

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

PRESENT

Dora Maria Abreu
 Jackie Rowe Adams
 Jennifer Araujo
 Anita Barberis
 Wayne Benjamin
 James Berlin
 Isaiah Bing
 Kotie Cannon
 Emilia Cardona

Vivian Ducat
 George Espinal
 Joyce Humber-Faison
 James Freeman
 Julissa Gomez
 Ramona Gomez
 Francisco Guzman
 Bea Hall
 Albania Lopez Jimenez

Mark Levine
 Elizabeth Lorris Ritter
 Maria Luna
 Rita McKee
 Helen Morik
 Carole Mulligan
 Cheryl Pahaham
 Zead Ramadan
 Rolando Rodriguez

Nelson Rojas
 Cleofis Sarete
 Steve Simon
 Manny Velazquez

EXCUSED

Aidee Camacho
 Rolando Cespedes
 Martin Collins
 Tony Lopez
 Glenda Swanson Massa
 Pam Palanque North
 Edith Prentiss
 Jonathan Tasini
 Gloria Vanterpool

ABSENT

Sybil Dodson-Lucas
 Ines Saldana Olesen
 Rafael Osoria
 Julio Peguero
 Ruddy Santana
 Janifer Wilson

The meeting was called to order at 7:16pm by Chair Manny Velazquez, beginning with the **Chair's Report** absent a quorum:

- A new list of committee assignments was distributed; please advise the office if there are errors or corrections.
- We are being recorded by MNN (Manhattan Neighborhood Network) for public access TV, pursuant to a resolution recently passed at the last Borough Board meeting with regard to increased public access to community meetings.
- Thanked soon-to-be-former Community Associate, Jeffrey Laufer, who is moving on to another position within City government, for his years of service to CB12. There was much applause for Mr. Laufer.
- Councilmember Martinez presented Wayne Benjamin with a proclamation at an MLK, Jr. Day ceremony at the Rocky Mount Baptist Church.
- Thanked Public Safety Committee Chair Emilia Cardona for her work on gang violence at George Washington High School.
- Thanked Housing Chair Cheryl Pahaham for her work on issues related to the Overlook Terrace construction project.
- There will be a task force on the ongoing Con Ed M-29 transmission line construction project, to be co-chaired by Obie Bing and Wendy Garcia (of MBPO). The project is going forward, but we have the opportunity to address transportation, public safety and other issues as they may arise. Martin Collins also is a member of that task force.
- Announced upcoming Borough Board meetings on budget issues for the current and upcoming fiscal years (FY '08 & FY '09.)
- Manhattan North command received 60 new police officers from the NYPD Academy's newly graduated class. None of the new officers were deployed to the 33rd or 34th Precincts because CompStat data suggest that our current staffing levels are adequate. We must continue to advocate for more officers in our precincts.
- Captain Dowling of the 33rd Precinct has been promoted to Deputy Inspector.
- The Sherman Creek Task Force report is being finalized by the Mayor's Office and will be made available to the Board when we receive it.

In the continued absence of a quorum, **Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum was invited to address the Board.** (7:22pm) Ms. Gotbaum described the Public Advocate's position as being the ombudswoman for New Yorkers, noting her office's process for fielding and resolving complaints. Recent successes include food stamps and the Agency for Children's Services. Currently she is focusing on the Department of Education, which has been under Mayoral control since 2002, but warrants a close and careful look on the progress of the last five years. Ms. Gotbaum has set up a commission, which will be interviewing all who wish to express themselves regarding their experiences with the school system since the advent of Mayoral control, as well as looking at what other school systems nationwide have done. She expects to complete her report within a year and to make recommendations to State and local government. For more information, go to www.pubadvocate.nyc.gov/advocacy/schools. Ms. Gotbaum took some questions/comments. Ms. Cardona: the School Construction Authority looks at utilization based on gross square footage, and there is a loss of cluster rooms – what happens to science, art and other subjects outside of the "core curriculum"? The SCA appears to be an entity unto itself, answering to no one. BG: acknowledged that this is a huge problem; we are looking at that. Maria Luna: on February 7th there will be a City Council hearing regarding public access cable, including the Manhattan Neighborhood Network, and its support by cable companies; asked for support. BG: will look into it. Helen Morik: NY Presbyterian Hospital is partnering with the Community League of the Heights on a New Visions public school, the Community Health Academy of the Heights. The school had identified a site at 158th Street, had completed architectural renderings for the site and was ready to go ahead with construction so as to open in the fall to accommodate the expanding program, now in its second year. Everyone agreed, but now for no apparent reason the SCA has scrapped the plan and is going back to the beginning. Why? It has delayed school opening for a year, which is a huge problem for the program. It currently is housed at IS143, is running out of room, and cannot accommodate its incoming 8th grade class in the fall. BG: we'll look into it. Zead Ramadan: asked that City agencies work together on traffic enforcement. All we have in CB12 are people who give out tickets, but there is no one at the George Washington Bridge – the busiest bridge in the world – directing traffic. BG: will look into it; referred to staff to schedule a meeting with representatives of the relevant agencies to pursue further. Ms. Cardona also noted that this issue will be addressed at the next Public Safety Committee meeting.

Manhattan Borough President Scott Stringer addressed the Board (7:35pm):

- Cable franchises are up for review, as they are every ten years. Things have changed so much in the last decade that we must engage in real forward thinking to project where we will be in 10-15 years so that we can enhance franchises to accommodate new technologies. For example, MNN will be televising this meeting and airing it on public access TV. Mr. Stringer announced campaign for Civic Channel TV; he would like CB12 to pass a resolution supporting this. He would like to negotiate a dedicated channel for Community Board, Precinct Community Council, School District and other neighborhood meetings. This increases transparency and is in furtherance of community reform.
- The BP echoed the Chair's comments regarding Con Ed M-29 transmission line task force, which will look not only at the M-29 construction plan but also other construction issues that impact the neighborhood. We have to think strategically about how to deal with major construction sites to keep problems from happening.

- MBPO is working with Councilman Martinez's office on issues related to gang violence.
- A vacant lot and building count was done a year ago to get a sense of what's where, borough-wide. Came up with 2500 properties just in Manhattan that are vacant or partially empty. Half of these sites are north of 96th Street, and many are privately owned. Some vacancies or underutilization may be because of speculating, but much is because the properties (and their owners) have aged and the owners are not motivated to do anything with their properties. In the '70s we were worried about landlords fleeing; now we worry when they stay but do nothing with their properties. Tax rates are lower north of 110th Street, and this special preference is part of the problem. Vacant uptown properties should be assessed at the same rate as those south of 96th Street. Thanks to Assemblyman Farrell for pledging to pass a bill to rectify this inequity. New tax revenues to the City could be \$110 million or more. We also need to have HPD/DOB do a citywide count, such as has been done in Boston and other cities, not just a Borough-wide review done through MBPO and CBO's. This can be a boon to affordable housing.
- In response to rising commercial rents and small businesses being priced out of neighborhoods, the BP is going to different corridors in the borough, including in Washington Heights and Inwood, to figure out how to help small businesses. Revolving loans, tax abatements and other creative solutions must be brought to bear so that local small businesses are not pushed out by banks and national "big box" franchises. This will be an ongoing dialogue, and Community Boards must be a part of the dialogue.
- "Go Green East Harlem" initiative: incidence of diabetes is 13%, and there is the largest rate of child asthma in US. MBP has formed a 100-person steering committee to figure out how to reduce these negative health statistics and take a neighborhood victimized for generations by environmental racism and turn this around. Initiatives include: breaking ground on a state-of-the-art asthma center; talking with developers about co-generation and other "green" building techniques; planting trees; adding greenmarket sites; added EBTs so people on food stamps can access fresh produce. BP also has just published the "Go Green East Harlem Cookbook," featuring healthful recipes from residents and restaurant owners, available on-line and in bookstores. It's not just a healthy cookbook, it's a love story about the neighborhood.

Questions: Ms. Luna praised the cookbook and encouraged people to cook healthy Dominican food; also announced an upcoming event. Bea Hall: regarding cable, what about bringing in competition so we can have better service? SS: Verizon is planning to submit a bid, so this will be competition for Time Warner. We also have to work at including public interest/public access channels such as MNN, which also trains children and adults in this technology in addition to providing public access programming. Mr. Stringer also noted that MNN's new uptown headquarters is the old firehouse in Harlem. Ms. Morik: crisis in commercial tenancy is a problem all over the City, not just in Manhattan; the situation is dire in Riverdale, as well. This is a critical issue for the next decade. SS: we can't shut our eyes to this; we have to find out what's happening "on the ground". BP is counting on public feedback to make this process work. If we're not careful, this neighborhood is only a few years behind what's happening in lower Manhattan. We must be vigilant.

A quorum having been obtained, Mr. Ramadan made a **motion to adopt the agenda**, which was seconded by Ms. Cardona. (7:53) Elizabeth Lorris Ritter moved that the reports of the Elected Officials' representatives be moved to the end of the agenda; Jim Berlin seconded. The amendment passed by voice vote with no discussion, as did the main motion. **A motion by Mr. Ramadan to adopt the minutes** was seconded by George Espinal and passed with one correction by Wayne Benjamin. (7:56pm)

Ebenezer Smith gave his **District Manager's report** (7:57pm). See attached; highlighted topics include:

- Our beloved Jeffrey is leaving after three years, to a higher and better place, Bronx Councilmember Annabel Palma's office. I appreciated his talents and predict success: good luck; we'll miss you. There was much applause for Mr. Laufer.
- Attended a meeting with the Bronx BP regarding an express route for the Bx12, which terminates on Broadway at 207th Street. This new service would connect WH/I with the Bronx and Co-op City, though it also will affect parking on 207th Street.
- Attended Parks Department's scoping meeting at the Morris-Jumel Mansion regarding its project for an ADA-compliant ramp and other improvements. The architect's intent is to blend the ramp in with the landscape.
- Has had ongoing meetings with DEP, DOB and Councilman Jackson's Office regarding the construction at 29 Overlook Terrace.
- Resolved issue with missing "No Parking" signage on northbound Broadway between West 169th and West 173rd Streets, which was resulting in people getting parking tickets.
- Defective manhole covers on Ft. Washington Ave. in 170's have been repaired.
- Thanked Board members and public for continuing to call quality-of-life and City service complaints into the Board office as well as to 311, and encouraged all present to continue to do this in an effort to enhance quality of life in upper Manhattan.

Questions: Mr. Benjamin: what is rationale for linking Co-op City to A-train? ES: It is part of a PlaNYC initiative to reduce the number of cars in the city, and in Manhattan. Ms. Hall raised concern about traffic issues on Fordham Road, which already are pretty bad, and would be exacerbated by this proposal. Ms. Luna noted that there still are serious problems with mail delivery and other services at the 10033 branch Post Office on 180th Street. ES: still working on this. Met last month with representatives of the USPS, and has another meeting this week. In the meantime, please continue to forward complaints. Ms. Cardona reminded Mr. Smith of history regarding previous meetings with the USPS on these issues, noting that postal supervisors just blame all the staffing problems on union issues. Kotie Cannon: we need expanded hours. ES: WH/I postal branches now are open until 7pm. Carole Mulligan: the service at the 10034 (Inwood branch) also leaves much to be desired. Mr. Ramadan: Since USPS is a Federal agency, we should get Congressman Rangel involved. This was very effective strategy in resolving problems with our local Social Security office several years ago. ES: representatives from the Congressman's office were present at the December meeting. Mr. Benjamin: we have to get the Congressman himself interested and involved, not just his staff.

(8:15pm) **CBO Presentation by Todd Florio, Director of Education, the Hispanic Society of America.** Mr. Florio focused his presentation on the museum's educational workshops and public outreach programs, noting how the HSA is trying to connect the community to the museum. It's free, an amazing building housing one of Manhattan's best collections. HSA is the oldest building on Audubon Terrace, having been there for 102 years. The

museum replaced a guard position with a new "Guia" program to combine the front-door security function with welcoming presence and enhanced educational programming in the galleries: position is filled by bilingual person with a rich understanding of the collection. The HSA's partner-schools include PS4; PS161 and PS28; also working with IS90 and other schools, and reaching out to PS128. Programs are geared mostly to 5th graders; this year HSA is reaching out to 3rd graders as well. Staff go to classrooms, bring classes to the museum, and bring the children's class-project art out into community. Recent projects have been on mapmaking and genealogy. HSA also hosts events for the community, is an active co-sponsor of the annual Uptown Treasures event each Fall, and has started a series of monthly gallery talks. Mr. Florio noted that the Sorolla murals are "on vacation" in Spain while the HSA renovates the space and installs climate controls. Completion of that project and return of the murals is anticipated in two years. It is a sad commentary that during only one month in Spain, the murals have been seen by over 250,000 people, but the HSA only has 20,000 visitors a year. Encouraged CB12 members to help spread the word and to come visit themselves. The HSA is trying to revamp its website. Questions: Mr. Ramadan commended Mr. Florio's vigor and enthusiasm. We always feared the HSA would leave the neighborhood; we are glad that this treasure is staying, is reaching out to the community and being more inviting. Ms. Luna reiterated many complaints about problems in the past and is glad to see this changing. Ms. Mulligan suggested that the HSA try other means of advertising, such as on-line posts and advertising in the local paper. TF: we have virtually no marketing budget, since we charge no admission. Rita McKee also thanked Mr. Florio for the museum's renewed efforts, particularly in light of proscribed arts programming in schools, and thanked him for an informative, inspiring presentation. Vivian Ducat asked why there is no signage for the museum in the local train station, which is odd given that the Morris-Jumel Mansion has its own plaque. TF: we spoke to MTA; they said we're already on the map in the station, but it's small and hard to see. We also applied to DOT to get signage on the Parkway. Ms. Lorris Ritter invited Mr. Florio to work with the Parks & Cultural Affairs Committee to get the word out more. Ms. Cardona suggested that perhaps the Landmarks Preservation Commission could help with getting special plaques. Also, what kinds of volunteers do you need?; perhaps the Board can act as a resource to get the word out. For more information, contact Mr. Florio at (212) 926-2234 ext.209 or visit www.hispanicsociety.org / www.uptowntreasures.org.

Public Speakers' Session (8:32pm)

George Espinal, Inwood Youth Council: the Council has selected six youth for the council. Beginning next month, you will see them here, in CBOs, etc, to identify five key community issues. Keep in touch so we can get information from your CBOs.

Betty Lehman, Isabella Geriatric Center: expanding home care program; moving home care services to a new facility at 218th Street & Broadway. Also starting a school for home health aides, opening in April. The training will be free of charge; will provide uniforms and employment opportunities. Currently looking for a Human Resources Manager and an RN instructor.

Monique Martin, Director of Operations, City Parks Foundation: Described upcoming programming at Highbridge Park: planning another season of community programming, including more youth programs.

Ruben Dario Vargas, resident: The intersection of Dyckman Street and Broadway northbound to turn left to get onto the Parkway is an accident waiting to happen; we need a left arrow. Mark Levine responded that this very intersection was the topic of a lengthy discussion at the December Traffic & Transportation Committee meeting and that DOT is undertaking a study of that intersection due to the confusion and danger, including a fatality in November. Mr. Vargas also observed that with regard to Post Offices, we need neighborhood people working at our branches; then maybe we wouldn't have problems, since they would know the area.

Maria Luna, Salsa, Shamrocks & Blues 5K Race: the event – the tenth annual – will be held, as always, the first Sunday in March, this year on March 2nd. Invited all to volunteer, to run and to spread the word to volunteers and runners alike – particularly school groups and community youth – to help make the event work. This event is the kickoff for the New York Road Runners Club season, which concludes in November with the NYC Marathon. Announced an organizing committee meeting the following evening.

Jeffrey Laufer, CB12: Thanked everybody for their support and encouragement. Noted that even though he will be employed elsewhere, he is not leaving the community. His new boss, Councilwoman Annabel Palma (Bronx, D#18) sits on the Land Use Committee, so he will continue to fight for community interests in that arena. Stated that he learned a lot and met a lot of good people during his tenure at the Board, and enjoyed his time here. There was much applause. Also promised to run the March 5k race. The Chair presented Mr. Laufer with a framed certificate: "with warm affection and deepest appreciation for your devoted service and outstanding work with members of Community Board 12, Manhattan."

Committee Reports (please note in addition to Committee minutes) (8:47pm):

Cheryl Pahaham for Housing & Human Services: Our previous meeting regarding the project at 29 Overlook Terrace was contentious. Councilman Jackson's staff is working with DEP to come up with a noise mitigation plan. The Committee passed a resolution proposing revised rules for DEP. A vote on this resolution was deferred for a few minutes while the Board had a chance to review a different version of the same resolution that was passed by the Health Committee at its meeting.

Wayne Benjamin for Land Use (8:53pm): Wayne Benjamin provided a brief overview of the way-finding signage project undertaken by New York Presbyterian Hospital/Columbia University Medical Center and presented the resolution passed by the Land Use committee in support of the zoning variance sought from the BSA by the Medical Center for the Board's consideration. Ms. Morik answered some questions about specific signs, noting that the waiver was needed since some signage gets obstructed by traffic, buses, etc., and that the signs are illuminated and on emergency generator. Mr. Benjamin noted that much information is included in handouts, adding that most of the signage is acceptable under current zoning, and only three needed a waiver. The resolution passed 24-0-1-1. Mr. Benjamin advised that the Department of City Planning will attend the February Land Use Committee meeting further to discuss the proposed Sherman Creek rezoning study in the context of the resolution this Board passed in November 2007, which recommended modifications to the proposed rezoning.

he joint resolution of the Housing/Human Services & Health/Environment Committees passed unanimously (26 votes) without discussion. (9:02pm)

Lead Ramadan for Economic Development (9:05pm): There was no discussion on the five resolutions presented.

- #1 recommending that the SLA reject a new On-Premises Liquor License at 431 Café Inc. We did not even entertain this application: it's a truck, and a truck is not an official address in NYC. The resolution passed unanimously (24 votes).
- #2 recommending that the SLA reject a renewal On-Premises Liquor License El Rey de Mambi, 558 W 181st St., passed unanimously (24 votes).
- #3 stating that CB12 has no objection to a renewal On-Premises Liquor License at 107 West Restaurant, 811 W 187 passed 22-2-0-0.
- #4 stating that CB12 has no objection to a renewal On-Premises Liquor License at El Monte Restaurant, 2153 Amsterdam passed 21-3-0-0.
- #5 stating that CB12 has no objection to TLC License renewal for Discovery Car Service, 147 Post Ave., passed unanimously (24 votes).

Mark Levine for Traffic & Transportation (9:17pm): Presented resolution in support of co-naming of SE corner 190/Audubon for Miguel Amaro, founder of Dominican Day Parade. Died 20 years ago. Family has been working for 2-3 years on this honor. No questions, some clarifying additions and grammatical changes. Brief remarks by his daughter, Judith Amaro. Maria, who knew him, made supportive comments: a nice man, a good example of what immigrants can do when they come to this country. The resolution passed unanimously (26 votes). Announced presentation at February meeting on PlaNYC.

Steve Simon for Health & Environment (9:24pm): Committee covered wide range of issues at its last meeting; suggests that Board members read minutes. Guest speaker at the February meeting will be Director of Technical Services, DEP's Bureau of Environmental Compliance, who will discuss how it handles air and noise pollution and other complaints from our district. If you have issues to be raised, please let me know or let Board office know. Our community has among highest number noise complaints in NYC. Other speaker will be from the Health Corps, a group based in high schools that was formed by NYPH's well known Dr. Mehmet Oz; he'll discuss its involvement with the City's Healthy Bodega Initiative. We have continued to follow up on issues arising from the M29 transmission line project. Board Chair Velazquez, T&T Chair Levine and H&E Chair Simon sent a letter to DOT requesting that certain orders by the PSC and other safeguards be attached to the street excavation permit to be issued by DOT.

George Espinal for Youth & Education (9:28pm): In the absence of minutes, Mr. Espinal summarized the events of the last meeting: a presentation from a new youth environmental group, "Go Evergreen Kids"; a presentation by CUNY in the Heights, and a discussion of IEP diplomas. Mr. Espinal presented a letter from Committee to the School Construction Authority regarding possible building sites. Mr. Espinal was reminded that any correspondence from the Board of a policy nature (i.e., other than routine logistical or service correspondence, which properly comes from the staff) must go out over the Board Chair's signature, not from an individual Committee member or Chair.

Emilia Cardona for Public Safety (9:52pm): see minutes. Next month trying to have Traffic Enforcement Agents for public safety issues. Please let the Committee know if you have specific areas of concern, so they can be prepared to answer our questions. Ms. McKee noted that Transportation Alternatives lists the intersection of 181st Street & Broadway as the most dangerous intersection in NYC. Although this is a T&T matter, it is also a PS matter, which is why this committee is looking at this issue.

Elizabeth Lorris Ritter for Parks & Cultural Affairs (9:33pm): refer to minutes. January Committee meeting was very productive focusing on parks issues in Inwood, with particular attention to Sherman Creek Street end parks, Harlem River waterfront and Inwood Hill Park. Re Dyckman marina RFPs, no concessionaire(s) yet selected; finalists still being vetted through the City's VENDEX system and Department of Investigation.

Reports from Elected Officials' representatives (9:34pm): Rafael Escaño of Comptroller Bill Thompson's office, for the second time, was the only elected official's representative to stay to the end; this was acknowledged with applause. He respects the Board's decision to move this section to end and has no problem staying to the end, but wishes that board members and members of the public would stay to the end as well. Shared highlights from written report, which was distributed.

There followed a brief discussion on the extent to which the Board is served by having elected officials' representatives speak at the end. Francisco Guzman said their input should be considered before resolutions are up for vote. Ms. Lorris Ritter says that if the representatives are speaking to a specific item up for a vote, then they could speak earlier in the agenda, but since their job usually is to listen to the proceedings, and perhaps to report on items other than those being considered by resolutions, there is no reason for them not to be at the end of the agenda. Mr. Ramadan argued for representatives speaking earlier in the agenda; Mr. Berlin said that they can stay to the meeting's end if they want to speak; Ms. Morik reiterated that their main job is to listen, not to speak. Mr. Guzman cautioned all assembled not to attack the character of those who leave early, or laud that of those who stay. Mr. Escaño agreed that we should all show courtesy to each other.

There being no new business, the meeting was adjourned at 9:42pm upon a motion by Mr. Simon, which was seconded by acclamation.

Respectfully submitted, Elizabeth Lorris Ritter, Secretary

Economic Development Committee, Community Board 12 (Manhattan)
January 8, 2008

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Zead Ramadan, Chair
Tony Lopez
Rita L. McKee

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

Julio Peguero, *Assistant Chair*
Rafael Osoria
Nelson Rojas
Ruddy Santana
Janifer Wilson

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Martin Collins

Guests: P.O. Kelly, P.O. Dinella (34th Pct); Rosa Santos (Coquitos Bar); Ligia Fernandez, Mercedes Veras, Agustina Guzman, Anamaria Arias, John Cichon, Elizabeth Cichon (3920 Bway Assoc).

Meeting called to order at 6:10 pm.

Absent a quorum, the Chair amended the agenda to hear complaints from six residents of the 40-unit residential building adjacent to La Parrilla Restaurant (OPL license number 1105757), 3920 Broadway between 164th and 165th Streets. These residents addressed the committee regarding quality-of-life problems they were experiencing with La Parilla:

- Excessively loud music beginning at 8:30 pm and continuing until 4 am, Thursday through Sunday, resulting in continual sleep deprivation, stress, and disruption of normal life activities;
- heavy vibration of floors, ceilings, walls, windows and furnishings within apartments;
- presence of restaurant patrons in the residential foyer, engaging in loitering, drinking, smoking, use of illegal substances, and disruptively loud conversations;
- noise filtering into residential foyer through a connecting exit door from the restaurant, which is often propped open, contrary to regulations;
- refusal of La Parilla to cease or contain offensive behaviors and noise, despite repeated in-person pleas to the restaurant management, letters to building management, and repeated calls to 311 and to the 33rd Precinct;
- hostile responses from restaurant personnel to complaints (eg., security personnel told building resident, "Tough shit, get used to [the vibration and noise];" building resident refused admission to speak with owner, and was physically restrained from entering);
- noncompliance with previous orders for the restaurant to install mitigating soundproofing solutions (La Parilla was previously fined and a noise abatement plan was required);
- weekend movement of tables and chairs in the restaurant to make room for a dance floor (La Parilla does not have a cabaret license), as heard by residents in adjacent apartments.

In Fall 2004 and 2005, representatives from Community Board 12, the 33rd Precinct and the Department of Environment Protection met with the owners to address noise and public safety concerns; the owners promised to follow the noise mitigation and safety recommendations. The Department of Health recently closed La Parrilla, which since reopened. On December 15, 2007, DEP cited La Parilla as being in violation of NYC noise ordinances (Violation #1791638), and has scheduled a hearing for January 29, 2008.

The Chair assured residents CB12 would send a letter to La Parilla, with copies to the 33rd Precinct, the DEP and the Tenants Association for 3920 Broadway, regarding their complaints. The letter will establish a deadline for compliance with recommended solutions. The Committee further notes that La Parilla's OPL renewal date is April 30, 2008.

Representatives of Coquitos, located at 178 Sherman Avenue also appeared before the Committee, although not on the listed agenda. The applicants had not attended the EDC hearing for their application (CB12 passed a resolution that did not recommend an On Premises Liquor license). Representatives were informed that Coquitos is less than 200 feet from a planned public school and a new liquor license cannot be granted per the Alcoholic

Coverage Control Law, the maximum license allowed is Restaurant Beer and Wine. Applicants understand that no liquor license can be issued because of the school's proximity.

Although a vote could not be taken at the meeting regarding applications on the agenda, and no applicants appeared before the committee to answer questions, representatives of the 34th Precinct spoke regarding the SLA applications of El Rey Del Mambi, 558 W. 181st Street; 431 Café Inc, 431 W. 202nd Street; Oleaga Sports Lounge, 3950 Tenth Avenue; 107 West Restaurant, 811 W. 187th Street; and TLC applicant Discovery Transportation Corp., 147 Post Avenue; see their opinions below:

- **El Rey Del Mambi:** 34th Precinct reports numerous noise complaints; arrests for marijuana use, sexual abuse, gun possessions, and slashings. The precinct strongly urges the Committee to recommend NO RENEWAL of the Restaurant Beer and Wine License.
- **431 Café, Inc.:** 34th Precinct provided photographic evidence that the venue in question is, in fact, a truck – which cannot be issued an On-Premises Liquor License. The precinct strongly urges the Committee to recommend REJECTION of the new application.
- **Oleaga Sports Lounge:** 34th Precinct has concerns of another large capacity “club” opening in Inwood near a public school. They strongly urge the Committee to recommend REJECTION of a new On-Premises Liquor License.
- **107 West Restaurant:** 34th Precinct has no complaints or objections to a renewal of the On-Premises Liquor License application.
- **Discovery Transportation Corp.:** 34th Precinct has no complaints or objections to a renewal of the TLC license.

CB member Martin Collins expressed concerns about the following issues:

- 1) Café Espresso, 4932 Broadway at 207th Street applied December 17, 2007 for a new OPL license (#1202965) but never notified CB12, in violation of the ABC Law which requires an applicant to notify the board 30 days before filing an application with the SLA. Mr. Collins recommended CB12 send a letter to SLA Chair Daniel Boyle as soon as possible, and the Chair concurred.
- 2) GT Vinoteca, 1-15 Bennett Ave., applied for an On Premises Liquor license (#1200260) on October 17, 2007. They approached EDC and we heard discussion re a Restaurant Beer and Wine license only (Committee vote was split, 4-4; no vote was taken at the General Meeting due to the lack of a quorum). The Chair will direct a letter to SLA urging that no OPL be issued, and because the 34th Precinct does not support the application.
- 3) Two new establishments are opening in Inwood: Oleaga Lounge, 10th Avenue between 212-213th Street (see previous comments by 34th Precinct) will hold at least 250 people. The community has not been involved in the process and must be notified; also, Seaman Cassandra, 4020 10th Avenue between 214-215th Streets is under construction; the premises is on the second floor of the Seaman Car Base station. The community should also be involved in discussion of this application.
- 4) The Economic Development Committee's agenda is not listed in the Manhattan Times; not listed on CB12's web page; and no flyers are posted to inform community residents of the applications. The SLA's ability to judge whether a license should be granted is enhanced when community residents, law enforcement and community boards are all involved in the process; with the omission of an agenda, the community's residents cannot be involved. Mr. Collins requested that flyers be posted and will send the Chair flyers that were previously used to notify the community.

Meeting adjourned at 7:30 pm.

- Respectfully submitted by Rita L. McKee

HOUSING & HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE MINUTES

January 10, 2008

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Cheryl Pahaham, chair
Kotie Cannon
Edith Prentiss
Rolando Rodriguez
Carole Mulliga

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

Glenda Swanson Massa, Asst.Chair
Rolando Cespedes

GUESTS: Roger Montesano FDNY, Ana Reyes, Johannes Von Seckendorff, April Greenwood, Marianne Filippone, Howard Levitsky, Bernard Zalon, Anthony Szuzvek, Candi Cordes, CM Robert Jackson, Wendyl Olivo, George Torres, Janickay Sofia, Kelly Foster, Timothy Foster, Roger Montesano, Leah Donaldson, George Murray, Brian Edwards, Cheyenne Gross, Roy Montalvo-Principal Inspector NYC DEP, Harry Meyer- Director of tech Services, Effie Ardizzone-DEP, Humberto Galarza-DEP, Stephen Baltzer-Marson CC, Mark Tosolini, Liliya Cherepanova, Simeon Banister, Pat Alfarano, Anthony Parson

=====

Cheryl Pahaham began the meeting at 7:10 PM in the lobby of 40 Haven Avenue, stating that City agency representatives were present to answer questions that had been submitted in advance by the Committee, and to answer the residents' own questions about construction at 29 Overlook Terrace. She asked attendees to sign-up in advance if they wanted to ask questions, which they could do after the City agency representatives finished responding to the Committee's questions.

Department of Buildings (DOB)

1. DOB could not bring a copy of the vibration monitoring report because it required a Freedom of Information Law request of the Police Department, since the report provided information about New York City Transit Authority tunnels. However, DOB determined that the developer had "gone above and beyond what was required," including installing ground vibration sensors in nearby buildings, and that the developer would stop construction if there was any movement noted in surrounding buildings. DOB inspectors were on-site. DOB recommended that residents call 311.
2. DOB received six complaints regarding 29 Overlook Terrace construction regarding illegal tree removal, work beyond permit, and the structural stability of the surrounding site.
3. When approving project permits, DOB does not take into consideration drains and demand for utilities; this is the responsibility of DEP once a project begins.
4. When approving construction permits, DOB only deals with the building code. No other factors, such as the availability of parking, or school crowding, are taken into consideration.
5. DOB does not require developers to submit a traffic mitigation; the Department of Transportation would do this.

Department of Environmental Protection (DEP)

1. The construction noise task force has always included community board members as representatives of the public. Community Board members did participate in the last revision to the City's noise code.

2. DEP received 101 noise complaints regarding 29 Overlook Terrace.
3. 95 complaints were investigated; no violations were found. 5 complaints were still open.
4. See response to question 3.
5. DEP representatives appeared to have difficulty explaining the construction noise code. After some discussion, it became apparent that the DEP brochure, "Have You Heard? New York City Has Overhauled Its Noise Code!" contained misleading statements, such as that on page 4 "Prohibited noises are those that exceed ambient sound levels by more than 10 decibels as measured from inside any property or on a public street at 15 feet from the source." Residents interpreted this to mean that the DEP should have found noise violations at 29 Overlook. However, DEP stated that the summary applied to "general construction noise," and not to the specific construction noises emanating from 29 Overlook Terrace. DEP representatives clarified that each piece of heavy noise making machinery had its own maximum allowable decibels. The DEP had tested complaints about the use of the hoe ram at the site and found that the hoe ram's noise registered 86 decibels measured 50 feet away from the ram. The City's maximum noise level for hoe rams was 90 decibels. The DEP would recommend that the developer provide a more effective noise muffler for the hoe ram.
6. DEP stated that there was no follow-up with residents by DEP to let them know how their noise complaints were investigated; many complaints were anonymous.
7. DEP does not notify developers in advance of inspecting a site and did not notify the project managers at 29 Overlook Terrace that it would be inspecting. DEP noted that it generally receives cooperation from construction sites when it investigates complaints.
8. See response to question 7.
9. DEP representatives did bring a copy of the noise mitigation plan; although they noted that the plan was posted at the construction site as required. DEP did not discuss the plan, however.
10. In response to the suggestion that DEP create a web-based database of construction noise complaints, DEP representatives stated that residents could call 311 or their community boards.
11. In response to questions about sound barriers, DEP stated that it would be asking the developer to expand the sound barrier around the site and that the developer needed to obtain the permission of owners of surrounding buildings to use their property to do so.
12. DEP stated that developers do not submit noise mitigation plans to the DEP because the plans are "self-enforced and change every day." DEP only monitors complaints from individuals.
13. Regarding future construction projects in Community District 12, the DEP repeated that it would only monitor individual complaints and the way to find out about investigations of construction noise complaints is to call 311.

Cheryl Pahaham announced that residents could ask questions.

In response to a question about how long the noise would go on, the developer Mr. Thompson stated that all of the hard rock would be removed in about 6 weeks. Next, there would be backfilling noise and light drilling, probably more outside construction noise for 5 to 7 months.

Another resident asked where residents would be able to park once the construction was completed and where the entrance to the new building would be. The developer responded that his workers would not be competing with residents for parking spaces and that the building would have two entrances—one on Fort Washington and one on Overlook Terrace.

A resident noted that the sound barrier on Overlook Terrace did not provide enough coverage. DEP stated that it recommended that the barrier flank the fence behind the building on Fort Washington and that with permission of the other building owners and cooperation of the developer, the area would be blanketed with an acoustical barrier, but that the barrier was unlikely to stop the echo or block sound.

Another resident asked from what distance the DEP measured the noise from the hoe ram. DEP noted that it got lower readings on Overlook Terrace than behind the building. DEP offered to take reading from the resident's apartment.

A resident commented that she was not aware of the construction and that a tower would be built. She was "appalled" that the developer was permitted to destroy the neighborhood.

Yet another resident commented that they as renters would receive no benefit from all of this disruption because they were not owners who would see their property appreciate in value. The developer replied that he was rebuilding the subway station on Overlook and Fort Washington and installing a watering system in Bennett Park and renovating the Fort Tryon youth center. Regarding building a new library, he stated that he did not think that would happen and that the public library was not interested in this offer.

Another resident complained that the luxury tower would destroy the character of the community; that a finding of no violations in 101 complaints meant that inspections were not being properly done; that residents received no feedback from DEP and that complaints got merged.

There were additional comments and questions from residents. After some discussion, it was implied that fines imposed for noise complaints might not be substantial enough to deter excessive noise and that imposing fines took too long—in the meantime, residents would still endure noise. Idling dump trucks had been an issue for some residents, but the developer's project managers stated that they no longer let dump trucks idle at the site.

DEP also announced that in consultation with Councilmember Robert Jackson, the agency asked the developer to submit another noise mitigation plan in a letter dated January 7, 2008. The developer must review the proposal and can choose whether to comply.

Cheryl Pahaham thanked the City agency representatives for attending, at which point, the meeting paused while attendees chatted among themselves and others departed. About 10 minutes later, Cheryl Pahaham and Edith Prentiss announced that the meeting would resume to consider a draft resolution on construction noise. Three residents stepped forward to participate in the discussion; one asked for more time to review the draft and did not vote. The Committee voted in favor of the resolution.

Vote on Draft Resolution

Committee Members:

4-Yes

1-No
Members of the Public:
2-Yes
1-No

After this vote, the meeting adjourned at 9 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Cheryl Pahaham, January 15, 2008

Traffic & Transportation Committee Minutes

January 7, 2008

Committee Members Present

Mark Levine, Chair
James Berlin
Edith Prentiss
Anita Barberis

Committee Members Excused

Beatrice Hall, Asst. Chair
Dr. James Freeman
Johnathan Tasani

C.B. 12 Members Present

Martin Collins
Obie Bing
Maria Luna

Guests:

Julio Bautista, Carol Blagman, Maurice Bruet, Phyllis Smiaski.

Chair Levine welcomed the committee and guests at 7:10pm with an announcement that Edith Prentiss was appointed by Governor Spitzer to the NYT Citizens Advocates Council.

Obie Bing and Martin Collins detailed the traffic coordination during the construction of the Con Edison's transmission line being installed between 204 and 219 Street (1.5 miles). Upon December 12, 2007 receipt from the Public Service Commission evaluation, Con Edison is responsible for the following in our community:

- Should provide uniformed officers for traffic control along impacted areas of Broadway due to busses being re-routed thus removing bus stops and access to the school and loss of parking spaces.
- Should restore affected roadways by milling and repaving the entire width of travel lanes including parking lanes or damage due to construction.
- Agreed to comply with all applicable noise ordinances governing this project (noise mitigation)
- Agreed to notify all affected entities to inspect the condition of their equipment to repair or replace while street is open.
- Repaving of area will be done within three months of initial excavation, but not more than six months for permanent repair of affected roadway.

Maurice Breuet, Deputy Commissioner of Manhattan DOT, was concerned that the evaluation of the equipment by other agencies may cause repaving to be delayed if their equipment needs to be replaced or repaired.- which could be another 12-16 months.

Edith Prentiss was concerned about the bus stops being returned to their original site along with appropriate signage. However, it was also an opportunity for bus pads to be installed in those stops if they do not presently exist; Mr. Breuet stated that 2008 had no bus pad contracts.

For more details, there is an Environmental Management and Construction Plan for anyone who would like to review the PSC orders. Chair Levine complimented both Obie and Martin on their dedicated time and detailed diligence advocating on behalf of our community.

Update by DOT of projects in our community:

- Sherman Creek Traffic Study- Selected 13 intersections to look at, but this has been delayed due to the fact that the same consultant is doing the EIS for the Dept. of Planning as well as the Traffic Study for DOT. Consequently, the traffic study will not be completed until next fall – a year late. Also the Urban Design Guidelines have been revised based on no-build, which is no increase in density. So, both of these studies will be presented to our community jointly.
- Public Toilet at Wadsworth Avenue and 181 Street – Although promised this fall, it will be delayed until the spring of 2008 as the only other one in Manhattan, located at Madison Square Park, has not been completed.
- Reopening of Henry Hudson Parkway at 181 Street – Markings on the parkway need to be removed first and the weather must be above 40 to do that work, so resurfacing will be in the spring of 2008 and it is the responsibility of NYState DOT. It was noted by J. Berlin that work on the wall at 181 Street is scheduled and would not be completed for another twelve months. This would change the timing for opening the Henry Hudson Parkway. DOT will confirm work and calendar. As the area just north of 1380 Riverside Dr. is city property, Parks will replant trees and the Arterial Maintenance Division will cleanup the sidewalk area.

Another request from a resident to correct the signage to deter traffic to HHP as it is closed to vehicular traffic.

A request from the daughter of Miguel Amaro to co-name a corner (to be selected) of 190th Street and Audubon Avenue "Miguel Amaro Way." A discussion ensued, only to be resolved by a vote in favor of the request.

Meeting adjourned: 8:53PM

Respectfully submitted by Anita Barberis

HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES – January 10, 2008

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT – Steve Simon, Chair, Isaiah Bing, Rolando Cespedes, Martin Collins, Beatrice Hall, Helen Morik, Pamela Palanque North.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT – Matt Chachere (Public Member).

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Manny Velazquez. **STAFF:** Ebenezer Smith, Adolfo Cuevas.

GUESTS: Dr. Angela Campbell, John Culpepper (Lower Wash. Heights Neighborhood Assn.), Harry Mayer (DEP), Arnold Wendroff.

1. S. Simon called the meeting to order at 7:20 p.m., noting that this is the first meeting in awhile attended by all the board members on the committee.
2. **Cell Phone Antennas** – District Manager Ebenezer Smith addressed an issue raised by Edith Prentiss at our last meeting – the possible negative effects from the placement of six cellular phone antennas on top of the Hilltop Pharmacy, a one-story building at Fort Washington Ave. and W. 187th Street. He reported that he received this complaint at the end of November and has been looking into it since then. He contacted the NYC Dept. of Health and Dept. of Environmental Protection. There is very little information available on the subject, no legislation or regulations, as reported recently by the Manhattan Times. He is continuing to investigate the matter and is trying to determine what device was used to measure excessive microwave emissions from across the street, as reported by E. Prentiss. He plans to check with the FCC and the Governor's Office and will report back to the committee.
3. **Mercury Contamination in the Community** – Arnold Wendroff, Ph.D, Mercury Poisoning Project
 - Mercury is generally used in thermometers and filling cavities but also as part of a ritual in Santeria based on the belief that it attracts good luck and repels bad luck.
 - He discovered the potential problem of mercury contamination in residences when he taught JHS science to special ed class in Brooklyn in 1989. In a lesson about the Table of Elements, a student told him that his mother sprinkles mercury on the floor of their apartment. It sinks into porous flooring and remains for decades.
 - Mercury causes crankiness, irritability, anorexia, shyness. The student had symptoms of extreme shyness.
 - No published cases – no one has looked into it.
 - 1995 survey of sales in Brooklyn and Manhattan botanicas found that they sold 25,000-155,000 samples of mercury. 99% are sold without warning labels required by the Consumer Product Safety Commission.
 - Typical container has 10 grams of mercury. Thermometer contains .7 of 1 gram.
 - He believes government agencies must determine the answers to three questions: Is mercury vapor present in apartments? Is it being absorbed by the occupants? Is the absorbed mercury causing illness?

Velazquez: We have to be sensitive to the fact that botanicas are affiliated with individuals' religious practices. We should look to education first.

Morik: Some religious practices are outlawed, such as animal sacrifices.

Wendroff continued his presentation:

- It has never been demonstrated that this particular exposure is harmful.
- Vapors are odorless, colorless.
- In 2002, DEP found a disproportionately high level of mercury at the Wards Island sewage treatment plant, which serves East Harlem and southeast corner of Washington Heights – 1/10th of the amount found citywide.
- In 2003, DEP did a targeted analysis of wastewater in sewer at St. Nicholas Ave. & W. 175th St. and found excess amount of mercury, ten times normal amount.

Mayer (Director of Technical Services, DEP Bureau of Air, Noise & Hazardous Materials): agrees that mercury is a long-term problem, but not aware of any data confirming contamination problem. DEP does not normally test for mercury vapor indoors. (At Chair's request, he agreed to check with his office for data on complaints relating to use of mercury in apartments. He will attend next committee meeting in February to discuss this matter as well as why WH-I had the highest number of air pollution complaints in Manhattan in December as well as 120 open tickets, the

third highest number of complaints awaiting a DEP response.)

Wendroff: City should test for mercury vapor in public hallways in housing projects, as was done in Union City, N.J.

- Lumex mercury vapor analyzer, portable device, costs \$20,000. DOH has it.
- DOH tested 15-20 botanicas in Brooklyn in 2000 and found that a number had elevated mercury vapor levels and that there were excessive levels in apartments on higher floors of buildings. No enforcement action taken.
- A survey of sales by local botanicas was done by an Inwood environmental group 17 years ago.
- This issue opens up a Pandora's box: lots of kids with learning disabilities are impacted. Enormous economic and political ramifications. "Educated elites of these communities are exquisitely embarrassed by this practice."

4. **Resolution on Construction Noise** – The committee reviewed a resolution on construction noise drafted by Cheryl Pahaham, chair of the Housing & Human Services Committee. Several amendments were proposed. M. Collins moved that the resolution be approved with the proviso that we work with the HHS Committee to incorporate the amendments. Adopted by a vote of 6-0-0-0.

5. **Update on M29 Transmission Line Project** – I. Bing reported that he and H. Morik spoke at Community Board 8-Bronx meeting Tuesday night, urging it to adopt companion resolutions to the three recently adopted by Board 12 calling for utility rate reductions for affected parties, curb-to-curb roadway restoration and a rodent control strategy. He and Helen received a warm reception from Board 8, Council Member G. Oliver Koppell and Assemblymember Jeffrey Dinowitz.
- H&E Committee should pass a resolution calling upon the PSC to require that Con Edison submit noise and traffic mitigation plans with future applications for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need.
 - Spoke to Borough President Stringer, who wants the construction task force, which last met in October, to move ahead.

It was agreed that we should invite Mayra Linares, Con Edison's community liaison, to attend committee meetings monthly to update us on the project. We will compile list of items we are due to receive from Con Ed to discuss with her. M. Collins reported that Maurice Bruet, DOT deputy borough commissioner, recommended that CB12 send a letter to DOT specifying conditions we would like added to the street excavation permit to be issued to Con Ed, including the replacement of bus pads. M. Collins offered to draft letter.

6. **Green Cart and Recycled Plastic Bags Legislation** – Copies of the bill pending in the City Council to authorize 1,500 new permits for vendors selling fresh produce were distributed. 200 permits would be allocated to Manhattan, with WH-I as one of the target areas. It was agreed that the committee will review the bill and discuss it next month. S. Simon said he asked the District Manager to check on whether CB 12 would have input on selecting sites for vendors. A NY Times article reporting that the Council passed a bill requiring stores to accept plastic bags for recycling also was distributed. It was agreed that more research would be done and this matter also would be discussed further next month.

7. **New Business** – I. Bing reported that he reviewed the environmental site assessment prepared by Rocky Mount Baptist Church for an 18-story mixed-use building it plans to build on its current site on Hillside Avenue. He spoke to their engineers and questioned the estimated electrical loads and asked them to do more test pitting to check for ground water to see whether land can support a high-rise structure. He also reviewed the brownfield cleanup plan for 4566 Broadway (Nagle Ave.), the site of a former gas station where an apartment building is planned. He spoke to the engineers and reviewed the plan for removal of hazardous materials.

P. North: we should look into two issues recently reported in the NY Times – 181% increase in cost of prescription drugs and study finding a disparity in the dispensing of pain-killing medicine to different ethnic groups. She will e-mail articles to committee members.

8. **Mail** – PSC sent a notice concerning public hearings on Jan 8-23 regarding Con Edison's request for a \$1.225 billion rate hike "to support investments in electric delivery infrastructure [presumably including the M29 transmission line and substation project] and demand reduction and energy efficiency initiatives, among other areas."

9. The meeting was adjourned at 9:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, S. Simon

YOUTH & EDUCATION COMMITTEE MINUTES

Jan 7, 2008

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Albania Jimenez, Chair
Jackie Rowe Adams
George Espinal
Maria Luna

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

Jose Lopez
Rolando Cespedes
Jose Lopez
Carol Mulligan
Cleofis C. Sarete

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Martin Collins
Jeffrey Laufer

GUESTS: Peter Sigrist, Mu-Ying Lin, Erik Carlson, Aldrin Rafael Bonilla, Mary Luz Pisani.

Meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Albania Jimenez, Chair of the Youth & Education Committee.

Go Evergreen Kids Presentation

Go Evergreen Kids is a website where kids can find and contribute ideas on saving energy and preserving the environment. It is the cause of environmental sustainability and learn a great deal in the process. We welcome every school in our neighborhood to join us!

Launch date January 19, 2008

CUNY in the Heights

Offering several Continuing Education & Professional Studies Programs.

Interboro School closed however, CUNY in the Heights is seeking to help students attain their G.E.D.

CUNY in the Heights is offering College for Kids programs in two sessions. If those students who have children can enroll their child in College for Kids while they attend their courses at CUNY in the Heights.

Only the State of New York can offer G.E.D. Diploma.

Certain students receive an I.E.P. High School Diploma which basically is worthless in college according to a representative from CUNY in the Heights. Students with disabilities receive I.E.P'S from their High Schools they attend.

Committee is seeking to invite principals to the committee meeting to discuss possible ways to improve the education offered to the students who attend their institutions.

I.S. 90-Traffic Condition

During dismissal many accidents have taken place.

The CEC just recently passed a resolution in regards to this issue. The CEC will forward the resolution to Chairwoman Lopez.

Santiago Taveras (DOE- E.d. of School Quality) 212-374-6862 Stavera@nycboe.net

Incident involving Youth occurred earlier today around George Washington High School.

NYPL-Inwood short in staff

Washington Heights- short in staff

NYPL undergoing major transformation.

Chairwoman Lopez is trying to create a Sub-committee so committee members can visit different community schools. The committee will begin to evaluate and assess schools with visits.

Write to SCA for potential new schools.(Martin will e-mail more information potential sites)

Motion to adjourn by George Espinal 2nd by Albania Lopez

Meeting adjourned 8:35pm

Minutes submitted by George Espinal

Public Safety Committee Meeting Minutes
January 9, 2008

Committee Member

Emilia Cardona, Chair
Jennifer Araujo
George Espinal
Rolando Rodriguez
Francisco Guzman

Committee Absentees

Aidee Camacho
Dr. Joyce Humber-Faison
Dr. James Freeman
Julissa Gomez

Board Members Present

Manny Velazquez, Chair

Staff Attending: Adolfo Cuevas, Community Service Aide

Guests:

Deputy Inspector Joseph Dowling, NYPD 33rd Pct., PO Tony Trinidad- 34th Precinct, Phil Zablocki-WHYC, Lt. Kenneth Scianna, Julia Marsh-Manhattan Times, Kevin William-Dreamers, Francine Scott, Joselinne Minaya-DA's Office

Meeting convened at 7:05pm by Chair, Emilia Cardona

Lt. Kenneth Scianna reported on **Youth Officers**. He began by addressing the incident nr. GW High School which was handled by patrol officers. Two male students were assaulted near W. 191st Street. (see reference 3 pages)

Youth Officer position was created to curb issues which may arise at schools. YO are chosen by Commanding Officer of the precinct. They are chosen based on personality, ability to work with youth.

There is no training to become a Youth Officer(YO)but when they are appointed training is provided. CO has a "cast" meeting at least once a quarter. YO's and community affairs personnel also attend.

- Statistics are not kept by YO's, but by the school
- Crimes do get reported
- Minor crimes get reported under juvenile stats
- Working hours are consistent with the schedule of the school to which the officers are assigned to
- 33rd precinct has two YO's currently
- If assigned to a high school, the number of officers will increase to address the needs of the high school
- School safety division falls under the jurisdiction of the commanding officer
- Recently the 33rd pct. Put their public safety division through some gang training
- The 33rd pct. does not do workshops for teens but they have the "Explorers" program for youth 14 to 21yrs of age

Due to a barrage of questions the report was interrupted

Questions from the floor:

- ❖ Civil rights; implementing positive behaviors and habits to our youth
- ❖ What types of programs can be provided
- ❖ Armory Track & Field a possibility
- ❖ More officers in Washington Heights
- ❖ Areas where there is a spike in crimes are visited by our Impact Response Team (IRT), mobile units which periodically work out of the precincts

PO Tony Trinidad, 34th Pct. also provided the group with info regarding the DARE and GRADE programs which can be a resource. The community can reach out to their national headquarters and let them know where the help is needed.

The 33rd pct. also; provides more specific work where the students are impacted thru school and home surroundings. Home visits are made, just last year alone; an outreach of 150 visits were made and at year end 130 visits had been successfully addressed.

Other options are certainly in place when Juveniles are already in the system. A judge assigns mentor to them thru what is known as a "Person in Need of Supervision" PINS warrant. Client to keep weekly appointed visits.

In retrospect, the stabbing incident near George Washington High School continues to make our youth vulnerable to their environment. Victim lived in Bronx and attended the school. Perp lived in the Washington Heights area. Youth violence in our area is considered on a decline overall.

George Espinal (Bd. Member) commented that many of the issues that occur with youth occur on our Transit system; in his opinion.....officers present disagreed.

Recapping the meeting

1. One idea is for the Public Safety Committee to create a list of community organizations which can serve to deter youth crime.
2. A goal of the Public Safety Committee is to partner up with Youth & Ed Committee for future collaborations concerning Youth issues.

Meeting adjourned 8:50pm

Submitted by Francisco Guzman, transcribed by D. Blow

PARKS & CULTURAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE MINUTES –January 15, 2008

Committee Members Present

Elizabeth Lorris Ritter, Chair
Jennifer Araujo
Francisco Guzman
Adolfo Cuevas (staff)

Committee Members Absent

Emilia G. Cardona (excused)
Ines Saldana Olesen

Board Members Present

George Espinal
Martin Collins

GUESTS: Phyllis Smizaski, community resident; Bradley Brooshire, Artist to Hear; Jim McNiff, community resident; Tracy Eberhart and David Brodherson, Harlem River Boat Club; Amy Gavaris, NYRP; Laura Gabby, CLIMB; David Brodlerson, community resident; Liz Demayo, community resident; Regina Gradness, community resident and Riverside Inwood Neighborhood Garden; Marisa Panzani, community resident; Amy Claydon, community resident; Joe Wojak, Virginia Annibale and Joe Butasek, Inwood Canoe Club; Maggie Clarke, RING and Riverside 1795 Riverside Drive Tenant Association; Obed Fulcar, Friends of Sherman Creek; Arthur Sherry, community resident; Jennifer Hoppa, Northern Manhattan Parks Administrator, NYC Department of Parks & Recreation (DPR); Chris Crowley, DPR Landscape Designer

The meeting was held in the auditorium of PS/IS 176, at 4862 Broadway, and was called to order at 7:30 pm by Chair Elizabeth Lorris Ritter. Noting that the meeting had to end early for personal/health reasons, Ms. Ritter asked everyone to listen to their fellow meeting participants, and to keep their comments brief and focused. With that, Ms. Ritter introduced Jennifer Hoppa, Northern Manhattan Parks Administrator.

Sherman Creek Gateway and Path project: The Department of Parks & Recreation (DPR) has a project to enhance the gateway entrance and pathway from 10th Avenue to the reconstructed area behind PS 5. The entrance will be off the crosswalk at 10th Avenue. Parks will be putting a short iron fence along the marginal street to the east (called, actually, "Marginal Street") to match the one that is already there, on the other side. The pathway material will be a manufactured wood surface with a natural look/feel, but which provides a hard surface adequate for wheelchairs, strollers, and easy gait with no tripping hazards. The shoreline will be edged with low wooden rail fencing, such as is used in Central Park. The entrance will also have several bollards as the pathway moves down the shore line. There is a bit of narrow area in planking will be installed to allow people to walk over and make it ADA-compliant. DPR will add to the erosion abatement work that the New York Restoration Project (NYRP) already had been doing to help preserve this fragile bit of shoreline. NYRP also is planting in this area in conjunction with DPR.

The path being created will be 14-15 feet above the water. There are few benches partly due to expense, and partly to preserve the site as a natural area, at the community's request. No additional lighting will be installed, as there is adequate ambient light from the school. Since it is natural area, no dogs (other than service animals) will be allowed, even on-leash.

Support for additional shoreline restoration of area along Harlem River was voiced. There was a suggestion about the expanding possibility for more rowing boat locations. Ms. Hoppa indicated that future boat clubs and recreational boating would be components of a future RFP for the former Val Rey Boat Clubs site behind PS 5, and that there would be considerable preparation costs for that area. There are serious erosion and infrastructure issues which were to have been addressed by the Army Corps of Engineers, but that project was put on hold indefinitely in the wake of Hurricane Katrina. There followed a discussion about the lack of access to Harlem and Hudson River waterfronts between 155th Street and Dyckman. The issue of boating access will be taken up at our next Committee meeting.

Sherman Creek Street Ends: Street end parks have been created at 202nd, 203rd, 204th, 205th and 206th Streets where these streets meet the Harlem River's edge. They are different sizes, with the one at 203rd being the largest and 206th being the smallest., more like a "Greenstreet" location. The total cost was \$1.7 million for the five parks, with Mayor Bloomberg and Councilmember Martinez providing much of the funding, (\$1.45m and \$250k, respectively). Although the parks are small and modestly appointed, the costs to restore missing street infrastructure were significant as water lines, sidewalks and street drainage were non-existent. The parks will be open from dawn to dusk. The 205th and 206th Street parks are small and do not require gates; those at 202nd, 203rd and 204th Streets have gates which will be locked at night. The closest bathroom is at Msgr. Kett playground, though that will change once the NYRP project just north of PS 5 (see below) is completed. The idea of using folding benches as a deterrent to use by homeless people for sleeping was mentioned. Since DPR already has purchased benches, and there yet is no known vendor for this new type of bench, they could not be used for this site, but it is a useful suggestion for future consideration. The 202nd, 203rd and 206th sites already are open, the Parks Department is waiting until the 204th and 205th Street sites are completed before having a "grand opening" ribbon cutting event.

ATI Update: New York Restoration Project is continuing their plans to develop the site just north of PS 5 which used to be gas station and parking area is being worked on. (The project is called "ATI" after the name of the company that operated the gas station.) There is currently a boat house there. NYRP plans to bring in a modular unit to be used as programming space, with availability to the community, and also public bathrooms. It is hoped to be up and running by next year.

Con Rail Building: This is the large, derelict building west of Staff Street, just before the marina, on the south side of Dyckman Street. The Mayor added \$3 million to DPR's budget to get building into working condition. Construction might start within a month, and would last about a year. Although there is an RFP in process for community-use programming space within the building, the City is paying to abate hazardous conditions, and restore plumbing and to the building, including public bathrooms.

Dyckman Marina: The finalists on last year's RFP are being vetted through the NYC Department of Investigation; this process should be concluded soon, and it is anticipated that the concessionaire(s) will be announced within a few weeks. Suggestions and concerns of CB12 were taken well into consideration during the RFP process, and DPR has stressed the importance of the awardee(s) meeting with the community right away. Among other stipulations as to use of the site, the community once again was reassured by DPR that:

- No amplified sound will be allowed without the express written permission by DPR on a case-by-case basis
- Hours of operation are restricted.
- Activity above a certain noise level must be inside.

Ms. Hoppa noted that the RFP applications may be reviewed at the DPR headquarters in the Arsenal in Central Park, and may also be available on-line.

Isham Park: The first phase of a project to address erosion control has been completed. A round of plantings also was done with the Rotary Club. Isham park now has a dedicated gardener. Thanks also to J. Reynolds and the volunteers of "Bruce's Garden" for their work in this area.

Inwood Hill Park: Improvements will be made to the pathways around the tennis courts. DPR has been filling in the cracks in the courts themselves, but they really are in need of a capital overhaul, which is estimated at just over \$1 million; that project has yet to be funded. The Indian Road Playground is due for a \$1 million overhaul; there will be a scoping meeting with the designer and other DPR staff on-site at 10am March 5th.

On a general note, Ms. Hoppa thanks DOT for their assistance in significant sidewalk repairs throughout CB12. In the past, DPR has only been able to fill in cracks with cement patchwork, but these repairs have proved inadequate. With DOT's help, over 100,000 square feet of sidewalks have been fully replaced, especially along Ft. Tryon Park's Broadway side, and elsewhere throughout CB12.

A question was asked regarding DEP patrol presence in Northern Manhattan. There are now two dedicated officers for CB12, but for overnights there is only one officer for the area north of Central Park, and (s)he is not always able to make it up to the problems in Northern Manhattan. The enforcement issue in Northern Manhattan is partly a problem with insufficient numbers of PEP officers and Urban Park Rangers, but also with inadequate levels of NYPD patrols. CB12 must advocate for more funding in these areas. Although a suggestion also made for volunteer park patrols was met with approval, volunteers alone will not address adequately the law enforcement need.

Mail & Announcements: There were a variety of announcements about upcoming events, especially that following weekend in commemoration of Martin Luther King, Jr. Also, the Northern Manhattan Arts Alliance (NoMAA) will be announcing their first batch of individual and organization grant recipients.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:15pm.