

**Community Board 12, Manhattan General Meeting Minutes
February 22, 2005 (Hammer Health Sciences Building)**

Members Present:

Dora Maria Abreu	Martin Collins
Jackie Rowe Adams	Sybil Dodson-Lucas
Mason Almeida	Peter Ferrara
Jacqueline Aristy	Leslie Foster
Anita Barberis	Beatrice Hall
Wayne Benjamin	Mark Levine
James Berlin	Jay D. Mazur
Aidee Camacho	Renato Mena
Kotie Cannon	Dr. Pamela Palanque-North
Emilia G. Cardona	

Members Excused

Luis Facundo
Elizabeth Lorris Ritter
Maria Luna
Glenda Swanson Massa
Helen Morik
Milagros Vicente

Members Absent

Dr. Emmanuel Barrientos
Rafael Beaumont
Fern Hertzberg
Joyce F. Holland
Jose Lopez
Nelson Rojas
Llewellyn Seaborn
Bienvenido Toribio
Bishop Gerald Walsh

7:30pm: **Quorum & Call to Order.**

7:30pm: Motion by Sybil Dodson-Lucas to **adopt the agenda**; seconded by Emilia Cardona. No objection. Minutes of January meeting are not available.

7:26pm: **Chair's Report:** Martin Collins: see attached for complete report; particular mention is made of the following items:

- Over 400 people attended the rededication of the Audubon Ballroom last night. Grand Opening for the Malcolm X and Dr. Betty Shabazz Memorial Education Center is scheduled for May 19th, on what would have been Malcolm X's 80th birthday.
- Sherman Creek inter-agency task force discussed publishing a newsletter that will highlight short and long-term goals, should be completed in March.
- The Department of Education has moved the scheduled completion of the Bishop Dubois site 7 months later, from September 2006 to April 2007
- The scheduled completion for Gregorio Luperon's proposed new home at 530-534 West 215th Street is July 2008. (Sybil Dodson-Lucas expressed her opposition to the proposed location of the Gregorio Luperon School at West 215th Street & Park Terrace West.)

7:37pm: **CBO Presentation by the Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation (NMIC):** Andrea Vaghy, (Director, Workforce Development) Provide job training to adults in Washington Heights-Inwood and citywide. Works with public assistance recipients, individuals with limited English proficiency, providing resume assistance, computer learning center, 3-hour ESL classes, adult education pre-G.E.D., citizenship classes, building maintenance program. The workforce development program places participants in about 500 jobs yearly. Jobs from entry-level home health aides, maintenance workers, office assistants, porters etc. Open 9am to 5pm, Monday through Friday, services are free. Just walk in. No appointment needed. They assist getting families' health insurance. They run a free tax preparation program for individuals who earn under \$20,000 a year and families with dependent children earning under \$40,000 a year. Since January, they have done about over 1,100 returns. Last year they completed over 1,800 returns and brought back \$2.9 million back to the community in tax returns and tax credits. All programs are free of charge. **QUESTIONS:** Emilia Cardona: Do you provide opportunity for the participants to become members of the local union? A: Unions have their own people, but we try. Julio Peguero: When are classes? A: Three-hour classes are offered Monday through Thursday 9am to 9pm. Saturday classes are also available.

7:46pm: **Public Speakers' Session**

Wendy Brennan, Associate Director for Metro NYC (National Alliance for the Mentally Ill) (NAMI): Spoke about NAMI's program and services. They are a support, education and advocacy organization with offices in all 50 states. NAMI NYC Metro is the largest affiliate in the country. All of their programs are free of charge and are peer-led. They have over 20 support groups for mental health consumers and their families. Spoke specifically about 2 programs that are geared for parents with children or adolescents in the mental health system. (1) Have a peer-led program that provides support for people who need to find other people with similar issues. They have a helpline for Spanish-speaking parents who cannot get out during the day with their children, open from 5pm to 7pm every weekday. (2) The parent matching system. They match parents with children in the mental health systems and the education system. Helpline number is 212-684-3264

Jean Bonnes, Community Resident: spoke regarding parks clean-up along the walkway from Haven Avenue to the Hudson River, at 177th Street. Had a successful clean-up event in October, but there is more work to be done. If interested in volunteering, please call her at (212) 674-5121. Ms. Cardona invited her to attend the next Parks/Cultural Affairs Committee, on March 1st; noted that Port Authority of NY&NJ representatives also were invited.

Lynn Opinate, NYC Public Library (W.H. Branch): Usually have programs for children and young adults on Fridays, Thursdays at 4pm. Please spread the word. Phone number is 212-923-6054. The branch is located at 1000 St. Nicholas Ave @ West 160th Street.

Edward Schoelwer, Lotus Music & Dance (Drums along the Hudson): Will be held May 1st, 2005 from 11am to 6 pm in Inwood Hill Park. Washington Heights-Inwood Development Corporation will be a partner in this event. A couple of people will be honored this year. There will be drumming, tree planting ceremony, numerous demonstrations, guided tours of the park. Native American crafts and art will be on sale and food from all nations. In response to a question from Sybil Dodson-Lucas, he noted that a tree will be planted in honor of Homer Young Kennedy III.

Seth Andrew, Teacher/Executive Director, Democracy Prep School: Looking to create 6-12 grade school in Northern Manhattan. Application is going in sometime in June. Purpose for this school is to provide a rigorous college preparatory alternative choice for parents. Looking for support and parents who will want to send their children to this school. Seeking additional members for advisory board and governing board. Will be at the next Education Committee meeting to give a presentation. **QUESTIONS:** Martin Collins: Will you open this fall or fall of 2006? A: Fall of 2006, there will be a year-and-a-half of planning before we open our doors. Cleofis C. Sarete: Where are you holding your meetings? A: Currently meeting at CPMC, CB10M and other locations. Aidee Camacho: You mentioned for grades 6-12; how many students? A: starting with 130 students, and growing, though capped at fewer than 100/grade.

Beatrice Hall, representing 157-10 Riverside Drive West: Brought some members of her building's co-op board to speak in opposition to the proposal of having two new units for developmentally disabled individuals run by Edwin Gould Services in their building.

Angel Vera, NYC Participation Project: spoke regarding supporting the rights of immigrants to obtain a driver's license. Currently DMV suspends the licenses of those who are unable to provide a social security number. A rally will be held at Our Lady Queen of Martyrs on March 6th at 12:30pm.

Obed Fulcar, Teacher at JHS 143M: Gave an update of the Sherman Creek Environment Project. There is a piece of wetland that needs to be preserved. The Army Corps of Engineers has pledged to preserve the area. Announced a boat-building program at Sherman Creek on March 12th, 2p-4p. Starting in September, a two-year pilot program will start to educate the students in environmental conservation. Will propose the creation of an Environmental Education Center at Sherman Creek.

Mike Fitelson, Manhattan Times: Announced that the Manhattan Times will be publishing its five-year anniversary issue this Friday. Page Thirteen will have the new "Eating & Entertainment/E&E Tuesday night" feature. Looking for establishments and artists to participate in this event.

Bob Issac, Community Resident: Spoke about the bike riding in the sidewalk. Lincoln Square BID put out a bike riding pamphlet/fact sheet. Wants CB12M to do the same.

Jay Mazur, Northern Manhattan Neighbors for Peace & Justice: Open invitation to talk on March 12th at the A.M.E Church on Amsterdam Ave and West 152nd Street. Congressman Rangel will be giving a presentation on the Iraq war.

Betty Long, NYS Nursing Association: Currently in negotiation with NYPH administration regarding the low staffing levels at the hospital. Possible picketing session in the near future. Looking for community support in this matter. Contract expired on December 31st, 2004. QUESTION: Wayne Benjamin: Can you tell us where the lack of nurse staffing is more critical than others? A: In all areas.

8:25pm: **Elected Officials' Reports:**

Lilliam Perez, for NYS Senator Eric Schneiderman: noted upcoming neighborhood event.

Roxanne Dodds for Manhattan Borough President C. Virginia Fields:

- Congratulated the Search Committee and the Board on the hiring of Renée Tirado as district manager.
- Rat situation: Health department reps, MTA reps met and the MTA immediately did some abatement at 163rd St. subway station.
- Spoke about the Lunar New Year Celebration; Dominican Independence celebration.
- Borough President's office is submitting a grant application to the Port Authority for CB12's C.E.R.T Team

Frank Hess, for Assemblyman Herman D. Farrell: Noted that the Assembly is on recess; spoke briefly about the budget. QUESTIONS: Martin Collins: What is the status on the lease of the VIM drugstore on Broadway near West 159 Street, and the newsstand on West 157th Street? A: Apple Bank owns the property and the drugstore has a month-to-month lease. The Assemblyman's office is working on the issue regarding the newsstand.

Joe McNearney, for Councilman Robert Jackson: Flyers on information table. Thanked Youth & Education Committee Chair Milagros Vicente and CB12 for outreach efforts in bringing residents to 2/16/05 meeting with Speaker Miller on the Campaign for Fiscal Equity issue. Please log on to www.ourkidscantwait.org for information and on-line petition to the Governor. Noted that the Council is working on responding to the Mayor's solid waste plan, which calls for four marine transfer stations, which will be used to transport garbage from trucks onto barges for shipment to out-of-state disposal facilities. QUESTION: Steve Simon: Under this plan, all the garbage picked up from districts 9, 10 & 12 will run through Washington Heights and onto the George Washington Bridge. Is this an issue the Council is evaluating? A: This is one of the main issues. Councilman Jackson appreciates that the new plan does not call for the reopening of the transfer station on 135th Street; he is opposed to this, as well as the opening of the E 91st Street transfer station.

Rafael Escaño, for Comptroller William Thompson: The construction site on West 174th street should be covered with a fence or plywood. It is an open construction site now. Mr. Collins will follow up.

Jocelyn Minaya, for Manhattan District Attorney Robert Morgenthau: Invited everyone to a forum on identity theft sponsored by the D.A.'s Office and Chief Diaz PBMN. 2005 summer internship program at the D.A.'s office. Resumes should be in no later than April 8th. Looking to get as many children from this neighborhood. QUESTION: Wayne Benjamin: Does this require an essay as to why the person is interested in law or government? A: Yes. It is one of the requirements, and I am willing to help them. They also must live in Manhattan.

Committee Reports:

Executive Committee: Martin Collins, Chair, introduced Jackie Aristy, Chair of Housing & Human Services Committee, to present a resolution opposing the establishment of two community residences for mentally & developmentally challenged adults at 157-10 Riverside Drive West. Ms. Aristy explained that the shareholders and board of directors of the River Terrace coop voted 64-2 to oppose the Edwin Gould Services for Children and Families proposal for an alternative community residence program at 157-10 Riverside Drive West, given decades of apparently unresolved complaints involving noise, vandalism, loitering, drug use and sexual activity in the public areas of the building and theft enabled by the lack of proper staff supervision and other poor management practices. CB12M urges the New York State Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities and the Office of Family and Children's Services to improve their procedures under the State's Padavan Law, including the sponsoring agency's notification requirements and the State's collection of information on the total number of federal, state, city and privately sponsored mental health and related facilities and programs located within a given community district. The resolution passed unanimously (26 votes).

Land Use (Wayne Benjamin): CB 9 submitted 197A plan to City Planning, best plan so far; CB10 submitted revised plan. Documents in package to review/comment by next meeting (3/4), including an advertisement for similar services as what Ethel Sheffer did for CB12 on Audubon/Amsterdam Aves. study. QUESTION: Ms. Dodson-Lucas: Where is funding coming from? A: There is a budget surplus because we didn't have a DM; we must use the money by the end of the fiscal year. We can allocate some of our funds & request the MBPO to provide additional money.

Parks & Cultural Affairs (Emilia Cardona for Zead Ramadan): Planning for Art Stroll on June 18-19 is underway. Contact Mike Fitelson. Next meeting is March 1st.

Ageing (Sybil Dodson-Lucas): Public health education with Dr. Pamela Palanque-North (Public Safety), discussed sexually transmitted diseases & the impact on the elderly. Shared pros & cons of new programs for senior roommates. More study necessary. (See committee minutes.) Investigate and outreach to the Hispanic community re: crisis affecting the elderly.

Traffic & Transportation (Aidee Camacho): Representatives from Transit Workers Union Local 100 attended, regarding the increased number of assaults (allegedly) against drivers on M101 bus. Committee requested more information & investigation to determine accuracy. Police Officer Steve McManus spoke regarding safety school zoning; will follow-up. Ms. Dodson-Lucas commended Ms. Camacho on the job well done in running the T&T Committee. Also asked if the Committee was aware of the motor vehicle fatality @ West 218th street & Broadway this week? A: Dago Suarez made the committee aware.

Health & Environment (Steve Simon): Please read committee minutes.

Public Safety (Dr. Pamela Palanque-North): Joint meeting with Traffic and Transportation Committee re: bus drivers' complaints. Will meet with the Civilian Complaint Review Board at next month's committee meeting. Will be discussing the number of residents filing complaints in northern Manhattan, whether they have decreased or increased. C.E.R.T meeting will be February 28th, @ 7:00pm., weather permitting.

Economic Development (Mason Almieda for Julio Peguero): Reviewed numerous applications for the State Liquor Authority. Received numerous noise complaints from residents about 3920 Broadway. Establishment will hire a consultant (sound engineer). Economic Development has requested this same practice to other establishments with regard to noise complaints. Jackie Rowe-Adams commended Mason Almeida and the entire Economic Development Committee for its handling of noise complaints. QUESTION: Aidee Camacho: Did the committee know about the closing of the bodega on West 190th Street, between Amsterdam and Audubon? A: Ms. Renee Tirado will look into it.

Motion to adjourn by Mr. Wayne Benjamin; seconded by Mr. Jim Berlin; no objection.

Respectfully submitted: Dago Suarez, Assistant Secretary.

COMMITTEE FOR THE AGING MINUTES
February 8, 2005

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Sybil R. Dodson-Lucas, Chair
Fern Hertzberg (excused)
Leslie Foster
Gloria Vanterpool
Nelson Rojas

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

Glenda Massa (excused)
Bishop Gerald Walsh(excused)

PUBLIC MEMBERS

Martin Collins, Chair, CB12

GUESTS

Norma De Candido-Resident, Mary Jones Springer-Resident, Cecil Levinson-Resident, Sara Jacobson-Jewish Community Council of WH/I, Tracy Sokoloff, Admin-Isabella Home Care, Zhauno Babayer-"Y" of Washington Heights, Ethel Linder Stoll-Resident

Sybil Dodson-Lucas, convened meeting at 10:15am.

Guest Speaker, Ms. Alana Bontelle, Public Health Educator.

Ms. Boutelle presented a slide show, which provided, in sometimes disturbing detail, information about sexually transmitted diseases. Further, Ms. Boutelle offered information relevant to seniors who may be engaging in risky behaviors and, those who expressed concerned about the lifestyle of younger members of the family.

Thereafter the committee heard from a participant who shared the concerns of the seniors who seek services in Veterans Hospitals STD is also an issue among this population.

Discussion followed on various topics including:

- Pros and Cons of new programs to encourage Senior "roommates", as a resource sharing initiative
- Outreach to the Hispanic Community of Heights/Inwood-a new initiative of the committee
- Invitation to Verna Arthur NFTA to present discussion of Grandparent Resource Center
- Committee to assess Emergency room conditions – follow-up to previous concerns
- Transportation Alternatives Safe Routes for Seniors will be topic for March meeting.

Meeting adjourned 12:00noon

Respectfully submitted by Sybil Dodson-Lucas

Parks & Cultural Affairs Committee Meeting Minutes
February 1, 2005

Committee Members Present

Zead Ramadan- Chair
Elizabeth Lorris Ritter
Sybil Dodson Lucas

Committee Members Absent

Emilia Cardona- Asst. Chair

Board Members Present

Martin Collins- Chairman
Steve Simon

Guests- Phyllis Smizaski, Ted Minos Artistic Director of Moose Hall Theatrical and Inwood Shakespeare Festival, Joan Facruervis- Community Arts Showcase, Kerri Holick and Carina Storrs- Danza Washington Heights, Tony Trinidad - NYPD 34th Precinct

Uptown Arts Stroll 2005

Mike Fitelstein presented: The first Art Stroll was in November '03. It was created to celebrate local artists & their work uptown. 50 restaurants and other venues located from 159th to 215 Street displayed art. It was a one day event and was very successful.

The second Art Stroll was on June '04. It was a 2 day event with 125 Artists and 60 venues and included an opening reception at High Bridge Park, with previews of art displays, and fireworks by the Grucci Brothers.

4 GOALS

1. Increase Latino representation, Service of recruitment for Latino artists
2. Increase diversity of arts (performing, visual, etc.)
3. More time to enjoy it all, less competition between venues
4. More "strollers"- increase audience

1. Musical Teatro, Arka Lounge, "Sand of Art", Audubon Partnership are organizations that can help recruit more Latino artist.
2. Possibilities this year... night of dance, poetry, film, literature, fashion, senior citizens art from local centers, Use winter garden at Children's Hospital to show case children's art. Need to fit in music nicely. Have a "stroll headquarters". Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone interested in helping.
3. Exposure ideas include: media coverage; Museum Mile Festival is one week before (use to publicize); James Stovall- United Palace-runs art department; NYC & Co.-tourism, website & database of local artists.

Prospective Dates

Tues 6/14 opening reception dates in between for the various nights (dance, film, poetry, etc.). Saturday and Sunday 6/18-6/19 are the main Art Stroll activities.

Ideas

- ♦ Artists should coordinate with venues themselves and then update Mike. Artist Unite: Poster contest to design publicity. Manhattan Times will publish map of venues. Stroll Guide-improve it color, art samples, VIP Reception. Action of local work (as part of reception). Honor Homer Young Kennedy III, largely involved last year. Letter from James Stovall-enthusiasm for stroll
- ♦ American Academy of Arts & Letters is in our neighborhood. Perhaps they'd be interested, have great concert hall, good place for fashion show.

- ♦ Hispanic Society, invite them to get involved.
- ♦ Suggestion to have artwork up larger & have artists themselves organize their own event/reception at that venue (responsible for own costs) - can be week following the big kickoff to avoid conflicts with "spotlight" nights in the evenings following the opening reception.

Advertising Ideas

- ♦ Museum mile the week before- have met, will plug the arts stroll, Include Cloisters
- ♦ Art Expos at Javits Center, can we get info to them? They have a broader audience.
- ♦ Bronx trolley- does Manhattan have anything similar? Last year we had shuttles for the days of stroll, they are committed for '05 too.
- ♦ Green markets. Get brochures out to tourism companies, postcards, flyers, and guides. What institution will be receptive to putting out literature? Merge our various databases for publicity.
- ♦ Get someone of notoriety at opening- perhaps Lee Bollinger's wife, Columbia University President, or Bette Midler.
- ♦ Raffle- motivate people to fill out info at venues. (Contact info, which venue attended, how one heard about it, etc.) Give each venue stamped self-addressed envelope in which to return info slips.
- ♦ Harlem Open Air Studio Tour (HOAST) similar event- tie in together? Keep in mind, "Materials for the Arts" for their event, supplies for banners, art supplies for kids at the "Stroll"

Volunteer Tasks- get artists to be volunteers too- requirement for participation. Ask all volunteers to commit to specific tasks.

BIG MEETING- Early April- target timeframe to get as many people possible to get info out to volunteer

Need Volunteers! Ideally 20-25 or more (only about 6-8 in past-not enough). Use youth groups (PAL, FYI) to help with flyers Inwood Community Services.

Volunteer recognition night, websites: washarts.com, wahart@yahoo.com for all Stroll-related material.

HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES – February 2, 2005

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Steve Simon, Chair
Helen Morik, Asst. Chair
Beatrice Hall
Barbara Smith Ramos

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

Emmanuel Barrientos
Sybil R. Dodson-Lucas(excused)

PUBLIC MEMBER ABSENT

Basilia Gomez

GUESTS: Noeleen Ostapkovich-Columbia University Medical Center (CUMC), Rick Kline-CUMC-IRB, Consuelo McLaughlin-Neurological Institute, Migdalia Onofrietti-NY-Presbyterian Hospital (NYPH), Faye Ramos

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1. **Clinical Trial Involving Emergency Treatment for Certain Stroke Patients** – Noeleen Ostapkovich, Director of Clinical Trials for Stroke and Critical Care Neurology, Neurological Institute, CUMC: the proposed clinical trial would utilize a drug (rt-PA) to dissolve blood in brain cavities during a hemorrhagic stroke (Intraventricular Hemorrhage) in patients who would not be capable of granting written permission in view of their serious illness. Currently there is no effective treatment for this condition. The drug was used successfully at a higher dose in a preliminary trial, resulting in decreased rates of death and infection. CUMC has applied to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to conduct this trial under its "waiver of informed consent" rule and as part of that process must show that community has been sufficiently informed of the trial.

Drug would not be used until CAT scan shows that bleeding has stopped and that an External Ventricular Drain is needed to manage the increase of fluid in the brain ventricles due to the blood from the hemorrhage, a minimum of 12 hours after the drain is put in. Would want to start treatment within 24-48 hours of patient arriving at emergency room.

FDA protocol on informed consent is being used in 17 other medical centers that are participating in the clinical trial. Other states allow family members to serve as surrogates, but NY does not have a law granting that power. NY will be only state to utilize "waiver of informed consent" rule.

The earlier study enrolled 48 patients, ½ in a control group. Columbia had 9 patients with moderate to severe strokes (comatose): 5 came from northern Manhattan, 2 from elsewhere in NY, 2 from New Jersey. The mortality rate in the treated group was reduced to 19%; the same rate in the placebo group was 24%. The "waiver of informed consent" was obtained for this trial, and a family member granted permission in each case.

The main risk factors for stroke: hypertension, smoking, obesity and drug use.

The committee advised her to continue to reach out to the community through the Washington Heights-Inwood Council on Aging, parent associations, community-based organizations, health fairs and the community doctors. A proposed notice for the local newspaper, the Manhattan Times, was reviewed and suggestions made.
2. **NY-Presbyterian Hospital's Current Relationship with Local Doctors** – Migdalia Onofrietti, coordinator, Columbia-Presbyterian Community Physicians: The program she runs, which will celebrate its 10th anniversary in July, enables local doctors who are not on the faculty of the Columbia medical school to admit and treat patients in the hospital (at both the main campus at W. 168th St. and the Allen Pavilion). Simon pointed out that when the hospital sought the approvals to build the Allen Pavilion, the community argued that local doctors had to be able to admit their patients. Back then doctors sent their patients to the ER and never heard back on how they were doing after being admitted.

Under this program, local MDs are linked to referral specialists so when they refer patients to the hospital, they get reports back. 140 doctors, most of whom are in Washington Heights-Inwood, are part of this network. 80 of them have admitting privileges and can treat patients inside the hospital. Last year they admitted 500 patients. The number in prior years was higher but dropped after some doctors established more profitable relationships with other hospitals. About 4,000 patients per year are referred to ambulatory care specialty clinics (a low number since it is not possible to track all referrals).

Continuing medical education courses are provided at no cost to local MDs.

An increasing number of doctors – mostly primary care pediatricians – are moving into the community, but Morik believes it still qualifies as a Health Manpower Shortage Area.

Patients with private insurance not accepted by NYPH's Ambulatory Care Network are referred to local doctors.

A major community is being planned to mark the program's 10th anniversary.
3. **Harlem Hospital Major Modernization Project** – Simon reported that CB12 has been asked to provide a letter of support for this project and that he had asked the hospital to send a representative to explain the details. The committee agreed that a presentation should be made before it could agree to recommend writing a letter of support.
4. **Solid Waste Management Plan** – This plan calls for garbage trucks from Districts 9 & 10 as well as 12 to travel through our community every day to cross the George Washington Bridge to dump their loads in New Jersey. It was agreed that CB12 should check on whether they would follow prescribed truck routes and to write to our Council Members to make sure that this issue is taken into account as the Council reviews the plan.
5. **Next Meeting: March 2.** Speaker: a representative from the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill, NYC Metro chapter.

Respectfully submitted, Steve Simon

Joint Land Use/Community Planning Task Force - Meeting Minutes
February 2, 2005

Committee Members Present

Wayne Benjamin, Chair
Anita Barberis, Asst. Chair
James Berlin
Julio Rodriguez
Jay Mazur
Dora Maria Abreu
Mark Levine
Jackie Rowe Adams (TF)
Jacqueline Aristy (TF)

Committee Members Absent

Peter Ferrara
Luis Facundo (TF)
Sybil Dodson (TF)
Zead Ramadan (TF)excused

Board Members Present

* = Community Planning Task Force

GUESTS: Resident – George Callahan

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1. The meeting was called to order at 7:15 PM.
2. Land Use Chair, Wayne Benjamin advised that a guest speaker from the Municipal Arts Society (“MAS”) was expected to be invited by the Community Planning Task Force Chair to attend tonight’s joint meeting of the Land Use Committee and the Community Planning Task Force but arrangements were apparently not finalized or confirmed. Mr. Benjamin will contact MAS and invite a representative to attend a future LU committee meeting.
3. Mr. Benjamin advised that Community Board 12-M Chair Martin Collins requested the LU Committee to take the lead in drafting a scope-of-work for a district wide neighborhood planning study. This request results in part from the availability of funds generated by staff vacancies CB12 M experienced throughout 2004. These funds would be returned to the City if they are not expended by the end of the fiscal year, i.e.: June 30, 2005. Chair Collins encouraged the LU Committee to take advantage of the funds available due to this unique, one-time opportunity to advance CB 12’s planning initiatives.
4. An initial draft of a Request for Qualifications for Urban Planning Consultant Services was distributed and discussed (copy attached). The review of the draft RFQ included discussion of topics such as the potential of phasing the study, performing mini-studies such as identifying sites for new schools in advance of the completion of the district-wide study (Dora Maria Abreu noted that a study of this nature is of interest to the Youth and Education Committee), examining trends unrelated to physical planning, identifying long-term and short-term goals and incorporating data from other CB 12 studies into the district-wide study. Additionally, it was noted that we may not want to write the RFQ too tight so as to allow the responding consultants to tell us more about how we might approach the study. It was agreed that a digital version of the draft RFQ would be emailed to facilitate ease of review and modification. Any additional comments from committee members are to be provided prior to the February 8, 2005 Executive Committee where the draft RFQ will be presented for further review and direction as to next steps.
5. The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm.

Respectfully submitted by: Wayne A. Benjamin

HOUSINGS & HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE MEETING

February 7, 2005

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Jacqueline Aristy, Chair
Joyce F. Holland
Jay Mazur
Barbara Smith-Ramos
Steve Simon

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

Julio Rodriguez, Asst. Chair

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Martin Collins

GUESTS

Ana Moreno-460 W. 147th St., Faye Ramos-GAP, Inc., Bryon Holman 1199/SEIU, M. Sato, David Rodriguez-61 Audubon Ave., Saturrina Batista, Reyes Adames-2224 Amsterdam Avenue, Resident-119 Audubon Avenue, Tenant Lennon-710 W. 173rd St., Josefina Munoz-189 Audubon Ave., Jael Zamora, Alla Zamora, and Candice Acosta (Residents)-214 Audubon Avenue, Candida Taveras-2240 Amsterdam Ave., Francesca Castellanos-503 W. 164th St., Mercedes Gruillon-61 Audubon Ave., Tomaz Brabski-610 W. 150th St., George-2224 Amsterdam Ave., Manual-2208 Amsterdam Ave., Craig Lemoult-Columbia News Service, Victor, Ana, Yolanda, Sarah, and Jose (Residents/Tenants Assoc.) -119 Audubon Avenue., Delsia Fermin, Tenant 12 Ft. George Avenue, Vanetta Forbes-2201 Amsterdam Ave., Nelson -2201 Amsterdam Ave., Lourdes-119 Audubon Ave., Mercedes Velasquez-502 W. 173rd St., M. Hernandez-2304 Amsterdam Ave., Maria-119 Audubon Avenue, Miranda-501 W. 173rd Street, P.O. Lopez - NYPD 33rd Pct., Deputy Inspector Jason Wilcox - NYPD 33rd Pct., Joselinne Minaya-Office of New York County District Attorney, Martin Smith-Office of Council Member Robert Jackson, and Kenneth Rosenfeld and Evan Hess of Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation (NMIC).

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The meeting was called to order at 7:15pm by the Chair, Jacqueline Aristy.

1.) Kenneth Rosenfeld, Director of Legal Services, and Evan Hess, Director of Organizing at Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation (NMIC) were introduced by the Chair of the Housing and Human Services Committee. They would be making a special presentation to community residents on *"Tenants' Rights, Housing Code Enforcement, and Organizing for Repairs."*

Mr. Rosenfeld gave a brief introduction on Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation, a community based organization serving residents in the communities of Washington Heights and Inwood. For over twenty years, NMIC has helped prevent evictions, correct substandard housing conditions, and provide social services to children and families. Mr. Rosenfeld highlighted a recent, unprecedented building-wide eviction case involving 21 tenants and their families at 516 West 174th Street. In this case, the bankrupt owner was attempting to use a federal bankruptcy sale to invalidate tenants' leases. Without legal representation from NMIC, over 75 people at 516 West 174th Street would have become homeless. Mr. Rosenfeld stressed to community residents that this case is a testament to the rising value of residential properties in Washington Heights and Inwood. Tenants need to be vigilant. They should read or find someone who can read for them everything that arrives in the mail concerning their buildings, especially bankruptcy notices.

Mr. Rosenfeld continued the discussion by mentioning that most tenants in Washington Heights and Inwood are Rent Stabilized. In New York City, rent stabilized tenants have the Right to a Lease Renewal. So, as long as, there is no significant breach of the lease (example: nonpayment of rent) and the apartment is maintained as their lawful residence, a tenant can continue living in their apartment. A landlord can not evict a tenant without a court order to evict from a Housing Court Judge; and, only City Marshals can carry out the eviction. Landlords can not attempt to evict a tenant by performing an illegal lock-out. Tenants threatened by an illegal eviction can get help from the local police precinct or by dialing 9-1-1.

Mr. Rosenfeld continued the presentation by highlighting some of the basic rights of tenants including the:

- Right to Heat from October 1st to May 31st
From 6 a.m. to 10 p.m., if the outside temperature is 55F or less, the inside/apartment temperature must be a minimum of 68F. From 10 p.m. to 6 a.m., if the outside temperature is 40F or less, the inside/apartment temperature must be a minimum of 55F.
- Right to Hot Water
Hot water must be supplied 24 hours a day, year around.

If heat or hot water is a problem, tenants should call and/or write the landlord. Tenants should also document the problems by keeping a log to record the lack of essential services. If the landlord does not respond, tenants should call 3-1-1. The call

to 311 will establish a record of the problem with the Code Enforcement Division of the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD). In New York City, housing code enforcement is complaint driven, so tenants need to call 3-1-1 to get an inspection of the existing housing problem.

In addition, tenants can also call 3-1-1 to register complaints regarding leaks, peeling or chipping paint, vermin, and lead. Rent Stabilized and Rent Controlled tenants can also file individual apartment and building-wide complaints for reductions in service with the New York State Division of Housing and Community Renewal (DHCR). These tenants will receive a rent reduction through DHCR, until the repairs and/or services are restored by the landlord.

All tenants have the right to bring a lawsuit or HP Action against the landlord in the Housing Part of the Civil Court of the City of New York for repairs and the restoration of services. HP Actions involve a process and take time. So, tenants must be diligent and list every problem in the HP Action. Inspectors will be sent by the court and can only inspect the complaints listed in the HP Action. If a tenants' association is organized in the building, tenants can be more effective in addressing existing problems. If the landlord does not comply with the court order for repairs, a contempt order must be filed with the assistance of a Legal Services attorney or a litigation attorney from HPD. In contempt cases, HPD attorneys will pursue fines. In cases where HP Actions are brought by HPD, the Emergency Repair Program may provide the necessary repairs.

Evan Hess, the Director of Organizing at Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation, continued the presentation on Tenants' Rights by highlighting the first-steps to organizing a tenants' association:

1. Tenants should hold a meeting. If a majority do not attend, perhaps tenants should proceed to fight for repairs and services individually. If a majority do attend, then the residents have an interest in the building and can proceed as a group.
2. Measure the level of interest in taking action to obtain building improvements by distributing a complaint form. If the forms are returned, people are ready to work on things. Returning a completed complaint form, indicates a commitment to following through with the group.
3. The tenant group can send the list of repair complaints by certified mail to the landlord for immediate action.
4. Tenants should meet again to determine the next steps and vote on an organizing strategy:
 - request a rent reduction for lack of services
 - organize a rent strike
 - start an HP Action
5. Tenants should respect and support the decisions of the group.

In closing the presentation, Ms. Joselinne Minaya of the Community Affairs Office for the New York County District Attorney briefly mentioned the availability of the Trespass Affidavit Program to help tenants rid their buildings of drug dealers. In requesting a building's enrollment in the Trespass Affidavit Program, the District Attorney's office does not disclose the tenant's identity to the landlord.

2.) The Housing Committee members continued discussion regarding Edwin Gould Services for Children and Families proposed community residences at 157-10 Riverside Drive West, apartments #2V and #13V. The Community Board requested and received a 30-day extension of the 40-day NYS site selection review period from Edwin Gould Services for Children and Families and the NYS Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities (OMRDD).

The committee members reviewed *Selected Facilities and Program Sites in New York City*, a publication by the New York City Department of City Planning that provides a listing of sites for new and expanded facilities under the City's Fair Share Criteria for Community Board #12. The Committee found that the City's database listed more facilities in the community, than disclosed by the New York State Office of Family and Children's Services (O.F.C.S.) registry used by OMRDD. The review of the data indicated an over-concentration in Community Board #12M. The members agreed that due to the over-concentration, the Housing and Human Services Committee could not support the establishment of the proposed community residences.

The Housing Committee members determined that they were unable to meet to work on the resolution, before the next General Board meeting on February 22, 2005. All present members agreed that the Chair would bring a resolution reflecting the Committee's determination to the next Executive Committee on Tuesday, February 8, 2005 for action.