



## Community Board 12 - Manhattan Washington Heights & Inwood

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Eleazar Bueno, Chairperson  
Ebenezer Smith, District Manager

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July 6, 2021

Hon. Mayor Bill de Blasio  
City Hall  
New York, NY 10007

Re: Resolution in Support of Proposed Solutions to Noise Pollution Issues.

Dear Mayor Bill de Blasio:

At the General Meeting on Tuesday, June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2021, Community Board 12 Manhattan, passed the following resolution with a vote of 38 in favor, 1 opposed, 2 abstentions, and 0, not voting, acknowledging the public health and public safety impacts of unreasonable noise and other quality of life issues on the community, and that solutions are needed that will result in the mitigation of these impacts; and encouraging continued efforts and dialogue as well as informed, effective and creative ideas around these issues.

**Whereas:** Quality of life issues such as unreasonable noise have overwhelmed residents of Washington Heights and Inwood since last spring. These have included daily and prolonged illegal fireworks activity; dirt bikes, ATVs and other vehicles racing through the streets; large outdoor parties in residential areas and parks, and noise from some restaurants and bars; and

**Whereas:** Throughout most of 2020, Community District 12-Manhattan, which includes Washington Heights and Inwood, logged more 311 noise complaints than all of the other districts in Manhattan, according to data from the Manhattan Borough President's Office, using its Boardstat data and mapping system; and

**Whereas:** Quality of life issues continue to be the predominant problems reported by the community to both the 33<sup>rd</sup> and 34<sup>th</sup> precincts, according to their own CompStat data; and

**Whereas:** Unreasonable noise has serious health impacts. Numerous studies have shown environmental noise is associated with a wide variety of adverse health outcomes, including hearing loss, cardiovascular disease, cognitive impairment, sleep disturbance, tinnitus and mental health impacts. In fact, an 83-year-old woman ended up suffering a fatal heart attack because of fireworks set off outside her building on Academy Street last July 5, according to her daughter; and

**Whereas:** Illegal fireworks also pose a serious public safety threat for the community, exemplified by the fact that they were the evident cause of a fire that destroyed a ground-floor apartment at 184 Nagle Avenue in Inwood also on July 5, 2020; and

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**Whereas:** The problem has persisted this year. The Patch news site reports that zip code 10032 has the most complaints about fireworks made to 311 from April 1 – June 25, 2021 (470 complaints). Zip codes 10040 and 10034 are also among the top five with such complaints, 342 and 226 respectively; and

**Whereas:** Community Board 12-Manhattan held a Public Hearing on Noise Pollution with representatives of various city agencies on August 4 that drew over 100 attendees; and

**Whereas:** After that Public Hearing, community residents seeking accountability and action from stakeholders with the power to enact changes organized into what is now known as the WaHI-Inwood Task Force on Noise. The Task Force has held numerous and extensive meetings with various city enforcement agencies, elected officials, environmental pollution experts, and other community members and groups since November 2020 before officially releasing in May 2021 a list of 29 recommendations for solutions to the noise pollution issue; and

**Whereas:** About 1200 people feel so strongly about this issue that they have joined a Facebook group, WaHi and Inwood for Respectful Decibel Levels, which report noise problems in the community and discuss possible solutions, clearly demonstrating the impact of this issue on residents on a daily basis; and

**Whereas:** Elected officials, such as Council Member Mark Levine, Borough Presidents Gale Brewer and Eric Adams, State Senator Robert Jackson and Comptroller Scott Stringer, have announced their own recommendations/plans to address quality of life issues in the district and in the city as a whole, and have appealed to Mayor Bill de Blasio and NYPD Commissioner Dermot Shea to do so; and

**Whereas:** These recommendations/plans for the most part are reasonable and sound, do not rely upon overly aggressive policing, and have a number of similarities, such as strategies for cracking down on illegal dirt bike/vehicle activity, improving current systems for logging 311 calls and responding to community concerns, curbing unnecessary helicopter flights, and providing education for communities on the health and public safety impacts of noise pollution, including illegal fireworks activity; and

**Whereas:** The 33<sup>rd</sup> Precinct has responded by organizing a “fireworks suppression operation” on June 4, 2021, targeting a select number of locations where it has received complaints about repeated illegal fireworks activity; now, therefore, be it

**Resolved:** Community Board 12-Manhattan acknowledges the public health and public safety impacts of unreasonable noise and other quality of life issues on the community, and that solutions are needed that will result in the mitigation of these impacts; and be it further

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**Resolved:** Community Board 12-Manhattan encourages continued efforts and dialogue as well as informed, effective and creative ideas around these issues.

Sincerely,



Eleazar Bueno  
Chairperson

cc: Hon. Jumaane Williams, Public Advocate  
Hon. Scott M. Stringer, Comptroller  
Hon. Brian Benjamin, State Senator  
Hon. Robert Jackson, State Senator  
Acting CO 33<sup>rd</sup> Precinct NYPD  
Geraldine Kelpin, DEP

Hon. Gale Brewer, Manhattan Borough President  
Hon. Al Taylor, Assembly Member  
Hon. Carmen De La Rosa, Assembly Member  
Hon. Ydanis Rodriguez, Council Member  
Hon. Mark Levine, Council Member  
DI Peter Andrea, CO, 34<sup>th</sup> Precinct NYPD  
Isaiah Jenkins, CAU