

Community Board 12, Manhattan
General Meeting – April 22, 2008 – 711 West 168th Street

PRESENT

Dora Maria Abreu
Jackie Rowe Adams
Richard Allman
Jennifer Araújo
Anita Barberis
Wayne Benjamin
James Berlin
Isalah Bing
Emilia Cardona
Rolando Cespedes

Martin Collins
George Cruz
Sybil Dodson-Lucas
George Espinal
Ramona Gomez
Francisco Guzman
Tony Lopez
Albania Lopez Jimenez
Elizabeth Lorris Ritter
Maria Luna

Glenda Swanson Massa
Rita McKee
Helen Morik
Carole Mulligan
Edgard Nau
Pam Palanque North
Rafael Osoria
Cheryl Pahaham
Edith Prentiss
Zead Ramadan

Andrea Reyes
Tammy Rivera
Rolando Rodriguez
Nelson Rojas
Ruddy Santana
Cleofis Sarete
Steve Simon
Gloria Vanterpool
Manny Velazquez

EXCUSED

Ingrid Dominguez-Brito
Vivian Ducat
James Freeman
Mark Levine
Ines Saldana Olesen

ABSENT

Aidee Camacho
Kotie Cannon
Julissa Gomez
Ariel Hart
Ninoska Uribe

The meeting was called to order at **7:17pm** by Chair Manny Velazquez. There was a quorum. Emilia Cardona made a **motion to adopt the agenda**, which was seconded by George Espinal and passed by voice vote with no objection. There were no March minutes to review, with apologies from the Secretary.

Mr. Velazquez gave the Chair's Report:

- Announced CB12's newly-appointed members – Richard Allman, George Cruz, Ingrid Dominguez-Brito, Ariel Hart, Edgar Nau, Andrea Reyes, Tammy Rivera and Ninoska Uribe – and welcomed those who were present.
- The George Washington Bridge will be undergoing construction through next Fall; watch for late-night and weekend closures on the lower level.
- The School Construction Authority has yet to decide on when it will be moving ahead with the building on 204th & Sherman Avenue; the Youth & Education Committee is working to push SCA to move on this project.

Ebenezer Smith gave the District Manager's report (7:24pm)

- There was a good turnout for the April 10th public meeting regarding the 181st Street Traffic Study. The next meeting will be a walking tour on May 13th at 4pm. For more info or to register, call 212-676-7985.
 - If there is construction that you think is unsafe, please let the board know, so that we can inform the MBPO to follow up through the Construction Watch Task Force.
 - Toured CB12 with a DEP representative to show all locations where there has been no timely follow-up of reports of various conditions.
 - Attended the April DPR operations meeting at Highbridge Park and learned of all the wonderful work happening at the recreation center, including homework help, computer training, etc.
 - Also discussed safety and enforcement complaints with Manhattan Borough Parks Commissioner Castro and Parks Enforcement Patrol.
 - Still working on issues and complaints with the Post Office; will be reporting to the Postmaster in Washington, DC.
- The District Manager fielded several brief questions from Board members on operational matters.

Public Speakers' Session (7:30pm)

Andy & Danny Wrublin, and Stuart Beckerman, Owners of 4640 & 4646 Broadway, and their attorney: looking to add another 200 feet of retail space on Broadway. There is a lot of retail on Sherman Avenue, but none on this block and we feel the addition will be good for the community. One of the hot topics discussed is that there are six rent-stabilized units which would be displaced. The pros outweigh the cons because the area needs more retail. We also are relocating the tenants, for example moving a tenant from a 2BR to a 3BR at same rent. We don't feel it sets any precedent. This also gives us the revenue stream to make necessary improvements to the building.

Artie Maldonado, Highbridge Rec Center: We are located at 173rd Street & Amsterdam Avenue. Our Afterschool program has grown since October from 12 youngsters to 35. We are focusing on literacy and science. One of our students came in first place in a citywide writing competition. We also are trying to build up our library and seek donated books for 6- to 10-year-olds (1st-5th grades). The Rec Center is open Monday-Friday 11am-9pm and Saturdays 8am-4pm. We also are trying to develop a job bank and a pre-professional program to help people get their foot in the door for employment. Contact #212-927-2012. The speaker was invited to next Youth & Education meeting.

Edith Prentiss, Disability Access Gardening Project: No disability access to planting opportunities. Can there be raised beds for access to planting? This would also increase the ability of the disabled and elderly literally to "stop and smell flowers." Another advantage: dogs can't defecate in raised beds! DPR is behind the concept. If you have ideas on locations, please let me know.

Interruption of Public Speakers' Session for Remarks from Elected Officials (7:44pm)

State Assemblymember Bill Perkins (7:44pm): Spoke briefly about the State budget. Despite challenges, we have made lemonade out of lemons. The Mayor will be required to spend school funding in accordance with allocation, and not in some other way at his discretion. The budget includes \$644 million for schools; this is substantially due to the new Governor's commitment to education funding. We also were able to bring 400,000 kids into Child Health-Plus. Made a contribution for the first time in a long time to build affordable housing, although the battle will be over the definition of "affordable." Spoke also about his town meeting on rat infestation and abatement issues, which was attended by more than 200 people, including representatives of DOH, MTA, Housing Authority and other agencies; there also was good media coverage by NY1 and Channel 4. I started this campaign while I was in the City Council, and I will continue to address this issue for as long as it remains a problem for our communities. Question from Ms. Cardona: What will happen to the sales tax surcharge? A: It was supposed to sunset, but will be used for general funding. Q: Wayne Benjamin: This budget has increased funding for schools, as well as an historic increase for affordable housing; can you confirm that? A: "We started

an affordable housing fund including \$300 million for the downstate area and \$100 million for upstate. This is not as much as it sounds like, but it shows our commitment." This segued into a brief discussion of funding for the Javits Convention Center. Q: Ms. Prentiss: I take issue with your observation that "no one got left out" of this budget: with the move of seniors from EPIC to Medicare Part D, "as I fall into the donut hole for the 3rd year running, we [the disability community] got left out; this is a slap in the face." A: "I did not mean to suggest that everything was rosy; we had a bad situation and we were able to do some good. Your issue is important to me."

Councilmember Miguel Martinez (7:57pm): Welcomed new appointees to the Board. Defended the City Council's use of discretionary funding: Many of us did not know that the Council leadership was parking money with organizations that didn't exist, then to be moved to actual orgs. Money always was spent by actual organizations on real projects of legitimate community value, but now they have found potential conflicts of interest. That doesn't mean that these discretionary funds are going to the wrong places; I am proud of the millions of dollars I have brought home to my District: for Dominican Women's Development Center, Northern Manhattan Improvement Corp. and Alianza Dominicana for domestic violence and other social programming; and to hundreds of other organizations, large and small, over the years. CBOs and constituents throughout my district benefit from these programs and funding sources. In the areas of economic development we do Women & Minority Small Business certification, and many other good and deserving programs. With regard to the proposed ULURP which is the subject of the upcoming Land Use resolution, I have met with the tenants and the owners. My position stays as is. I am surprised that the Land Use Committee supports conversion of residential units to commercial space. I am against this ULURP and this resolution. I believe the owners are decent people and they have integrity, but we tried years ago to get Post Avenue to not become a commercial area, and we need to continue with our tradition of preserving residential housing and not converting it to commercial uses.

Resumption of Public Speakers' Session (8:07pm)

Ken Rosenfeld, Northern Manhattan Improvement Corp: Thanked Councilmember Martinez for his comments regarding discretionary funding; we could not operate without some of that funding, but that is not why I am here tonight. Tonight is a defining historic moment for this Board: are you going to eliminate rent-stabilized housing from this community to provide for commercial properties? I, too, believe in the integrity of the owners, and that they are trying to do right by their tenants, but this isn't about that: once those units are lost, they are lost permanently from the rolls of rent-stabilized housing in this community. If we do this, there will be more efforts to convert apartments into stores. Is CB12 going to say we are protecting our community and our #1 priority is protection of affordable housing, or are we gentrifying? Are we saying "yes" to commercial investment at the expense of residents?

Elizabeth Loris Ritter, Cornerstone Chorale: upcoming concert on Mother's Day, Sunday, May 11, at 3:30pm at Good Shepherd Church. Also noted that the Chorale gets discretionary funding from Councilmember Jackson and is appreciative of this funding source as well.

Mildred Tarver, Dyckman Community Center: regarding Umbrella Lounge, which we were informed last night will be opening again. When it was open, it was open until 3 and 4 in the morning. There was fighting, shooting, yelling, vomiting; people ringing tenants' intercoms to try to get in their buildings. Also they are opening a huge club on 202nd St. between Ninth and Tenth Avenues. We can't sleep as it is, and now there will be two more clubs! We hope that you will help us in some way to prevent these clubs from opening up. We cannot take it.

Fred Riley, Department of Consumer Affairs re: "ShredFest": Holding an event this weekend, April 27, 10am-4pm, to promote awareness about identity theft and steps you can take to protect yourself. We will have 14 locations throughout the City with industrial shredders on hand, where you can bring things to shred: we will destroy it for you on the spot. We also are giving away shredders to early arrivals, and coupons for discounts on the purchase of a shredder for people who come later. There will also be lots of information on how to avoid or combat identity theft. The closest location for Upper Manhattan is 135th Street & St. Nicholas Ave; check www.nyc.gov for other locations.

Diana Caba, Northern Manhattan Arts Alliance: 6th annual uptown ArtStroll is coming this June. This is the first year that NoMAA is taking a leadership role in producing this festival. Part of Stroll will be the exhibition of artists we have funded so far through individual grants. We recently had a meeting in Fort Tryon Park, attended by more than 80 people. We are publishing a bi-weekly e-newsletter. Gave contact info, handed out buttons and literature; also solicited information regarding any upcoming events to be posted in the e-blast and for the ArtStroll. Q: Ms. Cardona: Will NoMAA be holding a contest of local artists for the ArtStroll poster design? A: This year we are honoring renowned local artist Knox Martin and the Broadway show "In the Heights" so those will be featured on the poster. Ms. Cardona urged NoMAA to reconsider holding the contest – it was an exciting component of the Stroll that also helped to brand and identify the event.

Rafaela Gonzalez, Community Resident: spoke against the Land Use resolution: I'm just a "plain Jane", and I don't want to see metal graffiti grates and 99¢ stores. Right now we have neighbors, I see businesses bringing in strangers. If it's dark, put in lighting.

Ruben Dario Vargas: also concerned regarding 4640-46 Broadway. Opposed to the proposed ULURP and Land Use resolution. We need more housing, why convert to commercial? If we allow this here, everyone else will want to do this.

Suhaly Bautista, Manhattan Borough President Fellow: I attend NYU, but I am a fellow in the "civic leaders of tomorrow" program, placed in different CBOs, working as a liaison to the Borough President, the CBO and the Community Board in which the CBO operates. "100 Hispanic Women" has a leadership institute, gives a four-year scholarship to a CUNY school. There is so little representation from this community, even though there are so many Latinas (and Latinos). Gave contact info (212-239-1430 or suhaly.bautista@gmail.com). Q: Ms. Cardona: Have you gotten in touch with local high schools and junior high/middle schools? A: Yes; we also are starting a charter school, and have been working with DoE.

Committee Reports (please note in addition to Committee minutes) (8:29pm):

James Berlin, Bylaws Committee Chair, for Executive Committee: gave a brief summary of three resolutions to amend the bylaws:

- #1 to increase the number of votes required to remove a member for cause, such that it is not fewer than one-half of the full Board – reso generated a number of questions regarding the Borough President's role in appointing and removing members. There was much discussion

clarifying that this reso seeks to ensure that the majority of the quorum be sufficiently large as to also be a majority of the board as a whole. Mr. Simon offered a friendly amendment substituting the words "by roll call" for "in written ballot" in the previous sentence of Sec. 5.05(4) of the by-laws. The amended resolution passed 20-13-0-0.

- #2 regarding the method of recording meetings, to include modern digital and other technologies, passed 32-1-0-0.
- #3 regarding attendance levels that would cause the removal of a Board member, lowering the number of unexcused Committee or General meeting absences as well as instituting a standard for a combination of the two, passed 28-5-0-0. Based on the discussion, the Bylaws Task Force was asked to review the definition of "excused absence" and make recommendations for a future amendment.

Wayne Benjamin for Land Use (8:57pm): presented a resolution supporting ULURP application by the owners of 4640 & 4646 Broadway to extend existing commercial overlay by 200 feet along Broadway. Helen Morik: In order to extend it by 200 feet, you have to take away apartments. Otherwise it sounds benign. Mr. Benjamin: Yes, this does affect the six ground floor units. If there were a provision whereby those tenants could be forced to move, then LU would not have supported this ULURP. This permits the conversion, it does not require it. Helen: It's not just about relocating tenants; we are taking away rent-stabilized apartments. I am opposed to this. Martin Collins: Every October we hold a public hearing and rank our budget priorities, and for the last two years we have ranked the creation of affordable housing as our #1 capital priority. Please vote "no" on this resolution. Maria Luna: expressed her opposition to this resolution in the strongest and most passionate terms. Rita McKee: WH/I needs good retail, good infrastructure, and if the only way to maintain infrastructure is to generate revenue, this is maybe not such a bad thing. There are so many violations in so many buildings, and if landlords aren't willing to invest in their buildings, how are we to see any maintenance and upkeep. Ms. Cardona: We don't need businesses that may collapse; we cannot afford to lose affordable housing units. I am opposed to this; landlords must make necessary repairs. The last thing we need is to lose housing. Mr. Benjamin: We have lost and continue to lose rent-stabilized apartments through illegal conversions. Ms. Cardona: That's a different battle. Mr. Benjamin: if we are serious about preserving rent-stabilized apartments, we should be fighting the illegal conversions. Ms. Prentiss: These people bought the bldg with this planned conversion in mind. The owners responded: We have spent \$350k on this property fixing it up and have improved the quality of the housing in these buildings. Someone else could run the building worse than we do, but we can't run it well without this additional funding. Richard Allman: There is no evidence that the community needs the additional commercial space. I live on a street without commercial property and this is a rare opportunity in Manhattan; I have to assume that these residents feel the same. The statement that there is a lack of commercial property strains credibility. Pam North: I will vote against this because of our long fight for affordable housing. On the other hand, in defense of this particular owner, I must say when I chaired the Public Safety Committee, we had four buildings in this area with drug problems, and this particular landlord came to the Board and talked to us about how they would do everything it took to get the drug sellers out of the building. They took the risks. I am voting no, because I am opposed to this plan, but this man came to us to help us and to improve the community. This is not a bad owner, although I do believe this is not the right thing to do. Mr. Wrublin (the landlord) made an impassioned plea in his defense: I know the loss of apartments is not what you want to see, but look also at how we are managing these apartments. There are landlords who just look at who they want to evict, and get out of the way, and we are not like that. We are the kind of the people who want to take care of our tenants and our buildings. By putting in this retail, it's going to make the quality of life in the buildings on Broadway better for the 96 tenants that are still there. There followed a roll call vote, and the resolution failed 3-32-3-0. Steve Simon offered an alternative resolution which opposed the ULURP. Ms. Morik said that passing a resolution is gratuitous; we can point to having resoundingly rejected a supporting resolution. Ms. Lorris Ritter, Mr. Simon and Mr. Berlin all stated that the Board should go on record as having a position. Councilmember Martinez noted that this isn't about whether the landlords are good guys, or otherwise a reflection on the landlords at all; it's about preserving housing and rent-stabilized units. The resolution passed 32-2-3-0.

Zead Ramadan for Economic Development (9:36pm):

- #1 offering NO OBJECTION to SLA renewal of On-premises Liquor license to 606 Restaurant Inc. d/b/a Mi Pequeña España, passed 34-2-1-0.
- #2 offering NO OBJECTION to SLA renewal of On-premises Liquor license to El Corralon, passed 34-3-1-0.
- #3 OBJECTING to SLA renewal of On-premises Liquor license to Broadway Café & Sports Lounge d/b/a Tinto Restaurant. A suggested addition by Tony Lopez of a "Whereas" clause, "This establishment has cooperated with Community Board 12, Manhattan and its neighbors and has made the necessary changes to become a better neighbor; and" was accepted as friendly, as was the change in the "Be it Resolved" clause from "OBJECTS" to "HAS NO OBJECTION." The resolution passed 30-6-1-0.
- #4 offering NO OBJECTION to SLA renewal of Restaurant Wine license to La Terraza (3881 Broadway), passed 33-3-1-0.
- #5 offering NO OBJECTION to SLA renewal of Restaurant Wine license to Estufa (5025-5035 Broadway), passed 34-2-1-0.
- #6 offering NO OBJECTION to SLA renewal of Restaurant Wine license to 1446 Crystal (1446 St. Nicholas), passed 34-2-1-0.
- #7 offering NO OBJECTION to SLA renewal of Restaurant Wine license to La Fiesta (3979 Broadway), passed 33-3-1-0.
- #8 offering NO OBJECTION to SLA renewal of Restaurant Wine license to 4931 Capitol Restaurant (4933 Broadway), passed 34-2-1-0.
- #9 OBJECTING to SLA renewal of Restaurant Wine license to Galicia restaurant (1506 St. Nicholas Ave.), passed 36-0-1-0.
- #10 offering NO OBJECTION to SLA renewal of Catering Establishment license to Seaman Cassandra (4020A 10th Ave.) passed 31-5-1-0. There was some discussion as to whether the business is complying with the restriction to only hold private events, with Martin Collins noting that it is advertising events via flyers throughout the neighborhood, therefore they are not private events. Dora Maria Abreu noted that if the flyers give a number to call and one must make a reservation in advance, then it still could be considered a private event. The Chair stated that any flyers making it sound like a public event should be brought to the attention of 311 as well as the Board office, so the staff can appeal to SLA to enforce this provision.
- #11 offering NO OBJECTION to SLA granting new On-premises Liquor license to El Conde Steakhouse (4311 Broadway), passed 33-3-1-0.
- #12 offering NO OBJECTION to SLA granting new On-premises Liquor license to 202 Umbrella Inc. (440 W 202 St.), passed 19-13-5-0.
- #13 offering NO OBJECTION to SLA granting new On-premises Liquor license to Element Restaurant Group (854 W 181 St.), passed 32-4-1-0.

- #14 STRONGLY OBJECTING to the SLA granting new on-premise liquor license to Cisco Lounge (4130 Broadway), passed 36-0-1-0.

Mr. Ramadan announced that there would be a full agenda of applications at the May meeting as well. It was suggested that in the future, separate resolutions be written for each item to avoid confusion during the roll call if a Board member wishes to support some applications but not others within an aggregated resolution.

Cheryl Pahaham for Housing & Human Services (10:29pm): Introduced a resolution calling on tax reform in New York State to increase equity, passed 30-0-3-0 after a brief discussion.

Sybil Dodson for Aging (10:35pm): refer to minutes. Dr. Shaw is guest speaker at next committee meeting, heading up a study, a real initiative in this community to study the rise of new HIV cases in adults over 50.

Emilia Cardona for Public Safety (10:37pm): gave details on survey questions; refer to minutes.

Elizabeth Lorris Ritter for Parks & Cultural Affairs (10:38pm): Please refer to minutes. Of particular note, it looks as if the Juan Bosch Foundation will be able to find an acceptable alternative venue for honorific co-naming. This was really a successful collaboration among CBOs, residents, the Parks Department and the Community Board. ADAVAte will be having an exhibit here next month; CU has been supportive of a gallery curated by NoMAA. Our next meeting will pursue final proposals for the 155th "Sugar Hill" triangle and a park co-naming for Juan Bosch, as well as waterfront access issues on the Harlem and Hudson and public programming outreach.

Steve Simon for Health & Environment (10:40pm): May meeting will be held off-site at NY-Presbyterian Hospital Ambulatory Care Network (ACN) practice at 4781 Broadway; will be reviewing services provided to the community and following up on previous CB 12 resolution opposing the closing of the Nagle Avenue site to see whether its patients were retained by the ACN. Also invited new board members to join his committee.

George Espinal for Youth & Education (10:42): refer to minutes

Reports of Representatives of Elected Officials (10:43pm)

Frank Hess for NYS Assemblymember Herman "Denny" Farrell referred to written reports. He also made announcements on behalf of the various electeds' representatives who didn't stay to the end of the meeting.

Rafael Escaño for NYC Comptroller William Thompson: Welcomed new members. Urged us to change the speaking order for elected reps as they come to address the public, not just the Board, and by the end of the meeting the public (and much of the Board, even) has gone.

Wendy Olivo for Councilmember Robert Jackson: Echoed Mr. Escaño's comments.

Mr. Berlin made a **motion to adjourn** (10:48pm); there were multiple seconds, and the motion passed without objection.

Respectfully submitted, Elizabeth Lorris Ritter, Secretary

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Elizabeth Lorris Ritter, Chair; Jennifer Araujo; Francisco Guzmán

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Emilia Cardona (exc.); Inés Saldaña Olsen (No other CB12 members or staff present.)

GUESTS: Odessa Starke, President, 150-155 Edgecombe Block Assn.; Paimaan Lodhi, MBPO; Laura Gabby, CLIMB; Jacob Morris, Harlem Historical Society; Jennifer Hoppa, NYC DPR, Yekaterina Gluzberg, NYC Partnership for Parks; Santos Acevedo, Damaris Aybar & Ana Luisa Martinez, Juan Bosch Foundation; Tracy Eberhardt, Harlem River Boat Club; Joe Wojak, Virginia Annibale & Joe Butasek, Inwood Canoe Club; Dawson Smith, NYC Mountain & Trail Bikers; Professor Apolinar Mesa; Miguel Martinez, NYC Council 10th District; Rafael Escaño, Nelson Castro. <There were additional attendees, but not everyone signed in.>

The meeting was called to order at 7:35 by the Chair, Elizabeth Lorris Ritter, who gave brief updates:

- Two recent fires in **Fort Washington Park**, which appear to have been set by a homeless man who since has been caught by the Police. NYPD Outreach program is getting involved to get homeless people help who reside in the park.
- There are no leads in the recent episodes of “**arboricide**” in **Inwood Hill Park**, wherein several dozen trees were cut down. These appear to be acts of vandalism, not theft, as the trees were not removed.
- **Dyckman Café & Marina RFPs** - no news to update. The City will have a public hearing once the awardee(s) is(are) announced, likely sometime in May. At that point anyone objecting to the awardee(s) would be able to give testimony. Pending the outcome of that hearing, the new awardee(s) will be called to meet with CB12 for public input on the concession(s).
- **CB12 Gallery update:** Liz met with Executive Director of NoMMA, Sandra Garcia Betancourt, and CU Government Affairs VP, Sandra Harris (CU is CB12's landlord) to discuss legal and operational issues regarding use of CB12 as a gallery. Columbia University was very supportive. NoMMA will put up display related to the Art Stroll in June. The UVDA (which is being renamed “Association of Dominican-American Visual Artists” or ADAVArte) will not be display here in May as initially proposed due to short lead-time. *[Note: ADAVArte later was able to organize an exhibition, which opened May 2nd.]*
- **J. Hood Wright Park retaining wall** project is stalled because of trees that are on top of the retaining wall which is to be repaired. Nine trees will be removed; thirteen trees have been planted in other spots throughout the park. They cannot be restored to the exact location as the roots will interfere with the new retaining wall.

Presentation by the Juan Bosch Foundation regarding renaming of the Highbridge Park “Library Lawn” triangle at 155th St. & Edgecombe Avenue. Professor Apolinar Mesa gave historical background on Professor Bosch who is considered a scholar, writer, historian, politician and more. He was the first democratically-elected President in 1962 following the assassination of Dictator Rafael Trujillo. During seven months in power, Mr. Bosch maintained full civil liberties for the country for the first time. As the leader of Trujillo-era exiles, Bosch founded of the Dominican Revolutionary Party (PRD) in 1939, and later the opposition Dominican Liberation Party (PLD), in 1973. He published more than fifty books in several genres, many of which still are used in schools throughout Latin America; novelist Gabriel García Márquez called Bosch one of his greatest influences. The Foundation believes that naming the triangle after Bosch not only would help promote this history but also increase tourism to the area. They would like to something in time for Bosch's centennial next year, and shared drawings for proposed public sculpture to be installed.

The Chair asked if other sites were considered, and, if so, why this was deemed best. A: it is a historical site in the heart of the community, with high visibility for people travelling within and through the area. Francisco Guzman asked how the group plans to attract tourism. A: A brochure will be created. We will work with the City and though the media to advertise, and do promotions and programming in local schools. The Chair stated that even with their world-class collection of Goyas and other Masters, the Hispanic Society Museum only generates about 10,000 visitors per year; why will people frequent a park named for Juan Bosch? Rafael Escaño stated that the man is a contemporary figure who well represents the country. Jennifer Hoppa from the Parks Department stated that other sites proposed already are named for others.

Additional suggestions were made, including the playground at Edgecombe & 158th Street; the new street end parks in Inwood at 202nd, 203rd, 204th, 205th and 206th Streets; and the Greenstreet at 171st & Amsterdam Ave. Mr. Guzman stated that both organizations had good reasons and ideas for functional use but which one will be able to sustain use? Ms. Hoppa observed that a statue or structure placed within a named park will always provide content for the community, but that co-namings are not always a good idea as group tends to get overlooked eventually.

Jacob Morris of the Harlem Historical Society spoke about the proposed "Sugar Hill Luminaries Unity" naming for this location which has been discussed at length in this committee at previous meetings, noting that unlike the Juan Bosch naming, which could go anywhere – and definitely should go somewhere – within CB12, the Sugar Hill honorific is tied to the 155th Street location, resting as it does on the actual Sugar Hill, and bridging the two Community Boards (9 & 12) which share this history. Several area tenant groups and the Friends of Sugar Hill also spoke in support of this proposal; they intend to start a conservancy and fundraise to support programming and improvements (benches, planting, etc.) to the site. It was suggested perhaps to combine both names at the single site, but this ultimately was rejected by both parties as impractical and unwieldy. It variously was observed that the 155th Street site was a good idea for the Juan Bosch naming as it is the southern boarder of Washington Heights, and that the 202nd-206th Street ends were good for the same reason, i.e., near CB12's northern perimeter.

Ultimately it was agreed that the Sugar Hill nomenclature was more site-specific. The Juan Bosch Foundation stated their openness to alternative suggestions so that both proposals could be implemented. The Chair agreed to work with the Parks Department and representatives of the Juan Bosch Foundation, and report back at the next Committee meeting.

Announcements:

- The Inwood Canoe Club announced a season open-house on May 25th at 10am.
- Ms. Hoppa stated that the City council allocated monies for pruning of all the new trees.
- Highbridge Mountain biking announced a then-upcoming event.

The meeting **adjourned** at 9:30pm.

Minutes taken by Jennifer Araújo, typed by Paola Garcia, and edited by Elizabeth Lorris Ritter

Traffic & Transportation Committee Minutes

April 7, 2008

Committee Members Present

Mark Levine, Chair
Anita Barberis
James Berlin
Dr. James Freeman
Edith Prentiss
Rolando Cespedes

Committee Members Excused

C.B. 12 Members Present

Richard Allman

Guests:

Regina Gradess – Resident, Debbie Foster – Resident, Lars Klove – Resident, John Orzeck- NYC DOT, Marcus Book – NYCT Government Relations, Raisa Gonzalez – Student at Columbia University, Carol Blagman – Resident, Ruben Vargas – Resident, Flora Huang – Resident.

At 7:12pm, Chair Mark Levine welcomed the guests and community to the Traffic & Transportation Committee meeting and had the Committee members introduce themselves. Chair commented on the status of "Congestion Pricing" vote in Albany as not quite dead.

- Two residents (Regina Gradess & Debbie Foster) of 99 Hillside Ave. submitted a petition requesting a speed hump or traffic reducer between Ellwood & Sickles Streets to slow vehicular traffic down. With many seniors in the area, vehicles do not adhere to traffic signs that permit pedestrian traffic to traverse, as they do not full stop at the Stop sign. Josh Orzeck, our DOT liaison, stated certain warrants are required to install a traffic reducer and among them are geometry of the street- length and width of block, incline and speed of vehicles, etc. DOT would do a study, which would take 6-8 weeks, if the Board would put the request in writing. However, as Jim Berlin suggested, this is an enforcement issue and should be brought to the attention of the 34th Police Precinct.
- Marcus Book, NYCT Gov. Relations, addressed the subject of maintenance of subway elevators, etc. He stated that there are monthly, quarterly and annual inspections of all the elevators, which operate 24/7. He summarized the new elevators replaced in our community. In 2002 at \$30.5K NYCT installed new elevators at: 168th St. – 4 on #1 line, 181st St -4 on #1 line & 1 on A line, 191st St.- 2 on #1 line and in 2005 at \$72K= 190th St-4 on A line, 191st St.-2 on #1 line & 181st St- 1 on A line with no new elevators currently in the pipeline. He further cited the down times of various elevators in our community ranging from minutes to hours.

Discussion ensued with reference to maintenance being pro-active. Properly staffed elevators could react faster to situations as well as the cleanliness (graffiti, etc), while ensuring the safety of community members. If these are state of the art new elevators,

inventory of parts should be available quickly. Also the intercoms in the booths should be tested to ensure they are operating, particularly concerning ADA elevators.

We requested what maintenance entails whether it is monthly, quarterly or annually and further supervisory structure should work properly.

Commended MTA for the shuttle busses at 168th St to carry passengers to points north in our community due to work being done on the subways over the past three weekends. This opened further comments about the inefficiency of Dispatchers to ensure that the engines of these busses were not idling as well as also designating appropriate busses to Ft. Washington Ave (#4 replacement) on a timely basis, as well as those traversing Broadway.

- Improved signage at 155th St and Riverside Drive. The signage at this location is confusing and should be made clearer and larger with better directions. Josh Orzeck will bring this to the Highway Design group upon receiving a letter from the Board requesting this issue be reviewed with recommended resolutions.
- Status of other DOT issues:
 - Dyckman/Broadway Traffic Study- Lights have been bagged for southbound onto Dyckman. Will restore parking, but meters have to be installed. The balance of concerns are still in study stage.
 - Repaving of Amsterdam between 181-183 Streets – Request to address problem area. DOT will do a street assessment. Usually each community has allotted about 10 blocks for milling down surfaces that we should review and prioritize.
 - Meeting on April 10 at CB#12 re sharing community input with DOT to mitigate the congested traffic on 181st Street in our community
- Other concerns: Carol Blagman of 1380 Riverside Tenants stated that the ramp is open to the parkway; however there is new yellow stripping designating two-way traffic in front of her building-when did this happen? When are parking spaces to be restored? Maintenance of the area is not DOS, but is the responsibility of the contractor, who is? Blinking lights on other side of bridge walkway are manually operated, hard to access and not timely enough to cross
- Queried Josh Orzeck, as what kind of new initiatives is DOT doing?
 - Plaza programs – increasing public space
 - Widening sidewalks – green space
 - Bicycle paths

Meeting adjourned: 8:55pm

Minutes respectfully submitted by: Anita Barberis

Public Safety Committee Meeting Minutes
April 2, 2008

Committee Member

Emilia Cardona, Chair
Francisco Guzman
Jennifer Araujo

Committee Absentees

Aidee Camacho
Dr. Joyce Humber-Faison
Dr. James Freeman
Julissa Gomez
Rolando Rodriguez
George Espinal

Board Members Present

Staff Attending: Adolfo Cuevas, Community Service Aide

Guests:

Clifton Hill/Deputy Director-Project Renewal, Jason Javier/NYU Student, Melissa Gonzalez/NYU student, Ian Fabian-C-Roots, Joselinne Minaya-NYC DA's office

Meeting convened at 7:07pm by Chair, Emilia Cardona

- Meeting called to order 7:15 pm
- Discussion on Public Safety Survey
 - Introduction by Emilia Cardona Committee chair: The purpose of this survey is to ensure that the statistic of the NYPD are reflective of what the community sees.
 - With that said the committee and public members discussed making changes to the survey and cover letter. The following changes where agreed on:
 - Changes to cover letter
 - Changed 2nd paragraph
 - Change "compstat" to "reported crime statistics"
 - Changes to survey
 - Extend question lines
 - Change question 3 to read:
 - *How can your local precinct improve upon the safety and/or quality of life?*
 - Add question 4: check boxes ☒
 - *How safe do you feel in your neighborhood? (1-5, 5 being the safest)*
 - Include the date*
 - Survey distribution/administration
 - Conducted by community member volunteers
 - Set up days and time
 - Go in pairs/teams
 - Clipboard, pens, fliers, surveys
 - Possible locations: target different age groups and gender...
 - Churches
 - PTA meetings
 - Street fairs
 - Schools at dismissal
 - Senior citizens center
 - National Safe Night (end of July)
 - Saturday Michael Buceck

- Collecting information
 - Afternoons from May – August
 - Goal: collect 500 surveys
 - Office closed Sat. and Sun. (pick up on Friday for weekends)
 - hold on to info and return when open
 - tabulate information as it comes into the office.
- Changes to flier
 - Make it more concise, effective, less words,
 - change contact email to: *cb12manhattan@cbnyc.gov*
 - Put on top: *Would you like to have a say in the decisions of your community?*
 - Above bold CB12 title, include: *If so, come participate in:*
 - Move top black box ("Problems ... involved?") above contact info
 - Change paragraph to: *Monthly meetings on the following issues:*
 - Public Safety
 - Economic Development
 - Arts and Cultural affairs
 - Aging
 - Land use
 - Traffic and Transportation
 - Youth and Education
 - Housing
 - Health

Meeting adjourned: 8:40 pm

Transcribed & typed by Francisco Guzman

Economic Development Committee - Minutes
April 1, 2008

Committee Members Present: Zead Ramadan, Chair; Nelson Rojas, Rita McKee, Ruddy Santana, Rafael Osorio

Absent: Tony Lopez (excused),

Board Members Present: George Espinal

Public Members: Javier Flores and Edison Rivera (El Corralon); Tania Colon (Business Solution); Emilio Suarez (202 Umbrella Inc.); Jose Northover (El Conde Steakhouse); Barbara Nunez (1446 Crystal Corp.); James Lee (The Element Restaurant Group Inc.); Daniel Valdez and Ramon Salcedo (Cisco Lounge Corp.); Dawson Smith (NYCMTB); Ligia Fernandez (3920 Broadway); Agustina Guzman (3920 Broadway); John and Elizabeth Cichon (3920 Broadway); Tamara Rivera (200 Dyckman St.); Ruben Dario Vargas (534 W. 178th St.).

Meeting called to order at 7:05 pm.

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and thanked the residents for taking their time to be here. He talked on the important responsibilities that come with attaining an SLA license, such as; respect the community surrounding them by keeping volume down, keeping their establishment clean and safe, and adhering to all SLA requirements. He stated that the committee's role is to try to make sure that businesses considered for any licensing will not adversely affect the community. He also stated that we try to encourage responsible economic development, but when it is discovered that there is an absence of sensitivity to neighbors concerns, SLA requirements are not meant, and/or unsafe conditions are created by establishments. The committee first tries to address the issues and disputes, and if unsuccessful, will strongly recommend to the SLA to retract or not renew licenses for those businesses creating a difficult standard of living for our constituents. Quorum was achieved at 7:20pm and we began reviewing applications.

Renewals:

1. 606 Restaurant Inc. - d/b/a: Mi Pequena Espana, 604A – 606 w. 207th St. (bet Bway & Vermilyea Ave) – On-premises Liquor - EDC 4-0-1, CBM 1-0-0.
- *2. El Corralón Corp. - d/b/a El Corralón bar Rest. -1986 Amsterdam Ave. (bet 158 & 159th Sts.) – On-premises Liquor.
Committee wanted to confirm the 200 foot rule – no problems per DM.
3. La Terraza Rest Inc. -3881 Bway (bet 162nd & 163rd Sts) –Restaurant Wine – EDC 5-0-0, CBM 1-0-0.
4. Estufa Inc. - dba: La Estufa –5025-35 Bway (bet 214th & 215th Sts) –Restaurant Wine – EDC 5-0-0, CBM 1-0-0.
5. 1446 Crystal Restaurant Corp. -1446 St. Nicholas Ave (bet. 182 & 183) –Restaurant Wine – EDC 5-0-0, CBM 1-0-0

6. La Fiesta Corp. - 3797 Broadway (bet Broadway & 158th St) –Restaurant Wine – EDC 5-0-0, CBM 1-0-0

7. Galicia Restaurant Corp. - 1506 St. Nicholas Ave (bet W 182nd & W 183rd Sts.) - EDC 0-5-0, CBM 0-1-0

The committee believed that the intent of the application was to transfer to a new owner pending a sale of the business.

8. 4931 Capital Rest Inc, d/b/a Capital Restaurant - 4933 Broadway (bet. 204th St & 207th St) – Restaurant Wine - EDC 5-0-0, CBM 1-0-0

*9. El Rancho Los Compadros - 110 Sherman Ave (bet. Dyckman St & Academy St.)

The committee wanted to confirm that the business was not acting as a regular restaurant and was in fact a catering establishment- confirmed as per DM 2 visits and questioning.

*10. Seaman Casandra Corp. - 4020-A 10th Ave (bet 214th St. & 215th St.)

The committee had CB12 office moderate a deal between Seaman and a neighbor to avoid a law suit as a condition for our renewal support.

11. Bway Café & Sports Lounge, Inc. - 4710 Broadway (bet Arden St. & Dongan Pl) - EDC 2-2-1, CBM 0-1-0

New Applications:

1. El Conde Steakhouse - 4311 Broadway (SW corner 184th St.) – On Premises Liquor – EDC 5-0-0, CBM 1-0-0

2. 202 Umbrella Inc. - 440 West 202nd St. (bet. 9th Ave & 10th Ave) – On Premises Liquor- EDC 3-2-0, CBM 0-0-1

They understood that previous owners have numerous complaints and were quality of life nuisance to community. New ownership; no more cabaret license; commitment to more food and restaurant service; and responsibility to neighbors than prior owners.

*3. The Element Restaurant Group Inc. – 854 west 181st St. (SE corner of Cabrini Blvd.) – On Premises Liquor.

The committee wanted a letter from the co-op management acknowledging their hours and format of business – it was received and confirmed.

*4. Cisco Lounge Corp. - 4130 Broadway (bet. W 174th St & W 175th St.) – On Premises Liquor – EDC 0-5-0, CBM 0-1-0

They are w/in 200 feet of United Palace – a religious institution.

* Committee position (incl. votes) will be taken once staff due diligence projects are completed, but will be ready for the General Board Meeting and resolution.

CONCERNS FOR THE AGING - MINUTES

April 8, 2008

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Gloria Vanterpool, 2nd Asst. Chair
Ramona Gomez
Nelson Rojas

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

Sybil Dodson-Lucas, Chair

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

PUBLIC MEMBERS

Fern Hertzberg
Diana Hernandez

Staff Member Present: Deborah Blow, Community Coordinator

Guests: Ethel Linder Stoll-Resident, Jim McNiff-Resident, Zamira Setaro-Con Edison, David Currier-Ft. Washington Houses, Norma De Candido-Resident, Loraine Perry-Resident, Wendy Olivo-Councilman Jackson's Office, John Kinney-CPAAA, Marilyn Pacheco-Isabella

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Opened meeting at 10:15am, Introductions of attendees.

Announced presentation of the Eldersmile program 1-4pm tomorrow at Allen Pavilion. All present were reminded not to sign any forms or applications. Review of last month's meeting with the Department for the Aging. The Committee requested that we write letters of thanks from Manny Velazquez and from the CB12 Aging Committee to the attendees of that meeting.

Follow-up at City Hall Thursday at 10:00AM Press Conference. Ask CSCS to come and present. Gloria has presented at Community Board 9 and Community Board 10, to ask for support with advocacy in opposing changes to current provision of services.

David Currier presented Ft. Washington Houses Services for the Elderly: Community Caregiving, a day program for people with memory loss; Ft. Washington Houses Senior Center; Gloria asked for monthly attendee to Community Board 12 Aging Committee from the Advisory Boards at FWHSE. David agreed to preent the request to his agency. David further described the symptoms of dementia and the needed support to families. Community Caregiver is paid for through a sliding scale fee, with a minimum of fifteen dollars per day. Community Care Management is an intensive case management program primarily focused for individuals with no family support, includes home visit. Open Door is a program for seniors, fifty years of age and older, who are developmentally disabled or mentally retarded. General case management department is available to the community. VOLS (Volunteer Legal Services) is present once a month at FWHSE.

Recommended bringing WHICOA directory to the distributed on the table at Community Board 12.

Submitted by Fern Hertzberg
Transcribed by Adolfo Cuevas

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Steve Simon, Isaiah Bing, Helen Morik, Pamela Palanque North

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Martin Collins

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Edith Prentiss

STAFF: Adolfo Cuevas

GUESTS: Andel Nicasio and Elizabeth Siantz -Center for Excellence for Cultural Competence, NYS Psychiatric Institute;
Cecilia Miller and Michael Santiago-Upper Manhattan Mental Health Center

1. S. Simon, chair, called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m.
2. **Cultural Barriers to Health & Mental Health Services in Washington Heights-Inwood** – Andel Nicasio and Elizabeth Siantz, Center for Excellence for Cultural Competence, NYS Psychiatric Institute, gave presentation about the recently created center, which is funded through a \$1M grant from the NYS Office of Mental Health to do a two-year study on integrating health services and creating networks of care "serving racial and linguistic minorities" in Washington Heights-Inwood, Central and West Harlem (Community Boards 9, 10 and 12).
 - Selecting 4-5 organizations in each community – primary care, mental health, social services and faith-based – "to tell us what they tried to decrease fragmentation of care and improve quality of care"
 - In Year 1, focus on physical health needs of mentally ill – people with mental illness on average die 25 years earlier than the general population in NYS, only 17 years earlier nationally (2000-01 statistics)
 - In Year 2, focus on people who don't get mental health services -- will examine different branches of health and human services in community
 - Possible needs of local providers might be for a case manager or bilingual nurse, for example. Center can provide funds on a short-term basis.
 - Will be in touch with providers and consumers and family members. Need advisory board members – meet ever 2-3 monthsA discussion ensued concerning existing service providers in the community. The committee suggested to Ms. Nicasio and Ms. Siantz that they contact the Washington Heights-Inwood Council on Aging, senior centers and other community-based organizations. When they mentioned that they would be visiting botanicas, Mr. Simon asked them if they would check on whether these stores are selling mercury and caution them against doing so, which they agreed to do.
3. **Upper Manhattan Mental Health Center** – Michael Santiago and Cecilia Miller –received grant to provide "concrete" services to seniors over 60 years old – psychiatric evaluations and medication monitoring, group and individual counseling and psychotherapy, supportive services and assistance with applications for home care, SSI, Medicaid, Access-a-Ride, etc., and referrals for medical care. The goal is to find out whether the seniors are getting services - identify, assess and refer clients. The catchment area includes Washington Heights and West Harlem. They try to station outreach workers at senior centers. Major problem is getting clients to overcome stigma of needing mental health services. They encourage isolated seniors to join senior centers. They contact home attendants and meals-on-wheels deliverers to reach homebound.
4. **Old Business – M29 Transmission Line Project** – I. Bing reported that he attended a pre-construction meeting on 3/13 at the Academy substation site with Con Edison representatives, the contractor, a Public Service Commission member and a Dept. of Public Service engineer. They did a walk-through of the site; he observed soil being removed and trucked away under a tight cover. DPS engineer is monitoring hazardous waste removal from the site weekly. Contractors said they will be doing ambient air monitoring. Harry Mayer from DEP also will do air monitoring. Contractors will check for clogs in sewers and catch basins and will report problems to DEP and CB12. A rodent exterminator was hired.
 - A meeting was held on 4/3 at State Senator Eric Schneiderman's office with Mayor's Community Affairs Unit staff to discuss rerouting buses during M29 project. Con Ed is complaining that MTA has no plan.
 - Gave Con Ed a list of 12 businesses severely impacted by project that may have to close because of 4-8 weeks of construction in front of their locations.
 - Construction Task Force meets again on April 23 in Inwood.
5. **Next Meeting:** 5/1 – Presentation by New York-Presbyterian Hospital's Ambulatory Care Network at its Broadway site in Inwood. It was agreed that an NYPH representative would be invited to speak about plans for improving the emergency room and the EMS turnaround issue at the 6/5 meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Steve Simon.

Land Use Committee - Meeting Minutes
April 2, 2008

Committee Members Present

Wayne Benjamin, Chair
Anita Barberis, Asst. Chair
Ines Saldana-Olesen
Rafael Osoria
James Berlin
Isaiah Bing
Vivian Ducat
Ruddy Santana
Dora Maria Abreu

Committee Members Absent

Board Members

Steve Simon
Emilia Cardona

Staffer: Adolpho Cuevas

Guests: Stuart Beckerman, Attorney's for W&S Broadway Property Group LLC, **Residents of 4646 Broadway**; Juana Vidal #35, Eva, Zonet, Teodoro Pichardo #3, Ms. Mejia #6, Leticia Torres #28, Idalia Concepcion #26, Irma Murya #48, Lucila Hernandel #55, Lunilda Munoz #46, Lourdes Cruz #38, Jaqueline Vidal #59, Jose Carrasco #27, Herminia Munoz #29, Jose Urena #5, Sergia Sanchez #25, **Residents of 4640 Broadway**; Norbert Polanco #35, Ana Ramirez #21, Pura Guzman #41, Vilma Tejada #44, Susana Vazquez #51, Rafaela Gonsalves, Theresa Rodriguez #4, Ruben Dario Vargas-534 W. 178th St., **Residents of 4648 Broadway** Hector Carrillo, Maria Lantigua #4, Rosario Pichardo #23, Jesus Acevedo #54, Maria Paulino #22, Magaly Arollo #51

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:15 PM.
2. A public hearing (the "Hearing") was held by the Land Use Committee ("LU" or the "Committee") to consider the ULURP applications (the "Application") submitted by W&S Broadway Property Group LLC ("W&S" or the "Owner") which seeks a zoning amendment to extend by 200 feet along Broadway and 100 feet along Ellwood Street an existing C1-4 commercial zoning overlay in a R7-2 zoning district (the "Rezoning"). The Rezoning would affect 4640 and 4646 Broadway (Block 2172, Lots 30 & 32) (the "Buildings"). The Application indicates that C1-4 and C2-4 commercial zoning overlays presently exist on Sherman Avenue, across the street from the site of the Buildings.

Land Use Chair Wayne Benjamin introduced Stuart Beckerman, legal counsel for W&S, who further introduced representatives for W&S, its managing agent and its architect. In summarizing the ULURP application, Mr. Beckerman noted:

- Current zoning does not permit group floor retail as-of-right
- The proposed rezoning/commercial overlay would affect two buildings owned by W&S 4640 & 4646 Broadway that contain 72 residential units
- There are two existing ground floor stores that pre-date current zoning and therefore are legally existing non-conforming uses.
- The goals of the owners in seeking the rezoning include:
 1. Expand the local commercial retail strip
 2. Enhance the vibrancy of the streetscape

3. Improving security by increasing pedestrian traffic
4. Increase building revenues

- The Rezoning would permit six ground-floor units to be legally converted to retail space, thus increasing the square footage dedicated to retail use from approx. 1,400 to 5,200
- Two of the six units are presently vacant
- Owners do not know what retail is anticipated, space is limited perhaps a bank or mix of local and national retailers – a demand study will be undertaken.
- LU Chair W. Benjamin asked residents what type of retail they would like to see. One tenant's response was no 99-Cent store or Chinese take-out

Daniel Wurblin, one of the principals of W&S added that W&S will not evict any tenant in order to convert the ground floor units to retail. Rather, W&S would:

- Relocate tenants to other units in the Buildings or other properties it owns in the neighborhood at rents similar to rents the tenants are currently paying. He cited that one tenant, a family of four, has already been located from a ground floor 2-bedroom to a second floor 3-bedroom at no increase in rent. A notarized letter from that tenant, Frank Perdomo, confirming this was presented to the Committee for its records.
- Also, any ground-floor tenant who does not wish to relocate is free to stay were they are as these are rent-stabilized units and the law requires tenants be offered lease renewals.
LU member *Jim Berlin* was pleased to hear that W&S will not evict any tenant.
- The Buildings were purchased by W&S in November 2005, are approx. 100 years old and were purchased subject to roughly existing 500 violations.
- Owners installed 16 CCTV cameras that may be viewed by NYPD, under the Trespass Program, and has helped to improve security.

The architect explained that conversion of the ground-floor units to retail will require lead and asbestos abatement work, adjusting the interior floor level to achieve accessible entrance from the street and structural work as required-perhaps replacing the ground floor wood beams with steel.

Residents had a number of questions and requests:

- Would like to have more exterior lights and those that are there repaired so they operate
- Stated that the Buildings shake when the A-train passes underneath and it started when Jewish Memorial Hospital was demolished.
- Impact of ground floor stores on their rents
- Building repairs not done in a timely manner

Owner's responses to the tenants concerns:

- The building lights are being repaired and more will be added
- LU member Obie Bing queried owners as what structural testing had been done; W&S advised that engineer has surveyed the Building and will prioritize repair and upgrade work
- The cost of converting the ground floor to retail space is born by the retail entity that assumes that space and does not impact the rents of the tenants in the

building. It was noted, if there was a Major Capital Improvement (MCI), which is a building-wide improvement like a new roof, under the rent guidelines (both stabilized and rent control) would be passed along to the tenants. CB12-M member *Steve Simon* asked W&S if it would forgo the MCI increases it is permitted related to installing a new roof if rezoning is approved and they agreed.

- The Building Manager, *Edgardo Ortiz*, stated that W&S purchased the Buildings in 2005 with more than 500 violations and he is prioritizing repairs to complete in a timely manner. In fact, the owners have signed agreements with HPD to remove these violations on a tight schedule (within 90 days).
- LU noted that repair and maintenance matters are not the subject of the ULURP application and also are not zoning matters. Property owners are required by law to maintain their properties and tenants have the right and obligation to follow up with the appropriate agencies (HPD, DHCR, etc). However, the LU expressed concerns about these matters and recommended residents contact the appropriate agencies and it would advise CB12-M's District Manager to also follow up on these matters.
- LU member *Anita Barberis* noted that repairs could only be completed in units to which Owners have access.

Councilman Miguel Martinez stated that we should be careful in supporting the conversion of residential units to retail when there is a lack of residential units as it could set a precedent that other owners would seek to follow and did not support this ULURP application. The LU Chair asked Councilman Martinez how this proposed legal conversion of ground floor units compares, for example, with the illegal conversions along Audubon Avenue. The Councilman indicated that the two situations were different; in part the small business would be displaced if the Audubon Avenue locations were required to be converted back to residential. The LU Chair indicated that it appeared that the illegal conversions were being rewarded and allowed to remain while the request for a legal conversion was being held to a different standard and that a request to legally extend an existing commercial overlay is a different request than seeking to create a commercial overlay where none currently exists.

CB-12M member *Emilia Cardona* indicated that the community has become very crowded and we cannot afford to lose residential units for business. *Steve Simon* further stated that six units should not be sacrificed to retail space. LU member *Vivian Ducat* expressed concern about over-commercialization and the loss of quiet residential streets and asked if there was a way rezoning to create a fund where the retail revenue would help pay for repairs in the Buildings. LU member *Dora Abreu* indicated she was familiar with the area and a retail presence would enhance security.

The Committee discussed the concern of over-commercialization and again questioned if the Owners, in seeking to convert legally, were being penalized. It also further discussed concerns related to pedestrian safety in the area, especially at night, and how a retail presence might add more eyes on the street. LU also decided that although the repair and maintenance issues were not related to the ULURP application, it would request that W&S provide the documentation that fully describes the scope of violations and anticipated timeframe for completion. W&S noted that it has entered into voluntary repair agreements with HPD for the Buildings which call for all work to be complete in July 2008; the Committee requested a copy of these agreements [Note: W&S provided the HPD agreements to CB12-M on Thursday, April 3rd. They are dated as of March 26, 2008 and expire on July 17, 2008. The violations on the Buildings date back to the early

1970s]. After further discussion a motion was made (A. Barberis) and seconded (O. Bing) supporting the ULURP application submitted by W&S subject to it providing the requested documents pertaining to the Building's maintenance and repair. The motion was passed based on the following vote.

	<u>For</u>	<u>Against</u>	<u>Abstaining</u>
Committee Members:	6	2	0
Board Members:	0	3	0
Members of the Public:	5	20	0

3. The LU Chair distributed copies of the executive summary recently provided by City College Architecture Center ("CCAC") for the Washington Heights and Inwood Neighborhood Planning and Land Use Study. The Committee was asked to review the summary and to be prepared to comment on it so that the document can be finalized, distributed to the full board and community stakeholders and so that CB12-M can begin to work to implement the recommendation contained in the study. It was indicated that copies of the summary would also be provided to the Executive Committee at its upcoming meeting.

4. The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 PM

Respectfully submitted by: Wayne A. Benjamin and Anita Barberis

HOUSING & HUMAN SERVICES - MINUTES

April 3, 2008

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Cheryl Pahaham, Chair
Glenda Swanson-Massa, Asst. Chair
Edith Prentiss
Kotie Cannon

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

Carole Mulligan
Rolando Rodriguez

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Staff Member Present: Adolfo Cuevas, Community Service Aide

Guests: Emmanuel Ecaicedo, Organizer-Working Families Party

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Chairperson Cheryl Pahaham convened the meeting at 7:10 PM.

Cheryl Pahaham introduced Emmanuel Ecaicedo to the committee members; she had asked him to present on two proposals for tax reform that were intended to increase equity in the tax system and reduce the tax burden for low income earners, but that would also help raise revenues needed to avoid further budget cuts from either the City or State governments. She noted that while the proposals were endorsed by the Working Families Party, the reforms would benefit the majority of households in Community District 12, and had been proposed at other times by other entities, such as the Fiscal Policy Institute. She also explained that Assemblyman Espaillat had sponsored a similar proposal, as part of the current State budget negotiations, to increase the tax rate for high income earners, which was adopted in the Assembly's budget proposal, but was rejected by the Senate.

Emmanuel described two proposals—one would reform the State's personal income tax by raising the rates for income above \$250,000. This change would increase State revenues, but would not create an additional burden for the lowest 20 percent of income earners, who are taxed (including all State and local taxes) at the highest rate. The second proposal, referred to as a circuit breaker, would provide property tax relief to renters and property owners up to a certain income. Property taxes would be limited to a percentage of household income. For renters, the benefit would be based on the renters' household income and the imputed portion of rent that went toward a landlord's property tax.

Some discussion ensued. Glenda Swanson-Massa, the Assistant Chair, noted that the presentation on the circuit breaker proposal was lacking in adequate detail and was unclear; she was concerned that an endorsement of these proposals by the Community Board could constitute partisanship, and asked whether the Housing and Human Services Committee was acting appropriately by considering a resolution endorsing the spirit of these proposals. Edith Prentiss asked whether landlords would also receive a benefit from the circuit breaker proposal and argued that only residential property owners should benefit. Kotie Cannon also noted that the circuit breaker proposal as presented did not describe how landlords would, if at all, benefit from the tax break. Board members continued to discuss these issues and came to an understanding and then agreed to consider and revised a draft resolution submitted by Cheryl Pahaham. An amended resolution recommending that the State Legislature enact reforms that would increase tax equity by reducing the burden on low income households and by raising revenue needed to avoid further service reductions was unanimously adopted. Committee members suggested sending the draft to the Executive Committee so that other chairs could discuss the resolution with their committees prior to the April 2008 general meeting.

Cheryl Pahaham then updated committee members on Community Board correspondence that was to be sent to the South Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation, which would thank the organization for its presentations to Land Use and Housing and Human Services, and welcomed a review of the

organization's actual zoning variance application that would ultimately be submitted to the New York City Board of Standards and Appeals, and would not express any opinion on the project until a public hearing was held.

Committee members discussed meeting topics for May and June. Cheryl suggested that May should be a follow-up meeting on the status of recommendations made in two prior resolutions with the Department of Homeless Services on services at the Fort Washington Men's Shelter and with the Department of Buildings and the Department of Environmental Protection on construction noise. Edith suggested that in May or June, the committee invite a representative to talk about a new adult literacy program for disabled individuals. She promised to schedule this. Kotie and Edith recommended that the committee spend more time on social services, instead of just housing.

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 PM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Cheryl Pahaham, April 7, 2008