

COMMUNITY BOARD 12, MANHATTAN
Executive Committee Meeting
Virtual via Zoom

May 19th, 2020
MINUTES

Executive Committee Members Present: E. Bueno (Chair); K. Diaz (1st Vice Chair); I. Medina (2nd Vice Chair & Chair, Licensing); G. Dengel, (Treasurer); E. Lorris Ritter (Secretary & Chair, Parks & Cultural Affairs); O. Kaminer (Asst. Secretary); A. Miranda (Housing & Human Services); W. Benjamin (Chair, Land Use); D. Nabavian (Chair, Traffic & Transportation); R. Allman (LGBTQ Task Force); J. Berlin (Parliamentarian); J. N. Frometa (IT Task Force); M. Anderson (Chair, Aging Committee); D. Estevez (Chair, Business Development); S. Simon (Chair, Health & Environment); C. Young (Chair, Public Safety); F. Florimon (Chair, Youth & Education)

Excused: none

Absent: none

Other Board Members Present: A. Oglivie, S. Fisher, C. Richiez, M. Graham, A. Vasquez

Government Officials Present: N. Espino (MBPO)

Member of the Public Present:

Staff: Ebenezer Smith, District Manager

Meeting was called to order at 6:50 pm by Chair, Eleazar Bueno

Chair's Report: Eleazar Bueno:

- CB12 partnered with Northern Manhattan Coalition for Immigrants and participates in providing 125 hot meals every Tuesday. Two restaurants donated food for last Tuesday's event
- Eight to nine restaurants also participate in a daily program to provide hot-meals to a program for our community
- Some CB members may not have laptops or cell phones to participate in virtual meetings. CB12 is reaching out to businesses in our district that may not have experience with digital conferencing
- First V.C. K. Diaz is working with the office to purchase electronic devices so CB members can access virtual meetings
- Chair Bueno welcomed three new CB12 members that joined the EC meeting
- A. Oglivie asked about the status of FB and YouTube. After much work that was done on a new FB page; the old page only has 70 subscribers. Chair Bueno said that in January or February, A. Oglivie was asked to join Jonathan to merge the accounts. A. Oglivie refuted that statement and said that no effort was done to merge the two FB pages. Jonathan said that the current page is tied to Ebenezer's account info and that the new page is tied to A. Oglivie but we can merge the two accounts
- L. Ritter suggested that the active FB page with the most number of followers should be the one to be utilized.

District Manager Report, Ebenezer Smith:

- In the month of May all committees had virtual meetings
- The office staff learned to handle Zoom and Webex. For nights with two meetings at the same time both of these platforms will be used
- The office is ready to transmit meetings from the conference room and upload it to YouTube once we are back to having meetings in person

- Many calls are coming into the office regarding noise complaints as well as landlord and tenet issues
- The District Manager E. Smith is requesting a raise in his salary; he has been requesting this since Shah was the Chair
- The Resolution of Inclusion passed in February but due to COVID19 and remote work the resolution was revised last week and sent to the MBPO this morning.

Treasurer's Report: Gerard Dengel:

- On Saturday before the EC meeting, Ebenezer sent the May report. The EC received the report a few days later. A request to the office was made to send the report a week prior to the meeting
- The May report includes actuals from July through April and forecast from May to June. Under unrestricted funding source we have about \$30,134 that could be available for restricted items and \$20,219 for unrestricted, totaling \$50,354 that could be available for computers and other equipment
- S. Fisher asked that the entire board get the report. Also asked that the expenditure be approved by the full board. The balance of the initiative is \$33,000 and needs to be spent in the next 30 days. Kathy will speak to Sally after the meeting
- L. Ritter said that we have some money in the Personal Services line and is it at all possible to hire community people to post flyers of CB meetings
- K. Diaz suggests that members can email her, Gerard, Eli and Ebenezer to make suggestions on how to allocate the funds. There are many resolutions from the 80's and 90's that still need to be digitized and there may be sponsorship opportunities in art, yoga classes, tote bags to use for food pantries, etc.

Secretary's Report: Liz Ritter:

- Since virtual meetings are our new way to meet due to COVID19, more people are attending the meetings
- All people that had attendance issues either did not reapply or were not re-appointed. The Secretary asked to get the most up to date committee assignments.

Calendars:

June:

- No changes

July:

- No changes
- New members orientation will be announced at a later date

Committee Reports:

Youth and Education: Chair, F. Florimon:

- Charlie Ortiz presented a proposal for the WHIN, a unique music charter school on 180th Street. The statistics they provided need to be re-assessed and include other committee's input such as T&T, LU, and others.
- The Y&E committee was planning to put together a forum about COVID19 experiences in the district for the community. The district manager E. Smith advised that there was one already planned by the Board
- D. Estevez is concerned about the influx of charter schools bombarding our district and the toll on public schools in the district. There is an overwhelming number of charter schools and

perhaps the Y&E can produce a resolution calling for a moratorium on charter schools and a study on their impact on our predominantly community of color district. Chair F. Florimon advised Estevez that the position of the Board is not to allow charter schools to collocate in public schools in our district. Regardless of how we feel about charter schools, the DOE and the state are allowing them to flourish. I. Medina suggested to have a charter school forum as there will be additional traffic with every new school

- C. Curtis asked if there is a disparity in our community and if so, what are they. F. Florimon advised that students did not suffer from lack of equipment
- S. Fisher is concerned that the focus of the meeting is not the public schools, as they are the ones that need equipment, not the private or the charter school.
- W. Benjamin would like to know what is the saturation of charter schools in the district. He also pointed out that they are actually public schools.
- S. Simon would like to know how kids are learning remotely if they have no laptops? Simon suggests that Y&E call DOE and ask for the data.

Public Safety: Chair, Curtis Young:

- There is an increase in domestic violence cases in the district and NIMIC made a presentation at the last committee meeting about this issue
- C. Young also attended the City Council public safety meeting after hearing that the City plans on cutting a substantial amount of money that was allocated to domestic violence programs and particularly NIMIC that serves community members that are hurt by domestic violence
- The PS committee passed a resolution in support of continuing funding for this program. Only \$9 million is allocated for this program
- Both reps from 33rd and 34th attended the meeting
- D. Estevez asked about enforcement of social distancing and masks and said that it is important to understand if the police enforce it evenly in all neighborhoods. The 33rd and the 34th attest that so far, the community of following the guidelines.

Traffic and Transportation: Chair Debby Nabavian

- A resolution about the Riverside oval area to address safety issues and speeding cars at the intersection where one person was recently injured. The proposal is looking to slow down cars coming into the intersection. Also, the 158th street intersection is 6 legs intersection hopefully DOT will make it safe for pedestrian to cross and keep traffic moving. DOT proposes to take 158 St and Riverside and make it one way traffic only
- The WHIN charter school presented their traffic study. The parking garage is going away and this is a problem because some people will drop off kids and that will create additional traffic. They are projecting 2 public buses arriving every day but early in the morning, around 7 to 7:40AM and will not interfere with the retail business in this location
- S. Fisher said that this will impact the 181st Street subway system and the senior center.

Land Use: Chair, Wayne Benjamin:

- Tim Anderson, the new MBPO planner for CB12 was introduced, also Annie White and Ryan Colt from DCP were present at the meeting and provided some updates
- We discussed the Inwood Rezoning and our resolutions asking for a district wide contextual rezoning of C8-3 that is also related to the WHIN charter school that now needs a special permit to renovate the existing building for school use because DCP has not acted on the resolutions CB12 passed several years ago pointing out that C8, which is heavily focused on motor vehicle use, is not something that is conducive to any of the mixed use development that is needed in our community

- Solar access resolution was discussed and a number of resolutions pertaining to historic preservation in WH and Inwood. Also discussed was the district wide planning and land use study that CB12 undertook with City College in 2007. DCP promised to follow up by providing copies of them so the reps can come up to speed with the resolutions mentioned above
- There was also a conversation of the City's commitments in conjunction with Inwood Rezoning; specifically, since the rezoning was challenged and overturned. Is the city sticking to the commitments from the rezoning proposal? We are asking DCP to give us answers for something where EDC is the lead agency and the one that should be providing us answers. At this time, they do not have any updates. It was suggested that all committees take a look at the letter that was signed by the City about what the commitment are, contact EDC and ask them to follow up on the commitments related to each committee. Will the City continue to honor their commitments if the rezoning is going to be overturned
- A question was raised about the implication of LL97 (Climate Mobilization Act) in terms of planning and zoning for sustainable city. We asked that DCP come back to us in September to address this question and what should we look at and advocate for. Per S. Simon, one project from DPR, Monsignor Kett Playground is in fact one of the recommendations from the Inwood Rezoning that is going forward.

Business Development. Chair, Domingo Estevez:

- The committee hosted a webinar in April discussing resources for small businesses during COVID and the need for pro-bono lawyers for small businesses that can provide guidance. The Legal Aid Society provides small business legal advice and support. 45 small businesses attended the virtual conference
- On May 5th, 37 business attended the BD meeting. Two of which are new businesses thanks to Isidro
- The next meeting will take place on June 2nd at 6:30PM. A rep from 809 will speak about his experience during COVID and what assistance is available to small business in general. A salon and barbershop owner will be presenting as well. The committee also reached out to the nightlife businesses.
- L. Ritter talked about some issues with alcohol take-out and patrons congregating on the sidewalk or in their cars near establishments and suggested that there should be some communication with establishments where this is an issue. D. Estevez did not think that the police should get involved in these situations and it's a question of educating the business owners on the different solutions to avoid these issues
- G. Dengel asked if there are any initiatives, grants, loans, etc. to help small businesses to pay rent and survive. D. Estevez answered that there is plenty of talk about helping small businesses but so far no real solutions
- Price gouging bill was passed yesterday
- I. Medina report that temporary legislations 1898 and 1808 were passed by City Council. They cap the delivery fee to 15%. A concern that the fee charged by the delivery companies such as Seamless, Grub Hub, UberEats and others is taking away revenue from the restaurant industry that is having trouble surviving. Additionally, when there are any complaints from the customers regarding the delivery service, such as time of delivery, temperature of the food etc. The restaurants are taking the hit while the fee paid for the delivery service companies remains untouched.

Health & Environment Committee: Chair Steve Simon

- The WHIN music community charter school made a presentation about the development's noise, air quality, hazardous material, solid waste management, sanitation, water and sewage infrastructure and produced a couple of recommendation which will be forwarded to the land use committee
- The committee recommended that the school work with it's two adjacent neighbors... the Washington Senior Center and Esperanza Center... and recommend that they get acquainted with the WHBID and contact I. medina
- The Health Department presented a new antibody testing location at 2100 Broadway & 116th Street. Council Member Mark Levine joined the meeting and reported that he took the antibody test that came back positive and he will be donating plasma
- A new testing site opened up in Washington Heights to perform diagnostic testing specifically for people who have symptoms or people who have been in contact with people that tested positive as well as healthcare and nursing homes workers. The site is at the Highbridge Park Recreation Center on 173rd Street and Amsterdam. The site open from 9am to 7pm, no appointments necessary. ID is required but this is a free of charge service
- NYP reported that the overall number of COVID19 cases has declined. NYP does not provide specific statistics of cases by hospital. In April they had 2,500 cases and on May 6th it was down to 1,349 cases. Since the beginning of the COVID19 crisis they have discharged 8,000 COVID19 patients. NYP does not release the number of patients that did not survive which is very disappointing
- The Baker Field temporary field hospital is still in use
- In the wake of devastating suicide of Dr. L. Breen, the head of Emergency Medicine at Alan Hospital, NYP has increased the mental health counseling for their staff.
- Alan Hospital is planning on having COVID19 medical research in the hospital in June and offered to have CB12 co-sponsor the event
- CB12 member and the Director of Marketing Community Relations Betty Lehmann reports that the high number of patient deaths at Isabella Geriatric center was reported to the NY State as required and that the State DOH knew about the deaths all along. The State knew about confirmed deaths and presumed deaths as well as deaths that occurred at local hospitals. Only recently did the State officially report confirmed deaths, which is why we were under the impression that this was the actual death rate even though this count was not included in the presumed death rate. Including the deaths that occurred elsewhere the total stands at 98 from Isabella. Other nursing homes are at high rate of infection and death and this is not unique to Isabella. The state is now conducting more testing and providing a supply of PPE that was not available before.

Housing & Human Services: Chair, Ariel Miranda:

- Carmen De La Rosa was present at the meeting to discuss a piece of legislation, the Excluded Workers Bailout Fund that means to offer financial assistance to residents and those that are not eligible for human services (undocumented or other)
- Multiple organizations reported that undocumented people paid \$1.1 billion in taxes using ITIN#'s just in 2017, paying into a system they now do not get to benefits from although they need it most
- Department of Homeless Services is talking about how to allocate space to those that find themselves homeless in the middle of the pandemic
- A resolution for no rent increases was presented as the rent is scheduled to be voted on the 17th of May and a resolution should go out hopefully tonight
- S. Simon suggested that we should vote on this resolution now as it may be too late to get onto the desk of the Rent Guideline Board if they choose to move the date of their meeting up.

- Vote: Y: 14, N: 0, A: 0 Bueno, Díaz, Medina, Dengel, Ritter, Kaminer, Miranda, Benjamin, Nabavian, Frometa, Estévez, Simon, Young, Florimon: Yes

Parks & Cultural Affairs: Chair, Liz Ritter:

- Thanks to virtual meetings there were 45 people that participated. People do not have to worry about travel or childcare and can participate in the meeting online
- There was a vigorous discussion about DPR's plans for the renovation of the Inwood ball fields. Please read the Minutes for extensive details about this plan. The committee passed a resolution of support for the proposed renovation plans for Inwood ball fields 1, 2, and 4. Fields 3 and 5 will remain in active use while the others are being renovated
- At the June meeting the committee will have a discussion about cultural affairs offerings through the community. There are many different ways that the arts are approaching how to deal with COVID in this difficult times. Different artists and art organizations in the community will be identified
- A presentation from the WH Inwood Food Network is planned and a discussion about BBQ in the community will be discussed as well. It is not clear that BBQ is not a permitted use. However, where and when BBQ use will be allowed this summer or next will be discussed

Licensing: Chair Isidro Medina:

- At the May meeting there were 10 licenses for consideration
- 3 licenses have been withdrawn
- There was some concern about Casa Crioula on Broadway, close to 192nd street. Some emails raising objections and complaints were received from residents and some board members as well. Most of the complaints were drug related issues with the previous owner. The new owner agreed to new business hours. S. Simon asked if stipulations were agreed on and if it is too late to ask for a security guard that can deal with the crowd outside the establishment.

IT Task Force: Chair, Jonathan Nuñez-Frometa:

- FB update: the new page is tied to the District Manger per DOITT requirements. However, we can marge the two pages. O. Kaminer asked to continue to work with the current page and find a way to merge the new page with the current page. L. Ritter asked not to start a new page when there are 2,000 followers on the existing page and that it should remain the primary FB page. W. Benjamin said that the CB site should be for CB issues only

LGBTQ Task Force: Chair, Richard Allman:

- No report.

New Business:

- D. Estevez proposed co-naming Dyckman & Nagle or Arden street after Isaiah Moronta who drowned in the Inwood peninsula in March while trying to save his friend, Manny Flores, after he jumped into the water to save him. Both young men drowned. Isaiah was an Inwood native.

Natalie Espino MBPO:

- They have a lot of reports of ACS going to open cases of truancy for families who simply don't have the devices or access to an internet connection. The MBPO is not able to access the DOE portal to request a device for a family that doesn't have one, it takes forever. Some families are in a 9-1-1 situation when they are being disrupted and student records are being affected by the fact that devices are not available and students are unable to plug into distance learning
- As far as public safety, there will be a town hall on enforcement of social distancing in communities of color

- Inwood Rezoning: the EDC tracker was disabled once the rezoning was reversed. The zoning maps were reset to August 2018. Right now the only way to get updates is to go through Tim, the MBPO urban planner, and the land use unit that can provide land use support.

Old Business: none

Announcements: none

Motion to Adjourn – called by E. Bueno, 2nd by D. Estevez.

Adjournment: 10:22 PM

Minutes prepared by: Osi Kaminer, Assistant Secretary, June, 2020