

Economic Development Committee

January 8, 2004

MINUTES

Members Present

Martin Collins, Chair  
Julio Pequero, Assistant Chair  
Mason Almeida  
Rafael Beaumont  
Rose Santo  
Dr. Pamela Palanque North  
Socrates Solano

CB12 Members Present

Dago Suarez

Guests: Elizabeth Arizaga & Federico Torres, In Vino Veritas, Rafael Ceballos, Rincon Latino Restaurant, Edwin Ortiz, Step to Ed's Inc.

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The meeting started at 6:05 p.m. with introductions and opening remarks.

*New Business Applications:*

Heights Vineyard Inc. (DBA: In Vino Veritas) 1202 St. Nicholas Ave.

The owners are Elizabeth Arizaga and Federico Torres and both attended. In Vino Veritas will appeal to an upscale audience with a wide variety of tapas, sandwiches, dinner plates, salads, and deserts. Ms. Arizaga shared with us the restaurant's business plan, menu and wine list. They will open from 11AM until 12PM seven days per week. Business has applied for a Tavern Wine License, which allows sale for on-premises consumption of wine and beer. The location has been soundproofed. The owners spoke about their responsibility operating in a residential area (i.e. good neighbor policy, sanitation, etc.). After further discussion, the committee recommended the State Liquor Authority grants In Vino Veritas a Tavern Wine License.

Rincon Latino Restaurant Corp. II 238 Sherman Ave.

The owner, Rafael A. Ceballos, and a manager attended. Mr. Ceballos recently purchased the business and has applied to State Liquor Authority for a transfer of the previous owner's On-Premises Liquor License. Mr. Ceballos has lived in the Washington Heights-Inwood community for 30 years and chronicled his prior restaurant experience. He envisions a family-style buffet of Spanish & American food and feels the location and size is just right. The restaurant, which is soundproof, is open from 7AM until 4AM seven days a week. The owners mentioned their attorney spoke with them regarding a variety of issues including the smoking law, operating in a residential area, etc. After further discussion, the committee recommended the State Liquor Authority grant Rincon Latino Restaurant's request for transfer of the On-Premises Liquor License.

Step to Ed's Inc. 1509B St. Nicholas Avenue

The owner, Edwin R. Ortiz attended. Step to Ed's is located in the basement of 1509 St. Nicholas Avenue. They have applied for an Eating Place Beer License. The business plan was unclear, particularly the concept of attracting customers from an adjacent street-level hair salon. Mr. Ortiz said the landlord gave permission but did not tell him if the use was permitted. We gave Mr. Ortiz the telephone numbers and advised him to contact the Department of Buildings to see if the proposed occupancy is allowed and the Fire Department regarding code requirements. The committee cannot make a recommendation on this application until we receive further information.

Note: Two new applicants did not attend, Elsa La Reina Del Chicharron (1249 St. Nicholas Ave.) and 178-180 Sherman Ave. Corp. (same address).

*Business License Renewal:*

Bennett Coffee Shop Inc. 4329 Broadway

Business is renewing its Restaurant Wine License. There was no adverse history on file. The committee recommended the license be renewed.

*Public Hearing Re: West 181<sup>st</sup> Street Traffic Congestion*

Traffic & Transportation, Public Safety, & Economic Development meet jointly on January 20 at the Gregorio Luperon High School to discuss 181<sup>st</sup> Street with the public.

*New Business:*

A meeting to discuss the next Uptown Arts Stroll will take place Tuesday, January 13 at 6:00 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 6:50 p.m. Submitted by Martin Collins.

## LAND USE COMMITTEE MINUTES – JANUARY 12, 2004

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Wayne Benjamin, Chair  
Anita Barberis, Asst Chair  
Walther G. Delgado  
Martin Collins  
Julio Rodriguez  
Rose Santo

### COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

Peter Farrara(excused)  
Nelson Castro  
Jay Mazur

### BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Bienvenido Toribio, Jr.

Deborah Blow, Community Associate

### GUESTS

Sandra Harris, Director of Community Affairs-Columbia University, Charles Ramfort-Washington Terrace,  
Lukas Herbert-Resident,

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1. The meeting was called to order at 7:12 PM.
2. The minutes of the December 3, 2003 and December 29, 2003 Land Use Committee meetings and the December 10, 2003 Public Hearing were approved as corrected (Moved: M. Collins, Second: A. Barberis, Vote: 5-0-0).
3. Sandra Harris of Columbia University presented information pertaining to 2142 Amsterdam Avenue. The status of redevelopment activities for 2142 Amsterdam Avenue was raised in the context of the Audubon IV ULURP applications. The site is a vacant lot (25' x 100') located at 166<sup>th</sup> Street. The MOU negotiated by Borough President Messinger and other elected officials (around 1990) for Audubon I Research and Development Project included provisions for 2142 Amsterdam Avenue to be donated by Columbia for a community use with an emphasis on housing. Ms. Harris indicated that while Columbia still owns the site it views it as a community site and has no development plans for it. Columbia will transfer the site at no cost once a feasible development project has been structured. In the past, the Community League of West 159<sup>th</sup> Street and the Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation each considered but did not proceed with development projects for the site. The Committee proposed that Columbia and CB12 work together to consider development options for the site. Ms. Harris committed to getting back to the Committee with any additional background information she has or can obtain on the site, site conditions, ownership of neighboring buildings, prior attempts at development by HPD or others, etc.
4. The update on Yeshiva University construction projects / demolition activity was postponed until the February 2004 Committee meeting since Committee Member Peter Ferrara who was to present the update was unable to attend the meeting.
5. Committee Chair Wayne Benjamin reported that Edwin Marshall of the Department of City Planning has been invited to attend the February 2004 Committee meeting to brief the Committee on the materials prepared by Mr. Marshall, Ethel Sheffer and graduate planning students from Columbia at the Committee's request for the Audubon Avenue Study that were presented to the Executive Committee at its December 9, 2003 meeting.
6. It was confirmed the Committee typically meets the first Wednesday of the Month and that the next Land Use Committee meeting will be scheduled for Wednesday, February 4<sup>th</sup>.
7. Committee Members Walter Delgado and Martin Collins briefed the committee on matters pertaining to the Sherman Creek planning process and pending workshop.

8. The meeting was adjourned at 8:25 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Wayne A. Benjamin.

**COMMUNITY BOARD #12, MANHATTAN  
DISTRICT SERVICE CABINET  
JANUARY 15, 2004**

Gregoria Feliciano, District Manager  
Deborah Blow, Community Associate  
Abbott Ruskin, Assemblyman Farrell's Office  
Lisa Schwartz, Senator Schneiderman's Off  
Joceline Minaya, Liaison, Man District Attorney's Office  
Capt. Jason Wilcox, NYPD 33<sup>rd</sup> Pct.  
PO's Lopez & Sanchez, NYPD, 33<sup>rd</sup> Pct.  
Deputy Inspector James Kehoe, NYPD 34<sup>th</sup> Pct.  
Sgt Jenkins/PO Santiago, NYPD PBMN  
Jack Sarroco, Liaison, Dept of Consumer Affairs

Zamira Setara, Con Edison  
Tony Brogdon, HPD  
Jenny Torres, Dept. of Transportation  
Carlos Infante, HRA  
Mona Yoffie, ACS  
Lynn Opinante, Washington Heights Library  
Felix Morales, Ft. Washington Library  
Judith Rodriguez, Inwood Library  
Clifton Hill, Project Renewal

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Ms. Feliciano welcomed city agencies, guests and representatives of elected officials, wishing them the best for the new year. She thanked all who attended inspite of the snow storm.

Ms. Feliciano asked the group to review a list of Capital/Expense Budget Priorities for year 2004 and to share all other personnel within their organizations.

Ms. Feliciano then called on a motion to adopt December Minutes . Seconded by Jenny Torres.

Ms. Feliciano called on a motion to adopt January Agenda. Seconded by Tony Brogdon.

Ms. Feliciano took a moment to congratulate Capt. James Kehoe on his promotion to Deputy Inspector of 34<sup>th</sup> Pct.

Ms. Feliciano opened meeting providing several announcements from CB12 to the group:

- Public Hearing: January 20, 2004 at Gregorio Luperon High School, at 7:00pm regarding the Traffic Study of W. 181<sup>st</sup> initiated by the Manhattan Borough President's Office. Ms. Feliciano spoke to a recent vehicular accident which occurred at that location. She said along with the help of DOT, CB12 is looking for better ways to mitigate the traffic flow making it more pedestrian friendly and safe.
- NY/NJ Port Authority to attend the Traffic Transportation/Health Environment Committee February 9, 2004 at 7:00pm re: to present on removal of lead paint from Tower on the NY side of the GWB, all are welcome.
- NYPH will present replacing fuel oil tanks located under the sidewalk on W. 168<sup>th</sup> between Broadway & Ft. Washington explaining to the project will be discussed at the Traffic Transportation/Health Environment Committee February 9, 2004 at 7:00pm.
- January 28, 2004 Landlord's Task Force Meeting @ 11:30am Board office.
- Issues and concerns about Dyckman Center, discussion January 29, 2004 with representatives from HRA at the board office at 9:30am.
- Meeting with the Managers of the USPS, local postal branches, January 30, 2004 at 10:00am.

Anyone with concerns regarding the above are invited to attend.

**Agenda Items**

**DOT - Jenny Torres** reported on the traffic conditions at Ft. George Hill/Fairview Avenue & St. Nicholas Ave. Ms. Torres briefly told the group that requests for different traffic studies are forwarded to the appropriate division at DOT. Turnaround time vary, depending on the request. There are signalization problems at these locations Arrow study evaluation take at least 6 months.

Abbott Ruskin shared his concerns with regard to DOT's briefing.

J. Torres distributed alternate side of the street parking suspension notices for 2004.

G. Feliciano asked that all agencies provide some breakdown of the progress or problematic concerns regarding (311) Call Center, so that we could monitor how the agencies are addressing the communities needs.

DOT responded: the issuance of a tracking number from 311 gives the concerns/complaint request a timetable for appropriate agency response, this is required before the agency can expedite further action.

**NYPD - Capt. Jason Wilcox** reported anonymous letter was received indicating drug activity at 619 W. 163<sup>rd</sup> St. Capt Wilcox reported that the letter was forward to Det. Quinn of the Narcotics Division, and the Special Operations Task Force.

Capt Wilcox also reported that SDG Management had some problems with tenant, Mr. Little in Apt. #65 at 550 W. 157<sup>th</sup> St. He said allegations from other tenants indicate drug use and prostitution at that location. They allege drug usage is ongoing. Back in March a severe fight broke out in the apartment, tenant, Mr. Little was not present at the time of fire nor convicted of any crime, HPD was instructed to allow him back into his apartment once renovated. Management agent requested the 33<sup>rd</sup> Pct./CB12 to assist with this matter.

G. Felciano asked Tony Brogdon of HPD to research problem. Will follow up at next meeting.

Manhattan DA's Joselinne Minaya response: letters just received, not given in time for the meeting. Will look in the matter further.

Capt. Wilcox provided overall crime stats for the year, he indicated crime down 3%, reduction in rape and stolen vehicles. Spike in robberies at the Bridge Towers, 3 incidents, (2) at 1370 & (1) at 1365 St. Nicholas Ave. arrests were made. Capt. Wilcox stepped of enforcement presence on Haven Ave between W. 172<sup>nd</sup> Street & Ft. Washington( 3 young teenagers-16 yrs old) arrested. Some articles recovere and knife retrieved from perpetrators.

**Jack Sarroco, liaison from Consumer Affairs** reported briefly on the following:

- He indicated only 4 inspectors for Manhattan,
- Clothing vendors are classified under the Environmental Control Board(ECB), summonses are issued but the process is slow to provide harsh penalties,(i.e. no warrants for arrests). On the other hand, because the fines are less, when issued by DCA criminal warrants can be issued which can result in the overnight arrests to vendor.
- DCA is responsible for enforcing categories of pricing and receipts on merchandise.
- Summonses range for \$100 - \$1000 and are set by the judge
- Licenses can be suspended after two incidents
- DCA inspectors surveill the areas for compliance
- DCA inspectors go in supermarkets to check the weight scales
- Check proper product info on items
- Observe dangerous conditions with parking lots and garages

Question: when are stiffer penalties imposed? Ms. Feliciano spoke to chronic offenders who really impede pedestrians passage, Example: northside of W. 181<sup>st</sup> Street (sales luggage). Jack Sarrocco answered it is up to the judge.

**NYPD 34<sup>th</sup> Pct. - Deputy Inspector James Kehoe** reported on notably baby abduction at W. 206<sup>th</sup> St. & 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue, mother and cab driver departed from cab to access local grocery store and left vehicle running. Perpetrator took car not realizing baby was in the back seat. Baby was returned after a call was placed to 911, no harm to the child, mother and cab driver arrested for endangering the welfare of a child.

Deputy Insp. Kehoe provided stats on year end overall crime activity, down 3.9%. He indicated some violence increase; 9 homicides vs. 7 for last year and 23 shootings vs. 19 shootings for last year. The Inspector reported identity theft still a problem, targeting card cards, opening up cell phone accounts. He said enforcement has increased even with minimal manpower 2,200 arrests vs. 2,100 arrests Inspector spoke to several incidents of attacks involving individuals wearing the new \$300 North Face Jackets. One incident at George Washington High School and 2 incidents at the lower end at W. 181<sup>st</sup> Street. Auto larceny unit made several arrests regarding stolen cars. Four additional permanent rookies have been added to the 34<sup>th</sup> Pct.

Inspector reported 311 calls have averaged 1,200 to 1,300 calls since the summer, presently volume has been reduced during the month of December to 740 calls. It was noted that 98.9% of the calls are noise related. He reported operation "Silent Night" still active enforcement initiative, vehicles will be confiscated due to loud decimal levels of music playing.

Ms. Feliciano asked about the policy with regard to apartment noise.

Inspector Kehoe responded: On the 1<sup>st</sup> visit to the apt., a warning, second time a summons should be issued. He said various noise complaints can be referred to the Washington Heights Coalition for mediation for sound disturbances. He announced the Coogans run in March 2004.

Chairman Ramadan extended his wishes for a good New Year and thanked agencies for their continued service to the community.

FDNY, Battalion #13 – Mike Murphy provided stats of Battalion responds on, 3,962 runs. Statistically even with last year, fires were up slightly over last year. He expressed the more fires are in direct correlation with the weather. He indicated several fatal fires resulted in fireman Brick, who lost his life (warehouse fire still under investigation), report will not be released until Spring 2004.

In addition, there was a 2<sup>nd</sup> alarm fire last Thursday, where an elderly women die ( W. 175 & Broadway). It was reported safety gates on the window, victim became overwhelmed by smoke unable to operate gates. On Tuesday evening Fire truck Engine 67 struck a pedestrian at W. 181<sup>st</sup> & Broadway on the way to a call. Pedestrian hospitalized, under stable conditions, still under investigation. Chief Murphy reported rash of apparatus equipment stolen (hydrant wrenches).

Manhattan DA's Office – Joselinne Minaya reported year end combined stats for both the 33<sup>rd</sup> and 34<sup>th</sup> Pcts.

- Total arrests 523
- Trespass Arrests 16
- Drug Arrests 192, 78 have been sentenced, 31 jailed
- Marijuana Arrests 250, 55 sentenced
- Robbery Arrests 30
- Grand Larceny 35, 8 sentenced
- Total Evictions & Vacates from 6/10/88 – 11/01/03, 2,113
- Total Bldg Trespass, 482

Ms. Minaya informed the group of the Internship Program registration for school students, deadline April. 300 children are interviewed, only 30 are selected from the ages of 14-18yrs. Six week program, weekly stipend provided for children to work in the DA's office.

G. Feliciano reminded group of the Landlord's Task Force January 28, 2004 at 11:30am. She acknowledged Sgt Jenkins of the Manhattan North Police Borough.

HRA – Carlos Infante nothing to report. Provided group with his number (212) 331-3851.

HPD - Tony Brogdon nothing to report.

ACS – Mona Yoffie nothing to report.

Con Edison – Zamira Setara provided literature on hypothermia. Questions arose regarding carbon monoxide. Ms. Setara referred persons to the Con Edison web site for more information. Battalion Chief provided brief description of the signs of carbon monoxide symptoms.

G. Feliciano asked that either agency provide written info for residents, so we can distribute at General Meeting.

Ft. Washington Library - Felix Morales reported ESL classes closed, will resume again in March.

Washington Heights Library – Lynn Opinante reported ESL classes filled.

Inwood Library – Judith Rodrigues reported ESL classes available to register, Wallace Foundation has provided monies for the afterschool program for all the branches.

Senator Scheneiderman's Office – Lisa Schwartz reported Alianza Dominican will be co-hosting with Schneiderman's office celebration of Dominican Independence Day at the Umbrella Lounge 2/27/04. She also provided group with a variety of brochures. She provided preliminary updates on new initiatives for a "Safe Haven" program instituted by the Westside Crime Prevention Program. Meeting will convene regarding initiative January 26, at 80 Bennett Avenue, contact (212) 928-5578 for further details.

Assemblyman D. Farrell's Office – Abbott Ruskin reported that Assemblyman Farrell provided strong testimony regarding MTA Hearings. Mr. Ruskin acknowledged the promotion of Deputy Inspector Kehoe.

Councilman Miguel Martinez – Miguelina reported on the swearing in of Councilman Martinez for another term in office. She also reported on the upcoming events, celebration of Dominican Independence Day, and the co-naming street dedication for “Riayan Augusto Tejeda Street”, “Alejandro Cordero Way”.

Project Renewal –Clifton Hill briefly reported on stats of the men's shelter. 4 psychiatric hospitalizations, 1 pvt housing and 1 supportive SRO housing.

Meeting adjourned 11:00am

Respectfully submitted by Deborah Blow