

HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES – March 7, 2019

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Steve Simon (Chair), Daryl Cochrane (Asst. Chair), Richard Allman, Tanya Bonner, Sara Fisher, Elizabeth Lehmann.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Beatrice Hall (Public Member, Excused).

BOARD MEMBER PRESENT: Richard Lewis, Bruce Robertson

GUESTS: Gary Rozmus and Wendy Monterosso, GEI Consultants Inc.; Julia Camagong, Nora Murphy and Julia Symborski, NY State Nurses Assn.; Sandra Harris and Jannelle Edwards, Columbia University Irving Medical Center; Chris Nickell, State Senator Robert Jackson; Jeanne Ruskin and Phil Simpson, NMN4S; Liz DeMayo; Paul Hintersteiner; Allegra LeGrande; Alexis Marnel; Avery Miles.

S. Simon, chair, called the meeting to order at 7:20 p.m. and introduced the committee members who were present.

1. **Presentation on brownfield remediation plan for 3875 Ninth Ave. @ W. 207th Street** – A 30-35 story residential building is planned for this site. Gary Rozmus, Senior Consultant, GEI Consultants Inc., made opening remarks and then introduced Wendy Monterosso, senior hydrogeologist and author of the plan, who gave a Powerpoint presentation:

- They are working with both the State and City brownfield cleanup programs.
- Prior to 1951, half the site was under the Harlem River. It was filled in between 1951-68 with unknown materials. From 1968-present, it has been used for auto sales and service, auto salvage, parking and storage.
- GEI undertook various investigation activities, including a geophysical survey looking for underground storage tanks, tested soil and groundwater, soil vapor sampling. Soil samples were collected from borings 15' deep.
- Primary contaminants: semi volatile organic compounds, volatile organic compounds (from petroleum), metals.
- Groundwater contamination found in two areas.
- Soil vapor: several VOCs detected on-site and under the sidewalk.
- Proposed remedial action: remove top 2 feet of soil across the site.
- Air monitoring will be conducted during the remediation.
- Lead-contaminated soil will be excavated in the SW and NE corners and removed to a higher level landfill for hazardous materials. Special oxidizing compound will be used during excavation to decrease concentrations in groundwater.
- Further sampling will be done post-excavation and continued monitoring.
- Perforated piping will be used to capture soil vapor and vent it out.
- New fill to be placed on the site will be recycled concrete aggregate.
- Periodic certification that remedies are in effect. The controls stay with the property forever. Future owners would have to follow remedial procedures and comply with site management plan.
- Work will generally be done weekdays 7 a.m. – 3 p.m.

S.Simon: Who will supervise the remediation and the removal of the contaminated soil from the site?

A: Scientists and engineers will be on site throughout the remediation to make sure it is done properly.

S.Simon: Will the North Cove, which borders the site, be protected during this work?

A: The North Cove should not be affected. No materials are allowed to spill over from the site into the cove.

D. Cochrane: What is the timeline?

A: It happens “hand-in-hand” with the construction of the development at the site. This is the first phase of construction. Some improvements on the east side of the site (landscaping and permeable pavers) extend beyond the property line, closer to the river.

D. Cochrane: Notices should be given to local residents and passersby, signs posted on exterior of site.

S. Fisher: concerned about the possible impact on the quality of the water in the river.

C. Nickell: Boaters also should be alerted. Archeological studies are needed since area contains a Lenape burial ground. Will the workers be protected from contamination?

A: OSHA requirements will be followed.

A.LeGrande: Water levels are rising. This site is effectively on a riverbed in a floodplain.

2. **Update from NY State Nurses Association** – Julia Camagong, NYSNA Political and Community Organizer, reported as follows:

- Allen Hospital: NYSNA has received a copy of the Certificate of Need application submitted by NY-Presbyterian Hospital to the State Dept. of Health regarding its plan to close the psych unit at the Allen Hospital. NYSNA is preparing a summary report, which it will make available to CB 12 and others.
 - 26 of the 30 beds are currently in use in the psych unit.
 - Another provider, a full-time doctor, is being hired.
 - Contract Negotiations: 98% of members voted to authorize a strike. Still no progress, no counter-proposals from hospitals, bad-faith bargaining. Need baseline number of staff for patients.
 - Requested letter of support from CB 12.
3. **Columbia University Medical Center Report** – Sandra Harris, Assistant Vice President, Government & Community Affairs, reported on the 5th annual parent conference, health science careers programs, new Office of Service Learning, a workshop on child-rearing for dads, and the hiring of a new Chief Operating Officer, Donna Lynn, former Lt. Governor of Colorado. She will be attending the next CB 12 general meeting.
4. **Resolution calling upon Amtrak to remove billboard at Riverside Drive & W. 155th Street** – S. Simon distributed copies of a resolution that was passed by the Traffic & Transportation Committee on Monday night. After some discussion, Lehman/Cochrane moved that the resolution be approved. The resolution was passed by the following vote:
- | | |
|-----------------------|-------|
| Committee Members | 6-0-0 |
| Other Board Members | 2-0-0 |
| Members of the Public | 3-0-0 |
5. **Review of agencies' responses to FY 20 expense and capital budget requests** – The committee members discussed the responses and comments that the board should submit to seek clarifications or specific commitments from the agencies regarding our budget requests.
6. **Isabella Geriatric Center Report** – Betty Lehmann, Director of Marketing & Communications, reported:
- The Governor has proposed a \$1.1 billion cut to Medicaid and Medicare in the state budget. Isabella is working with 1199 and hospitals to oppose this cut. It would mean a loss of \$4 million to Isabella.
 - Trip to the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, D.C. on April 12 – open to anyone in the community over 50
7. **Old Business** – S. Simon reported on the following:
- Street and Sidewalk Cleanliness Ratings: The rating for acceptably clean streets in our district for February was 99.4%. The rating for acceptably clean sidewalks was 98.9%.
 - There were 162 service requests for DEP from WH-I residents in February. The most frequent ones were as follows: Noise: Construction Before/After Hours (29), Lead Kit Requests (17) and Noise: Alarms (13).
 - DDC provided a written status report on its four current projects in our district:
 - installation of sewer/water main in Inwood – 35% complete
 - water main/fire hydrant/water valve replacements on Haven Avenue, Fort Washington Avenue, Riverside Drive, W. 165th – W. 172nd Streets – 36% complete
 - installation of water main on W. 170th Street – 7% complete
 - pedestrian safety project at the Broadway/Nagle/Bennett/Hillside Avenues intersection – 15% complete
8. **New Business** – S. Fisher: Allegations have been made that the \$850M allocated for ThriveNYC has been misspent.
9. **Announcements** – S. Fisher: Big River Sweep with Riverkeeper and Girl Scouts on May 4. Car-Free Earth Day on April 27. St. Nicholas Ave. will be closed to auto traffic 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:18 p.m.
Respectfully submitted, Steve Simon.