

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES

January 23, 2001

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Anita Barberis
Abby Belkin
James Berlin
Fredericka Cuenca
Leslie Foster
William A. Garcia
Beatrice Hall
Herbert Harwitt
Joyce F. Holland

Robert C. Liebeskind
Elizabeth Lorris Ritter
Maria Luna
Isidoro Martinez
Miguel Martinez
Luis H. Minier
Victor Morisete Romero
Norma Nadien
Marcos Navarro

Julio Peguero
Zead Ramadan
Julissa Reynoso
Steven Rizick
Nelson Rojas
Maria Sierra
Barbara Smith Ramos
Ricardo Urefia
Sandra Wachspress

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Rafael Beaumont (excused)
Ronald J. Botelho (excused)
Emilia G. Cardona (excused)
Laurie T. Cohen (excused)
Walther G. Delgado (excused)
Sybil R. Dodson (excused)
Jack Fogle

Soledad Hiciano
Manuel J. Mendez
Helen Morik (excused)
Dr. Pamela Palanque North
William C. Ortega
Martha Pepin
Bertie Ray, III

George Sanchez (excused)
Laura Sterling
Cheryl Tidwell
Juan Villar
Msgr. Gerald Walsh (excused)
Elouise Whitehurst (excused)

The general meeting of January 23, 2001 was held at the Mt. Sinai Jewish Center.
Community Board 12 was called to order and began its regular session at 7:30 P.M.

Chair's Report – William A. Garcia

Welcomed members and guests. Thanked everybody for all the cards and emails received by his wife and him on the occasion of the birth of their son, Ryan William Garcia. Recognized the presence of Acting Supreme Court Justice Rolando Acosta, attending the meeting for the swearing in of CB 12 newly elected officers. Reported on the decision of the Bureau of Federal Prisons not to proceed with the proposed location for a half-way house in our community; they are open to suggestions for new sites. Congratulated Robert Jackson on the victory of the court decision to revamp the financing of school funding in New York State. Mentioned that CB 12 did a great job last year of working together and focusing on the needs of the community. Finally, he thanked the CB 12 staff for the hard work they have been doing even though they were short staffed.

District Manager's Report - Gregoria Feliciano

Highlighted items included in her written report to the board. Stated that the list with schedules and location of School Board 6 meetings is included in the board members package. In response to questions, Ms. Feliciano clarified the following issues:

- She does not have detailed information on location and size of storage space needed for HRA Graffiti Removal Program at CB 12.
- That the indoor locations of the City Access Kiosks awaits CB 12 input.
- That the RFP's for the Youth Development and Delinquency Prevention Programs for 2001 will be discussed at the CB 12 Youth and Education Committee.
- Will look into the outreach of DOT to the wholesale beer distributor on the installation of traffic signal at 204th Street and 9th Avenue.

Finally Ms. Feliciano presented a bag of gifts on behalf of CB 12 to Mr. William Garcia on the occasion of the birth of his son.

Mr. Garcia thanked the board. He also thanked the Mt. Sinai Jewish Center for hosting the meeting and informed that Ms. Helen Morik had a car accident over Christmas, is recuperating and wished her well. He also informed that he will be a speaker on the new developments on Immigration Law on 1/27/01 and 2/3/01.

Having reached a quorum, the agenda of the meeting and the minutes of the December 2000 general meeting were approved without objections.

Installation of CB 12 Officers:

Acting Supreme Court Justice Rolando Acosta conducted the swearing in of the newly elected CB 12 Officers William A. Garcia, Chair; Fredericka Cuenca, 1st Vice Chair; Marcos Navarro, Secretary; and Elizabeth Lorris Ritter, Assistant Secretary. Mr. Walther G. Delgado, 2nd Vice Chair and Ms. Emilia G. Cardona, Treasurer, were excused from tonight's meeting.

Public Session

Leslie Foster – Isabella Geriatric Center

Announced new program at the Center of Social Daycare. CB 12 members will get more information on this program in the mail. Thanked CB 12 for Quiet Zone resolution and might need additional help from CB 12 on signage from DOT.

Nyguana Manning and Shelly Genao – Harlem Downing Agency

Explained services offered and locations of centers, at 800 Riverside Drive and 29 Adam Clayton Powell Blvd.

Ruben Dario Vargas – Community Resident

Pointed out the need for arrow light indicating to go west on Dyckman Street and Broadway, north-west corner. Congratulated Mr. Linares on a job well done on the halfway house issue.

Lt. James Griffin – 34th Precinct

Announced the extension of beat cops to Bennett Park and Fort Tryon Park. Stated that there were 2 unrelated homicides on 181st Street. An arrest was made on the first one and the second one is being investigated. Ms. Lorris Ritter asked about the removal of the shrine for the victim of the first homicide and Lt. Griffin responded that the 2 officers who did this acted on their own and were put on modified assignment and transferred out of the community.

Marianna DePaola - Community Observer

Complained of the disgraceful state of the subway entrance at 181st Street and St. Nicholas Avenue, the overcrowding of the sidewalks with merchandise by the store owners, of people loitering on the sidewalks and obstructing pedestrian traffic, the little time given by the traffic lights for pedestrians to cross the streets and the lack of courtesy by the motorists not yielding the right of way to the pedestrians crossing at the intersections.

Ms. Norma Nadien suggested for the City to raise the fines to the merchants overcrowding the sidewalk with their merchandise as a deterrent. Mr. James Berlin suggested that there should be a resolution by CB 12 requesting legislation by the NY City Council to raise such summonses, while Ms. Lorris Ritter stated that the raising of the fines is not enough, that the merchandise should be confiscated after the 2nd or 3rd violation. Mr. Garcia stated that such a resolution could be considered by CB 12 incorporating request for the NY City Council to raise the summonses and after the 2nd or 3rd violation confiscate the merchandise. Ms. Barbara Smith Ramos commented that the District Service Cabinet meetings should not be social gatherings with the City Agencies but to raise issues such as this.

Susan Razazi – Alta Classica

Announced free concert on Sephardic Music at the Hebrew Tabernacle on February 18th at 4:00 PM. Offered fliers and CB's on the organization.

Nick Lundren – Legal Aid Society

Announced new economic development project for CB's 9, 10, 11 and 12 to provide legal services for community based organizations, for profit and not for profit, on issues such as housing, economic development and others. The first location of such project will be on 125th Street State Office Building. In response to questions he stated that they are open to individuals and will try to have an office in each community board. They are open to suggestions for a site at CB 12.

Nicole Johnson – Manhattan Borough President's Office

Stated that they are looking for the new Liaison of the MBPO at CB 12 and there will be one soon. Reminded the CB 12 members that the re-appointment of members started already. In response to questions she stated that she doesn't know about the plans for the Sherman Creek area and will relay the concerns about this area to the Manhattan Borough President. Stated that the MBP states in her written report that she is trying to develop and keep the Mast 125 project as a viable and desirable destination.

Juan Ramirez – Manhattan District Attorney's Office

Announced the 2001 Summer Internship Program for Junior and High School students. Went over the requirements for the program and left a leaflet with the information for the program. He hopes the program will recruit students from CB 12 area.

Victor Morisete Romero – Community Association of Progressive Dominicans

Congratulated the members of CB 12 for passing the resolution against the halfway house site. Stated that ACDP is running a tenant's organizing program which have created 32 tenant's associations, brought 22 cases in housing court and is working closely with the DA's office on the Trespass Affidavit Program. In response to questions on possible locations for the halfway house, it was suggested that this issue should be raised by the Federal Bureau of Prisons at the Manhattan Borough Board meeting.

Cheryl Joseph-Dyebisi – Community Resident

Spoke about the deplorable situation of the public schools of the area, specifically the lack of kindergarten and Pre-K spaces in School District 6. There are 900 Pre-K spots in the entire district, 10 for entire day program and the rest is for 2 ½ hour day. Stated that in today's world higher standards of education are needed in our area. Mr. Garcia suggested to Ms. Joseph Dyebisi to raise these concerns at the School Board 6 meetings too.

Public Official's Report

Councilman Guillermo Linares

Congratulated Robert Jackson and Attorney Michael Ravel on court decision on NYS School Funding Formula. Mentioned that he wrote a letter to NY Presbyterian Hospital emphasizing that anything short of 25% benefit for the community will not be acceptable in their expansion projects. Reported that there was a successful benefit concert to help the family of the 2 children that perished in the fire at 181st Street, and that a fire prevention workshop is being organized by his office in conjunction with the Fire Department on 2/17/01 at 2:00 PM at IS 164. Announced that he will be introducing legislation for prevailing wage for cleaning workers. Congratulated CB 12 on the resolution passed against the site of the halfway house in our community and presented to CB 12 the copies of the letter of the Federal Bureau of Prisons indicating that the halfway house will not proceed at the site selected.

Ms. Joyce Holland asked about the City Council Legislation about notifying the parents of young adults who receive summonses. Mr. Linares stated that he doesn't have enough information to elaborate on that, but considers it a good thing for the parents to be notified.

Dr. Pamela Palanque North asked whether Pre-K programs in the public schools are funded through the regular formula that Kindergarten programs are funded. Councilman Linares stated that he is not too familiar on how this is affecting School District 6, but that the main problem for implementing very little of these programs in the district is the overcrowding situation.

Mr. Berlin suggested to get the assistance of the NY Presbyterian Burn Prevention Program for the fire prevention workshops organized by Mr. Linares' Office. A member of the public asked via CB 12 member Ms. Smith Ramos about the participation of federal, state and City officials to get the additional funds to the City as a result of the court decision.

Mr. Linares stated that the City Council Speaker and the Mayor went to Albany to press the Governor not to appeal the court decision, and that the City Council will introduce legislation in favor of the NYS School funding court decision. Mr. Linares suggested that CB 12 should invite the new School Board 6 Superintendent to attend the CB 12 public meeting. Ms. Leslie Foster suggested that CB 12 write a letter congratulating Mr. Robert Jackson on NYS School Funding Court Decision.

Committee Reports

Economic Development Committee – Maria Sierra, Chair

Presented resolution on Washington Heights Business Improvement District expansion to include West 181st Street from Ft. Washington Avenue to Cabrini Boulevard, St. Nicholas Avenue from West 170th Street to West 193rd Street and Broadway from West 170th Street to West 193rd Streets. Ms. Sierra acknowledged a typo on the original draft of the resolution of 178th Street instead of 170th Street, which was also noted and offered as a friendly amendment by Ms. Ritter. She also offered another friendly amendment to add on the third whereas that the concerns were raised at the public hearing of 1/3/01. A vote of 21 in favor, 4 abstentions and 1 not voting approved the resolution with the friendly amendments.

Ms. Sierra invited the CB 12 members and public to the 2/7/01 Joint Economic Development and Land Use Committees where Ivelisse Fairchild will be speaking on Columbia University Biomedical Science and Technology Park.

Mr. Berlin highlighted good collaboration of the City agencies and community in the project for the reconstruction of stepstreet on Pinehurst Avenue at W. 181st Street.

Announcements

Ms. Maria Luna stated that some CB 12 members might have a problem being on time for the CB 12 general meeting of February 27th since that is Dominican Independence Day and various activities will be taking place on that date.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 PM

Respectfully submitted by:
Marcos Navarro, Secretary