

Manhattan Community Board 12
Housing and Human Services Committee
Thursday, April 7, 2022, Zoom

Committee Member Attendance – Richard Allman, Bruce Robertson, Daryl Cochrane, Marshall Vanderpool, Ayisha Oglivie, Marielle Ali, Edda Santiago

Excused – Michelle Lee

Public – Linda Alexander, Serena Miller, Zohra Roy, Adam Blank, Carlos Manzueta, Phil Zablocki

Call to Order 7:06 pm

Welcome and Introductions

Logical Buildings Presentation on Grid Rewards App (Zohra Roy, Serena Miller, Adam Blank, Linda Alexander)

Logical Buildings is a company striving to reduce energy costs of New Yorkers and earn revenue and reduce overall carbon emissions. Logical Buildings designed Grid Rewards is a free app available to small businesses and households in New York City. Following Coned rollout of smart meters which provides granular data on energy consumption in up to 15-minute periods. With Grid Rewards, you can reduce your energy consumption and earn money based on your energy usage as connected to your Coned account.

Grid Rewards has three main purposes:

- Energy equity application in line with ConEd's strategy to put in smart meters into apartment buildings. ConEd has replaced older electric and gas meters with smart meters that now put out up to 15 minutes.
- With Grid Rewards, you get paid to reduce your carbon footprint as well as energy usage based on ConEd connection of smart meter. It informs consumers of peak energy demands and encourages them to reduce their energy consumption during those periods to earn savings both in a reduced energy bill but also through rewards on the app.
- ConEd prefers to pay consumers money to reduce energy usage rather than use energy especially during peak demand times. ConEd works with Grid Rewards to pass on the savings to consumers through PayPal, check, and online charity donation.

Following the presentation, HHS Committee members had a series of questions.

Questions from Committee Members

Committee – How does the app look like for the individual consumer?

Logistical Buildings– Grid Rewards is a free app with accessible on Google Play or the Apple Store. It is also available as a website. You link the Grid Rewards account with your ConEd account. Once the account is linked, users can begin earning incentives and gaining insights to lowering monthly electricity bill.

Committee – Can you tell us more about Logical Buildings?

Logistical Buildings – A company about energy data and provided this information for larger energy consumers. With the advanced metering upgrades for small energy consumers, Logistical Buildings created Grid Rewards for everyday energy consumers.

Committee – How are the rewards redeemed?

Logistical Buildings – Consumers have an option of claiming earned rewards through PayPal, check, or donating their earnings to an organization such as We Act.

Committee– In the future, would Grid Rewards be able to have enough data to see the number of users per neighborhood and see how many KW have been saved?

Logistical Buildings- yes, this is part of the next phase of GR is to create neighborhood to reduce energy usage based on ConEd data.

Committee- Are the large shifting events summer based?

Logistical Buildings – yes, the events are summer based, but Grid Rewards is working with ConEd to create a year-round system.

Committee- How are the reimbursement rates determined?

Logistical Buildings – Every energy user is available to everyone who uses ConEd by downloading the app. ConEdison calls peak events (when it most expensive to use electricity) and then pays volunteers to reduce energy usage – i.e., LED lights, energy efficient appliances.

Committee- A lot of the buildings are not up to code as it relates to wiring. Does it account for problems some buildings experience energy consumption noting the rise in electrical fires in our area?

Logistical Buildings- There are NYCHA buildings that use smart meters, and those tenants are already using Grid Rewards.

Committee – How does the savings work?

Logistical Buildings – You will receive savings in your ConEd bill if you shift your energy usage to non-peak times (less expensive times to use energy) as determined by ConEd. You will also receive rewards from the app which Logistical Buildings passes those savings on to end users to receive as PayPal, check or charity donation.

Committee – Is the company NYC based? Or will this be spread out to other areas?

Logistical Buildings – Logistical Buildings has been around for 8 years having launched a similar software that large buildings can use to save on energy costs; GR is

an iteration of similar work but for everyday energy users. Grid Rewards has been around for 1 year. It is the smart metering technology by electric companies that allows Grid Rewards to provide the benefits to energy users. It is the data provided by the smart meters that allows for this energy consumption data.

Committee – How can we get this information out to the larger community, particularly those who may not be comfortable with applications and websites can also benefit?

Logistical Buildings – The Grid Rewards app is a user-friendly platform for people of all ages. Logistical Buildings also hosts in-person sessions to assist people to sign up.

Committee – Is the app available in different languages?

Logistical Buildings – Yes, it is currently accessible in Spanish, Mandarin and Russian.

Now Pow Presentation – TBC Update on Resource Platform Resolution

Committee Resolution passed in March on creating citywide resource platform. One of the action points was to invite Now Pow, a tech company started by two veterans looking for a one stop resource to connect veterans to social services mainly from the healthcare perspective.

Chair provided an update on conversations with Now Pow and Manhattan Borough President's Office on the resource platform. The Manhattan Borough President's Office indicated interest in the resolution but solely for Manhattan. The resolution calls for a city-wide resource. Summer Youth Employment individuals can support the CB12 office with updating the CB12 specific resource document.

Ayisha and Bruce expressed interest in supporting the resolution to move forward.

Resource Fair

We are currently behind schedule due to limited capacity, but there is still interest in moving the fair forward.

Committee members asked about potential locations such as Sherman Creek Park, places that Columbia Presbyterian or Yeshiva University may be able to donate spaces.

Committee members agreed to share details about the Fair in their respective committees.

Old Business

- **Update on Request for Construction Hours Variance at 37 Hillside**
Bruce and Daryl provided an update based on Michelle's emailed report. Company has decided to finalize exterior work with existing construction hours

during the week but will revisit the Housing and Human Services Committee in the fall to request a variance to complete interior, quieter, construction work. Company agreed to meet with neighbors in the fall to discuss the request for Saturday construction hours before asking the Housing and Human Services Committee for a letter of support.

- **Update on Call with Senator Cleare's Office**

Office is involved with Lobbying Day trip to Albany. The Office is also putting together a series of workshops on the legalization of cannabis and the rights of individuals. Flyer is forthcoming. Senator has expressed interest in coming to a future committee meeting.

- **Update on Fort Washington Armory Resolution**

Community Resident Phil Zablocki asked -

In May 2021, Community Board 12 passed a resolution on the usage of space at the Fort Washington Armory. There were four be it resolved.

- What is the status of the public hearing on the Fort Washington Armory? What is the delay as it was previously scheduled for spring 2022?
- What is the status of the other be it resolved? Has the Community Board been in touch with DHS?

Chair responded that a lot of the delays are around the newly elected officials not having sight of the situation or resolution. It has been raised with the CB12 Office. Chair has a meeting with CB12 Office to move this forward. Chair has reached out to DHS but has not received a response. Chair agreed to follow up. Chair does not have an update on the other be it resolves. Chair also shared that there are scheduled conversations with elected representatives in the coming weeks and agreed to raise this matter with them.

Committee member Ayisha shared the resolutions be it resolves.

- Public Forum
- City Council to raise issue of usage of the Ft. Washington Armory
- Creation of a taskforce with CB12 members from various committees and community residents

Committee member Daryl asked if there are other organizations involved in advocacy around the Ft. Washington Armory.

- Yes, there are numerous community residents involved in other organizations. Phil agreed to share names of organizations with the committee.

New Business

- **Barnard Symposium on redlining.**

Barnard now has an exhibit open to the public on Fridays showcasing the results of the study and the impact of redlining on racial and socio-economic groups. Committee member Ayisha will share the information.

- **Update on Distressed Buildings in Washington Heights and Inwood**

Chair is following up with HPD and will seek to invite them to the May Housing and Human Services Committee meeting.

- **Discussion on Removal of Homeless Encampments in NYC**

Committee member Edda asked whether we could look into storage solutions for our homeless neighbors as a way for NYC to build trust with homeless New Yorkers.

Committee member Ayisha shared that HRA provides funding for storage for individuals and families experiencing transition but unsure if a similar service exists for homeless individuals. The committee can consider a resolution requesting storage solutions for homeless individuals. Committee agreed to revisit this idea in May.

Adjourn Meeting

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 pm. It was seconded by Edda Santiago.