

**GENERAL MEETING MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 26, 2002**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

Jacqueline Aristy  
Rev. Lee Arrington  
Anita Barberis  
Abby Belkin  
James Berlin  
Emilia Cardona  
Martin Collins  
Fredericka Cuenca  
Walther G. Delgado  
Sybil R. Dodson

Leslie Foster  
William A. Garcia  
Beatrice Hall  
Herbert Harwitt  
Joyce F. Holland  
Maria Luna  
Elizabeth Lorris Ritter  
Benjamin Mantell  
Manuel J. Mendez  
Helen Morik  
Marcos Navarro

Julio Peguero  
Ron Peterson  
Zead Ramadan  
Steven Rizick  
Nelson Rojas  
Maria Sierra  
Barbara Smith Ramos  
Juan Villar  
Msgr. Gerald Walsh  
Elouise Whitehurst

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT**

J.F. Sanchez Acosta  
Rev. Antonio Almonte  
Rafael Beaumont  
Ronald J. Bothelo (exc.)  
Soledad Hiciano  
Isidor Martinez  
Norma Nadien  
Dr. Pamela Palanque Morth  
William Ortega  
Martha Pepin  
Sandra Wachspress

(7:23) Meeting called to order.

General introduction and welcome by Chair. Adoption of agenda and approval of minutes were deferred, pending quorum.

(7:27) Introduction of Dr. Gerald Fischback, MD, VP and Dean of Columbia University

Came here one year ago from NIH (NINDS). Wants to make Columbia University excel and reach new level of national and international recognition, but can only do this in partnership with the community. CU is completing the third building of HSD research facility, to open in Spring 2004. Created 150 new jobs especially in cancer research. Fourth building proposed for biotech, which will also provide jobs. Described partnerships with New York Presbyterian Hospital for patient care and job growth. Introduced Kevin Kirby, VP, Administration; Ross Fromer, Deputy VP for Gov't Affairs; Ivy Fairchild, Assoc. VP of Gov't & Community Affairs.

Jim Berlin: Happy and encouraged to hear how Dr. Fischback feels the institution should function.

Public Member: anything going on with proposed hotel on 165<sup>th</sup> Street and Ft. Washington Avenue?

A: No plans anymore; this was an old plan, but a hotel still is needed for visiting students, researchers, etc. (A Board member noted for the record that the Empowerment Zone withdrew \$25 million in support since contractor could not get project together.)

Zead Ramadan: what is the timeline for the fourth building?

A: Currently beginning ULURP. Discussing with four different developers. Noted that NYC and NYS are lagging in the biotech industry. NYC is 43<sup>rd</sup> in US, way behind Boston, San Diego and other cities. CPMC is the only place in NYS with space for commercial enterprises and it is important to increase this. Currently there is space for "incubator" companies (which work on ideas in the early stages of formation and research), but more space is needed for larger scale biotech enterprise. Dr. Fishback outlined an 18-month+ process – 2-3 months for ULURP, 2-3 months to negotiate with developers, a year to negotiate with City – before construction can actually begin.

Marcos Navarro: How will community know when jobs are available and what are they?

A: I would like to come back to CB 12 to share this information.

Sybil Dodson: What about research opportunities and involvement of community in IRB and research protocols?

A: Human research has many benefits but also some dangers and it is important to have non-professional community involvement to ensure that research meets needs of community. Again, it is an ongoing partnership.

Quorum was reached at 7:40 PM

(7:40) Motion to adopt agenda by Fredericka Cuenca and seconded by Sybil Dodson: unanimous.

(7:41) Motion to approve minutes by Martin Collins and seconded by Helen Morik: unanimous.

(7:44) **Chairman's Report:** Walther G. Delgado

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- Resignations: George Sanchez; members who have not reapplied for membership; recruit new members (have applications); term limits for Board Members is 10 years.
- Good work for CB 12 Executive Committee Officers and Committees.
- Spoke about common African American heritage and Dominican heritage celebrations on February 27<sup>th</sup>, and his hopes that one day these two important days of pride could be commemorated with one events.
- Mayor's Draft Budget: attempts to close \$4.8 billion gap mostly with service reductions and "revenue enhancements" (i.e., taxes). Cited specific cuts to libraries, police, youth, parks, aging, etc. Some of these cuts will be devastating, but this is just the beginning of the process culminating in adoption of budget by Council in June. Urged Board and Chairs to assess how cuts will affect institutions providing services to their advisory areas, so CB 12 can formulate course of action. Also encouraged Board Members to get informed. This information is available on the web.
- Cuts to CBs themselves have been restored; certain staff promotions and technical upgrades now can go forward.
- Spoke about new census data. Urged the Board to "put the 'P' back into 'Planning'". Gave some illustrations of data regarding gains in housing units and growth including estimated under-counting. Even so, CB12 is the 5<sup>th</sup> most populous community in NYC.
- Unofficial reports from FDNY regarding possible ambulance station at 181<sup>st</sup> street firehouse. Contacted Commissioner Scopetta to find out about community involvement in citing. There was an old plan that had been rejected, and it may have re-surfaced. The Board supports an ambulance station, but not at that location. Matter referred to Transportation & Public Safety committee.
- Follow-up to residential facility for developmentally disabled proposed for 790 RSD, which the Board rejected at its January meeting. PDS appealed to the NYS on 2/22. CB12 presented information on saturation and number of facilities in community, and on whether or not large non-residential facilities (NYSPI, shelter, etc.) should be included in the list of facilities that the New York State Office of Mental Retardation & Developmental Disabilities considers. Only one CB has been upheld on appeal, although many have tried.
- Regarding membership: George Sanchez has resigned, brining membership to 42. Urged members or public members who have time to commit to (re)apply. Noted that there is a discussion at Borough Board as to possibility of term limits for Board members. Noted that term limits cut both ways: they make room for new people, but also deny experience and institutional memory.
- Has been asked by Council Speaker's office to testify at budget hearings.
- Praised committees for their ongoing work.
- Land Use Committee is looking at zoning on Audubon Avenue.

(8:08) **District Manager's Report:** Gregoria Feliciano

- Met with BID Director and DOT to discuss pedestrian trip hazards (tree roots, broken concrete, "Z" bricks, etc.).
- Rat infestation and garbage along Wadsworth Avenue. Working w/ DSNY, and working w/ Dept. of Finance to find building owners.
- 34<sup>th</sup> Precinct investigation reports of increased drug activity at certain locations
- follow-up and additional info regarding renovation of NYFD 13<sup>th</sup> Battalion on 181<sup>st</sup> Street and possible ambulance bay.

- follow-up on activity pursuant to complaint log, especially regarding rat infestation. Increase in complaints
- several FYI items: stepstreet construction at 181<sup>st</sup> Street and Pinehurst; smoke detector give away through FDNY
- Thanks to Captain Hurley (acting CO of 34<sup>th</sup> Pct.) and other members attending from the 33<sup>rd</sup> and 34<sup>th</sup> Precincts for coming.

Q: Ron Peterson: Regarding pedestrian access to 181<sup>st</sup> Street area due to vendors.

A: This is being addressed at the District Service Cabinet as well.

#### (8:18) Public Session

Kathy Fink – Club Isabella: Medical model adult day program. Website: <http://www.geocities.com/isabella.org/index.html>.

Jose Nuñez – Yeshiva University: Free tax assistance for low-income or disabled individuals. Available four Sundays: March 3<sup>rd</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup>; April 8<sup>th</sup> & 14<sup>th</sup>. No advance registration, just bring valid photo ID and past history.

Michael Alvarez, Regional Librarian at Inwood and Representatives from other libraries in our community: Introduced representatives from the branches: Anne Petit, children's librarian at Ft. Washington; Kimberly Harris, adult librarian at Ft. Washington, offering programs in association with Cooper Hewitt; C. Cooper, adult librarian at Washington Heights Library, which has a great collection of English/Spanish books, and offers internet classes; and Helen Bailey Michelle of the Ft. Washington Branch.

Raysa Castillo – Dominican Women's Caucus: Regarding naming of greenstreet at 157<sup>th</sup> Street at Broadway & Morgan Place after Ilka Tanya Payan. Dedication ceremony on 3/1, the beginning of Women's History Month. Community and family are grateful for the honor.

Clifton Poole – State Senator Schneideman's Office: Regarding redistricting – picking up more of Washington Heights, Inwood and West Bronx, but losing much of the Upper West Side. Believes that this is partly punitive: redistricting is a highly political process, which happens largely behind closed doors, and without community input, though there will be public hearings next month. A Board member expressed wish that Senator Schneideman himself attend a Board Meeting.

Sander Dulitz for Councilman Miguel Martinez: the Councilman has introduced legislation regarding tuition increase for undocumented alien being charged out-of-state rate; has called for Congressional hearings regarding flight AA587, and called on the FAA to ground other Airbus planes; denounced cutbacks in the Mayor's budget; is meeting with FDNY regarding proposed ambulance station on 181<sup>st</sup> (which he opposes); and urged public input into Council budget hearings.

Marianna DePaola – Community Resident: Complaints regarding laundry on fire escapes, garbage disposal along community areas in neighborhood. Street vendors are taking away business from stores and lack of fire inspectors and board of health inspectors. (Jim Berlin: asked DM to follow up with FDNY regarding blocked fire escapes, as this is a public safety hazard.)

Carlos Rodriguez for Manhattan Borough President: Reminders regarding board applications.

#### Public Officials Report

Robert Jackson, Councilman, District 7: Preparing for upcoming hearings. Has attended hearings on mayoral control of the Board of Education. Noted Mayoral budget item of \$64 million for youth prison beds, which should be directed to after school programs instead. Urged all to get involved in ways of thinking creatively to bridge budget gaps. Spoke regarding staffing and constituent services at district office.

Q: Ron Peterson: Concerned about proposed demolition of Board of Education. What is impact on local control?

A: spoke of some of the innovative proposals of Brooklyn Borough President, current School Board and City Council Members, pointing out that the issue is in front of NYS, but will likely expand board. Supports community, not mayoral, control of the Board.

Q: Emilia Cardona: spoke in support of cuts after school, not just for academics.

A: supports this, and increased funding for education

Chair officially welcomed Councilman (and Deputy Majority Leader) William Perkins, who briefly addressed the Board, speaking about difficult budget process, and importance of everyone working together. He commended Board for orderliness of our meetings and commended community for electing such an exciting, hardworking leader as Robert Jackson, whom he described as a real asset to the community and the Council.

#### (9:13) Committee Reports

Economic Development Committee – Maria Sierra, Chair: Resolution for liquor license application at 558 West 158<sup>th</sup> Street (same location as 556 West 157) for which community repeatedly has opposed such applications. Applicant has recorded three citations for violations. Assemblyman Farrell has written to NYS Liquor Authority opposing the application.

Emilia Cardona: we've discussed this so many times and the Board is in agreement of this issue.

Sybil Dodson: proposed that CB write to landlord that we are not anti development and would like him to work with us to plan a more appropriate use than something involving a liquor license.

No further discussion. Resolution passed unanimously.

Chair acknowledged presence of Chief Raymond Diaz of Manhattan Borough North (successor to Chief Estavillo, now Citywide Chief of Patrol).

(9:25) Parks & Cultural Affairs – Marcos Navarro, Chair: Gave an update regarding the Harlem Heights Historical Area. Meetings are ongoing and productive; the Committee will present a resolution in March. Committee also is organizing a workshop to form a conservancy for uptown parks.

(9:26) Health & Environment - Sybil R. Dodson, Chair: On March 5<sup>th</sup> the Health & Environment Committee will be discussing IRB – follow-up regarding clinical trials and ongoing research with Washington Heights/Inwood.

#### (9:27) New Business

Maria Luna – spoke about track hall of fame event earlier this evening and upcoming events at the armory. Reminded regarding upcoming 5K Salsa, Shamrocks and Blues race.

Elizabeth Lorris Ritter requested that the armory be asked not to hold this event on night of CB 12 meeting.

Frank Hess spoke about special wrenches and water shortage due to open hydrants. Can NYPD get the special wrenches to close the hydrants.

(9:31) Anita Barberis motioned to adjourn; there were multiple seconds.

Respectfully submitted by: Elizabeth Lorris Ritter, Secretary

**PARKS & CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MINUTES  
FEBRUARY 5, 2002**

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT**

Marcos Navarro, Chair  
Abby Belkin  
Emilia Cardona  
Elizabeth Lorris Ritter

**CB 12 MEMBERS ATTENDING**

Jim Berlin  
Steven Rizick

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT**

J.F. Sanchez Acosta

**PUBLIC MEMBERS ATTENDING**

Susan Razavi

**GUESTS**

Ellen Macnow, NYC Dept. of Parks & Recreation  
Liam Kavanagh, Acting Borough Commissioner, NYC DPR  
Savona Bailey McClain, West Harlem Art Fund

**Deborah Blow, Comm. Service Aide**

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The meeting convened at 7:15 PM

Elizabeth Lorris Ritter chaired the meeting at the suggestion of Marcos Navarro.

1. Presentation by Liam Cavanagh of the NYC Dept. of Parks & Recreation on proposed Parks Conservancy for CB 12. Abby Belkin informed about prior discussions of the CB 12 Parks Committee about this issue. Mr. Cavanagh went over the type of conservancies in existence, ea. Central Park Conservancy, East Village Park Conservancy. He further explained how each conservancy reflects the need and resources of each community; that they are sources of funding, volunteers and capital projects for the parks, and need to eventually function as not-for-profit community based organizations. He also suggested that Partnership for Parks will be able to help our efforts to start a parks conservancy in CB 12.

Questions were raised about the definition of conservancy, which group or groups in CB 12 might be willing to take up this effort and the funds available in our community.

James Berlin suggested that the Parks & Cultural Affairs committee organize a conference with the various CBO's of CB 12 on this issue. The committee decided to have said conference in April 2 or 9 (to be determined at the Executive Committee meeting on 2-12-02) and Abby Belkin will get in touch with the Partnership for Parks for the information needed to organize this conference at the Committee's March 2002 meeting.

2. Ellen Macnow of NYC Dept. of Parks & Recreation, Hudson River Trail. Ms. Macnow gave out maps of proposed routes of the Hudson River Trail in Inwood Hill Park. Elizabeth Lorris Ritter summarized position of CB 12 on this, in particular CB 12's long standing opposition of bicycling in this park. Concerns were raised about keeping bicycles off the paths not allowed for bicycles. Ms. Macnow stated that there will be fences and signs for this.

Suggestions were made to organize a tour of this path, weather permitting, so that CB 12 members could see first hand the condition of this path. Ms. Macnow also offered to present slides of this route at the 2/26/02 general meeting.

Finally the prior resolution on this project was amended and approved by the committee with 4 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstain from committee members, 1 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstain from CB 12 Public Members and 1 in favor, 0 opposed, 0 abstain from members of the public.

This resolution will be presented at the general meeting of 2/26/02.

3. Savona Bailey McClain, West Harlem Heritage Area. Elizabeth Lorris Ritter explained main objections to the resolution presented on this issue at the 12/01 CB 12 general meeting, mainly the naming of this area.

Ms. McClain went over the historical aspects of this plan, its themes and area encompassed. She also clarified how each neighborhood within this area will be mentioned and its historical backgrounds, heritages and areas of interests will be highlighted. The committee decided to discuss this resolution at the 3/02 committee meeting to be presented to the general meeting of the same month.

4. Old Business: follow up with Ilka Tanya Payan group on naming of square, and Police Precinct 33<sup>rd</sup> on food truck at 161<sup>st</sup> Street and St. Nicholas Avenue parked by "No Standing" sign. It was clarified that this establishment has the needed parks permit and is keeping its area clean.
5. New Business: Susan Razavi stated that Artists Unite had a well attended meeting at the Nagle Avenue Young Men's & Young Women's Hebrew Assoc. to promote the arts in the community. The next meeting will be on 2/12/02 at the same place.

Announcements:

Elizabeth Lorris Ritter announced the following activities:

- ❑ Nurture Art exhibitions from 2/8/02 to 3/8/02
- ❑ Cornerstone Concert on Early Music on 2/10/02 at 3PM
- ❑ Pied Pipers theatre production for teens 2/9/02 at Holy Trinity Church.
- ❑ The Parks Council and parks 2000 are merging and will come to CB 12 to discuss their plans.

Savona Bailey McClain announced an exhibition on Harvey Hampton on 2/15/02 6:30 to 8:30 PM

Meeting adjourned at 9:20 PM

Respectfully submitted by: Marcos Navarro