with a certain number of violations in agency databases – only one building at a time can be searched or viewed. There is no ability to achieve joint certification of violation removals by both the tenant and the landlord online. Finally, the Public Advocate's Office has long requested some kind of interconnectivity between city agency databases for better data analytics.

CB12M has an aged and huge stock of buildings in constant need of repair. CB12M has too many uncorrected violations.

This is part of the greater greener urban movement towards sustainable and more energy efficient systems and to better accommodate unfunded city mandates.

NOTES: \*Capital Ranking: Only the top 40 ranked and accepted. \*\*Expense Ranking: Only the top 25 budget items ranked and accepted  
Some of these rankings may eventually include requests made from board conversations with city agencies held several months ago.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30pm.

Respectfully Submitted by  
Yahaira Alonzo, Assistant Chair  
Edited, rewritten and released by  
Richard Lewis, Chair - HHS Committee  
October 2, 2014