

HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES – May 5, 2016

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Steve Simon (Chair), Mitchell Glenn (Asst. Chair), Daryl Cochrane, Elizabeth Lehmann, Beatrice Hall (Public Member).

ABSENT: Wanda Garcia, Andrea Kornbluth, Javier Trejo.

GUESTS: Merelis Ortiz, Centro Altagracia de Fe y Justicia; Emilio Carrillo, MD, and Julio Batista, NY-Presbyterian Hospital; Sandra Harris, Columbia University Medical Center; Dana Daugherty and Larry Bryant, NAMI-NYC Metro; Martin Collins; Sara Fisher; David Huggins, Kimberly Vasquez, Hannah Whiteker.

M. Glenn, Assistant Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

1. Presentation on Uptown Cleanup – Merelis Catalina Ortiz, Community Outreach Coordinator, Centro Altagracia de Fe y Justicia / Altagracia Center for Faith and Justice, reported as follows:

- The Center is in the process of conducting five community clean-up events in Washington Heights-Inwood on various Saturday mornings. Two have taken place so far; three more are planned for May 7 (Isham Street and Seaman Avenue), May 21 (outside St. Elizabeth's Church, 268 Wadsworth Ave.) and June 11 (Anne Loftus Playground). Hours are 9-11 a.m. Everyone is invited.
- The purpose of the project is to bring education about sanitation and environmental justice to the community.
- Each person will receive a water bottle and a t-shirt. Responsibilities include cleaning the sidewalks and curbs, and placing the garbage in appropriate bags and receptacles. Lunch will be provided after each session. There will be a speaker on environmental justice after each lunch.
- On the last day of the project (June 11), there will be a celebration and a "clothes swap." The "clothes swap" will take place from 1-4 p.m.
- Council Member Rodriguez gave a \$40,000 grant to Centro Altagracia de Fe y Justicia for this project.

2. Connecting Health Care with Community-Based Social Services – Emilio Carrillo, MD, MPH, Vice President - Community Health, NewYork-Presbyterian Hospital, gave a Powerpoint presentation:

- Factors that affect health – biological, psychological, social/cultural, income
- 2003 study: 47.8% of Hispanic children have "less than very good health"
- NYPH is proposing to form "a Regional Health Collaborative" to address the health-related social needs of people in our community. This initiative would be funded through the Accountable Health Communities (AHC) program operated by the federal Center for Medicaid / Medicare Innovation and created under Obamacare.
- The collaborative will include various community-based organizations, especially service providers that assist people with problems related to food support, housing, transportation and utilities
- 70% of Washington Heights-Inwood residents have Medicaid and/or Medicare.
- The AHC program has to serve at least 51% of these beneficiaries (75,000 people) per year. NYPH currently serves 55%.
- The core of the program involves students asking all of the patients in the ER, the Ambulatory Care Network practices and the hospital's clinics whether they have any health-related social needs and then referring them to service providers who can assist them with these needs.
- The work done by the community service providers will be tracked to show positive outcomes.
- He would like CB 12 to be on the advisory board.
- The grant would be \$4.5 million over five years. 50% of the funding would go towards IT. 34 students would be given stipends. The application will be submitted 5/18.
- The program will begin next January. The hospital plans to initiate the program regardless of whether it receives the grant.

S. Simon praised the proposed program and said the committee would like to assist in this effort to increase needed services in the community.

3. NY-Presbyterian Hospital Report – Julio Batista, Director of Community Affairs, reported as follows:

- He suggested that CB 12 request that restaurants that come before us for liquor licenses put healthy food choices on their menus. CHALK, a NYPH program, would be willing to work with these restaurants.
- Council Members Rodriguez and Levine are sponsoring an event with the Mayor's Community Affairs Unit, the Fire Department and Red Cross tomorrow here at the Alianza building where free smoke and carbon monoxide detectors will be given away.
- A health workshop will be held for the Lang Youth Scholars this Saturday.
- A seniors' talent show was held at the Allen Hospital last Monday. DNAinfo ran a nice story about it.

S. Simon: A CB 12 member wants to know whether NYPH is part of the hospital consortium (including Memorial Sloan Kettering, NYU and others) that is building a proton therapy facility for cancer patients at 125th Street and Second Avenue. If not, is NYPH planning to have its own facility and will it be in our district? She and her husband have to travel every day to a hospital in Somerset, N.J. for the radiation therapy.

J. Batista said he's not familiar with the facility being built on 125th Street but would look into whether NYPH is involved. He said NYPH tried to build such a facility in Westchester but was blocked by the local community.

4. Isabella Geriatric Center Report – Betty Lehmann, Director of Marketing & Communications, reported as follows:

- This will be the 15th and final year of the McFadden scholarships, which are given to college-bound students in Washington Heights-Inwood. Funds are running out. The awards dinner will be held 6/8.
- Another open house will be held at Isabella House – apartments with services for those over 62 years of age – on 5/21. There are 78 apartments in the building, 12-15 vacancies each year.
- The Fund for the City of New York will be holding a ceremony at Isabella at which it will present its Sloan Award for Public Service, which is given to city employees who go above and beyond the call of duty, to Police Officers Thomas Troppman and Edwin Rodriguez from the 34th Precinct for help they have given to youth in the community. The ceremony will be held 6/1 at 8:30 a.m. The community will be invited.
- The Uptown Art Stroll will hold a cocktail party at Isabella on 6/7 at 4-6 p.m.
- The expanded short-stay rehab unit, now with 90 beds, was opened.
- A kickoff event will be held 5/17 for the new NORC program at the River Terrace coop.

5. Old Business -- S. Simon: Our Street Cleanliness ratings for April dipped below 90% to 87.9%. The Inwood sector had the best rating (93.5%), and the one in lower Washington Heights had the lowest rating (77.8%). Our Sidewalk Cleanliness ratings were much better again – 96.3% overall. All four sectors had a rating above 93%.

S. Simon: The City Council passed the bill today imposing a 5-cent fee on both plastic and paper bags in retail stores. This committee and then CB 12 passed a resolution urging that the fee only be imposed on plastic bags.

S. Fisher: Friends of Inwood Hill Park planted over 380 trees on Earth Day weekend with the help of a lot of kids. The Parks Department planted 400 more trees. The Friends also collected 60 bags of litter that were sorted into 32 bags of recyclables and 28 bags of trash. The Friends will be in the park every second and fourth Saturday.

6. New Business – S. Fisher: The North Cove will be one of the sites for Riverkeeper's Clean Sweep on 5/7. Water testing will be done at four sites: North Cove, Muscota Marsh, Inwood Canoe Club and Peter Jay Sharp boathouse. May add two other sites.

D. Daugherty: NAMI will be holding its annual walk on 5/7 from the South Street Seaport over the Brooklyn Bridge and back. The largest mental health walk in the state, it's a fund-raising effort to make sure NAMI's services are free. The community health fair will be held on the second floor of the Alianza building on 7/16 at 12-4 p.m. She is leaving NYC and will be replaced as Program and Outreach Coordinator by Larry Bryant, whom she introduced.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Steve Simon, with assistance from Betty Lehmann.