

Community Board 12, Manhattan
General Meeting – January 27, 2009 – 34th Precinct (2207 Amsterdam Ave.)

PRESENT

Dora Maria Abreu	Martin Collins	Mark Levine
Jackie Rowe Adams	George Cruz	Tony Lopez
Richard Allman	Ingrid Dominguez Brito	Elizabeth Lorris Ritter
Jennifer Araújo	Vivian Ducat	Maria Luna
Anita Barberis	George Espinal	Rita McKee
Wayne Benjamin	James Freeman	Edgard Nau
James Berlin	Julissa Gomez	Pam Palanque North
Isaiah Bing	Ramona Gomez	Rafael Osoria
Emilia Cardona	Ariel Hart	Edith Prentiss
Rolando Cespedes	Albania Lopez Jimenez	George Nelson Preston

EXCUSED

Helen Morik
Glenda Swanson
Massa
Cheryl Pahaham
Ninoska Uribe

ABSENT

Rev. Antonio Almonte
Kotie Cannon
Carole Mulligan
Ines Saldana Olesen
Andrea Reyes
Rolando Rodriguez
Ruddy Santana

The Chair, Manny Velazquez, **called the meeting to order** at 7:20pm; absent a quorum. He apologized for the lack of a written report, due to illness. He reported:

- Committed to shorter meetings, and less time on Economic Development Committee resolutions, which take up a great deal of time.
- Re-organizing committee assignments effective February 1st. Please advise if you have schedule issues and need to switch your current committee assignment(s). We are looking for stability, so please be able to commit to the entire year. Also asked for resignations from the Land Use Committee, which currently is overly full, with ten members.
- Last month the Executive Committee approved the reconfiguration of the Economic Development Committee into a Commercial Licensing & Permits Committee and an Economic Development Task Force, which Richard Allman will address later in the meeting.
- Attendance letters went out to the eighteen members who have missed two or more meetings in a six-month period and therefore are in warning status and in danger of being removed from the board for poor attendance. We are following up with the Borough President's office regarding appointments and reappointments. Some members who have not been able to attend meetings regularly have resigned to other committees rather than continuing to drain quorum.
- A representative from the State Liquor Authority will be attending the February general meeting to discuss permitting issues so that we can understand the regulations.

Mr. Allman spoke briefly about the research being done to establish an **Economic Development** working group which initially will start as a task force, and then move to a committee once there is a better understanding as to what other groups and organizations are working on these issues in this area. We will be working in four broad areas:

- Who's doing what in the community; how do we create better collaboration and awareness
- What are the major projects in the community – GWB station, Sherman Creek, others.
- Cultural tourism
- Small business retention and development

Tony Lopez spoke about how to reduce the amount of time we spend on Economic Development resolutions while actually doing our job. Rather than reviewing all of these licenses, or not reviewing any of them, we should consider if the establishments already have received their licenses, and the **SLA's requirements for community board review**. For example, off-premises license applications (grocery beer, for instance) we don't need to review. Renewals that have already been approved, should we bother w/ this? If there are problems at the location, yes, but if there are no complaints or issues at that location, perhaps we should not be reviewing them. Rita McKee: last month we looked at a liquor store which didn't need community board input, and yet we should have discussed that. A: there is nothing stopping us from reviewing things that are a problem, but we shouldn't be reviewing routine bodega applications. Edith Prentiss: we rejected the last two liquor stores; this review is a good way to learn more about businesses. A: we need to keep our eyes and ears open as to what is happening in our community so that we can address liquor stores and other possible problems. We should be vigilant. Mr. Velazquez: The District Manager should be checking SLA website to know what applications are pending, and make sure that the notice of application is posted on the premises. If the community comes to meetings, then we know there is a problem. In the case of the liquor store, we were able to pass a resolution urging that the SLA reject the application, which it did do. Martin Collin gave a brief explanation of how the process had been managed in the past: we used to do all non-problematic renewals as a single resolution; problematic resolutions were done individually.

Ebenezer Smith gave the **District Manager's report** (7:39pm), apologizing for lack of written report, but he was too busy.

- Per Cheryl Pahaham, who is excused from this evening's meeting due to illness, there will be a public hearing regarding 457 West 163rd Street. There is proposed to be a community residence in a condo at this address. Representatives for DMHMRAS will be attending the hearing.
- There has been a rumor in the community that a correctional high school is to be placed in PS173. This is a rumor; there is a proposal to site a middle school for children who are over-aged. We don't know what this means, so we have asked the principal to attend the Youth & Education and the Public Safety Committees so that we can get more information as to what is happening.
- CAU will be having a meeting for minority and women-owned businesses at the 125th State Office Building later this week.
- The retaining wall on Fort Washington Avenue at 165th – it is not visible from the Avenue, but can see from 165th street, in the parking lot on the SW corner of the intersection – is going out to bid. The actual construction won't start until January 2010; with estimated completion that Aug.
- NYC EDC looking to hire consultants to develop a conceptual plan for public waterfront esplanade in Sherman Creek to 208th Street. The RFP went out yesterday (Jan 26th); responses are due March 6th. For more information, call <phone> or go to <URL>.
- CB12's website is up and running. Though the technology itself is working, we need more content, and look to members to help in this regard.

- Manhattan Neighborhood Network Cable has free access for community boards to provide programming of their design and production. Several segments are planned, including one I already did explaining the role of community boards and giving a brief introduction of CB12. Any committee chairs or other members interested in taping a segment should contact me to make the arrangements.
- Gave information regarding summer youth internships with the Manhattan DA.

Ms. McKee: what is the TV program? A: flexible format; an opportunity for each CB to do whatever it wants – panel, discussion, whatever. Toni Cardona (for a public member): can the program show some of CB12 meetings? A: not sufficiently interesting; could do excerpts. Maria Luna: how would we get equipment, and who would do taping? I do a show, and I have to provide all of that. A: they will provide technical assistance and training. Mr. Allman (for public member): there will be a meeting tomorrow to address issues at 173. A: I will attend.

Guest Presenter: NYC Department of Information Telecommunications & Technology (DoITT) 311 System, Evelyn Nieves & Tom DiGiulio (7:52pm) Based on a show of hands, everyone in the room was familiar w New York City's 311 system. Mayor Bloomberg's idea was proposed in January 2002, and launched a year later (in March '03). The system consolidated 40+ City agencies' call centers, and eliminated the need for dozens of pages of phone book listings. There are aggressive goals in terms of shorter wait times and better customer services. The availability of data helps accountability, accessibility and transparency of City agencies' operations. The system operates 24/7; is fully bilingual (English/Spanish), with additional access to 180 languages; and employs 450 professionals (300 call center agents, and the rest support staff). As a service of the City of New York, 311 is only equipped to respond to enquiries regarding New York City services, though operators can make referrals to other government agencies – for example to NYS DMV for enquiries regarding drivers' licenses or to the US Department of State for those regarding passports. About 40% of calls are given information during the call without any additional service required (e.g. trash pick-ups, recycling, or other routine municipal City services); 36% are transferred to another call center, either an NYC agency or an outside agency as above; and 24% require follow-up, in which case a service request number, which can be tracked through 311 or on-line at www.nyc.gov. There are 44,000 calls daily, and 75 million calls since its inception, with 16 million calls in 2008 alone. All information is confidential, and is not given out to anyone other than a particular agency as may be needed to solve the specific problem. The top ten service requests from callers in CB12 are to HPD for heat, paint, plumbing and other housing maintenance issues and to the NYPD for various noise complaints. Within the enhanced 311 system, about 25% of calls are for health & human service related issues apart from government infrastructure. Operators can put the caller in touch with a 311 specialist who can describe not only City programs, but partnered programs with CBOs. To access 311, dial "311" within New York City, or 212-NEW-YORK. Soon the system will have the capacity to accept on-line service requests in lieu of (or in addition to) calling. Also coming soon: the ability to submit photographs and videos of potholes or other conditions.

Q: Ms. McKee: I've called 311 a number of times, and have been very impressed with the action these calls have gotten. But usually I am calling from my cellphone, and it takes a long time to get through to the operator due to the pre-recorded information. A: We are compartmentalizing the information so that frequent items can speed-press a number to be transferred. Wayne Benjamin: how does 311 track MTA complaints, especially given that their complaint line is only open 9-5. A: we can't track that information as the MTA is a State agency, not a City agency. We have worked with the MTA, for example during the transit strike, but we can't track specific information beyond the general nature of the call. Pam North: is there a way to get the complaint number if the caller provides the date/time of the call that generated it? A: No, for privacy reasons, you have to have the complaint number when you call for follow-up. You have to keep your complaint number so we know we're speaking to the authorized person who actually lodged the complaint.

With the achievement of a **quorum (8:13pm)**, Ms. McKee made a **motion to adopt the agenda** which was seconded by Rolando Cespedes. There was no objection to the suggestion to move the Health & Environment Committee report to #3, before Economic Development, or to the main motion. Emilia Cardona made a **motion to approve the minutes of the November meeting**, which was seconded by Mr. Benjamin. Ms. Cardona made a second **motion to approve the minutes of the December meeting**, which also was seconded by Mr. Benjamin and passed without objection.

Elected Officials' Representatives' reports (8:15pm)

Lilliam Perez for NYS Senator Eric Schneiderman: Sen. Schneiderman has been appointed to the Codes Committee – a major policy leadership position – which had its first hearing today. The Senator also has been appointed to committees on tourism/culture, energy and the environment, and the Judiciary. We are transitioning from how things used to work to how they can work better, and working to bring back a progressive agenda to New York State. It is an exciting time, even as we are facing a crisis. It remains to be seen exactly how budget deficit will affect us: these are scary times, and we must stay united.

Rafael Escaño for NYC Controller William Thompson: (8:17) written report (get highlights) senior ctrs, MTA finance, something else.

Monica Taveras of the Mayor's CAU declined to speak, as there had been an extensive presentation already from a Mayoral agency.

Frank Hess for NYS Assemblyman Herman D. Farrell: the Assembly is trying to pass an early budget in March, rather than waiting until April. Ms.

McKee asked about the Kheel plan, an alternative proposal for expanded mass transit which would be largely free to riders. A: it not on the table at this point; the first thing they have to resolve is where the money is going to come from and how it will be spent. Kheel plan is not part of the discussion. Q: why not? It's a self-funding plan. A: if enough people think it's worthy of doing, it will be discussed after the budget, since the MTA is not part of the regular budget. And we can't know what to do until we know what the feds are going to do. Payroll tax is being looked at. Ms. North: I attended a town hall meeting on Saturday, and there were representatives from 940 Saint Nicholas Ave who also had come to CB12 to advocate for elderly who are being evicted in what appears to be a ruthless process. The Assemblyman was going to visit the building; what happened with/ that? A: I don't know if he went there that day, but members of our staff have gotten involved, and inspectors came and a good number of the problems have been resolved or are being worked on. Not sure of specifics regarding evictions.

Anamaria Jones for NYC Councilmember Miguel Martinez: (8:25): announced upcoming State of the District address. Maria Luna: thanked the Councilmember for his efforts to ensure that firehouses don't close. A: thank you, we are working hard on this important issue.

Abigail Cole for NYC Councilmember Robert Jackson: (8:28pm) The Mayor has rescinded his proposal to close senior centers. Announced upcoming hearings (1pm Thursday 1/29). There was a question about a school siting in the PS173 building.

Public Speakers' Session (8:31pm)

Yoshafía Hill, Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone: manager of workforce development. Upcoming event geared to helping un- and under-employed individuals to put their careers on a path for healthcare sector employment. We are investing in sector-employment programs. This is in conjunction with 1199/SEIU; this was the first time we could get an actual labor/management training program for non-union members. February 20th, 10am-4pm we will be sponsoring a healthcare career day at 215 W 125th St. Attendees can be pre-screened for entry-level positions. Even those not yet work-ready won't be turned away, but will get additional referrals. Acknowledged Ms. North, a member of the UMEZ Board and Chair of this committee. Provided contact info and fliers. Ms. Cardona: can you work with CB12's newly proposed Economic Development Task Force? Zead Ramadan (who also sits on UMEZ's Board): we can collaborate on these efforts to bring public forums to our community. A: yes to both, that is our goal in coming to you this evening. Steve Simon: we created a unique program some years ago, a joint program with CUNY and Columbia University where students got stipends so they could do otherwise unpaid internships. Can we get additional funding for this through workforce development funding? A: we've been doing that in the nursing field, and we will continue to discuss this program with CUNY and CU to see if we can support this program as well.

Richard Francis, Comunilife: Spoke about a community residence program at 173rd & Saint Nicholas Avenue which serves people with mental illness, and a new residence proposed to open in March. Our extended programming, includes a "Life is Precious" suicide prevention program focuses on Latina girls, who have among the highest rates of suicide, although with the advent of the economic downturn there's been an increase in the general suicide rate since last September. We are working to educate the community as to what they can do to safeguard friends and family. He described some of the warning signs & symptoms. Most people, even those without a clinical background, can be helpful; it requires attentive listening as well as the ability to recognize changed behavior or appearance, and be attuned to the signs that people with suicidal ideation often exhibit. Ms. McKee: why do Latina girls have an elevated rate of suicide? A: We do not know for sure, though we have hunches; part of it is because of migration, the stress/strain of disrupted family and adjusting to new environment. But we are open to ideas as to why. Ms. Luna: What are the numbers? This is news to me. A: Go to our website, where there is more information on a recent study? Ms. Cardona: There are complicated psycho-social factors that drive this. Ms. McKee: Sexual attacks on Latina girls are up; is this related? A: Not sure. Elizabeth Lorris Ritter: thanked for bringing this important issue to our attention; a friend of my teen daughter's friend committed suicide last month, and it was devastating.

Richard Realmuto, Community Resident: lives on 176th; ramp leads into JHW park. Teenage son was mugged back there. Landlord put floodlights in back of building, but the lights in the park itself are not functioning. Can the Parks Department please fix them? Also announced that he is running for City Council (10th District). "I'm a new face, but I'll be back." Mr. Simon and Ms. Lorris Ritter agreed to follow up.

Tess Shaw, community resident: Noise issues on Dyckman. After many calls to 311, we finally realized that the problem isn't a concert or park or cars, but Mamajuana Restaurant. We've contacted Councilmember Jackson's office about this. This restaurant plans to expand, I don't know what that means, but will more business mean more noise? This is a real problem for area residents. What are the relevant noise guidelines?

Odalys Cruz, US Census Bureau: gave information on what the census is, and why it's important. The 435 Congressional seats are reapportioned based on the census; New York lost one in 2000, and Utah gained a seat. New York State (and in particular, New York City) has a significant undocumented population, which we have to reach out to so that they can be counted. Also the distribution of more than \$300 billion in federal funds, is based on the census. Our process is safe: we do not divulge information to other agencies. Each employee is sworn to *privacy for life*, with penalties of up to \$250,000 in fines and/or five years in prison. The next census will begin April 1st 2010. Getting everyone to fill out the forms is an investment in the community. And, we do more than just the decennial count. Gloria Vanterpool: where are you spreading the word regarding employment opportunities with the census bureau? A: www.census.gov. Ms. Luna: re jobs, can people apply for these census jobs? A: yes, there are jobs, beginning now through 4/1/10. We are working with Alianza Dominicana, ACDP and councilmembers Jackson and Martinez to get that information out to the public. Edith Prentiss: we were appalled to discover that the training and testing are being done in an inaccessible venue. Please, is there no requirement that the training be in compliance with federal, state and city regulations on accessibility? This is a 4th floor walk-up! A: we have to go with what we can. Ms. Prentiss: CUNY also has an accessible site on 181st street. Ms. McKee: we should try to encourage as many people from our area to apply for these jobs because people are more likely to give information to people they know. A: We are giving presentations to different CBOs, advertising in the media and with elected officials. Ms. Vanterpool: what about churches and senior centers? A: yes, we are doing that. Ms. Cardona: can we get copies of applications in addition to CBOs? A: I will pass that on to the recruiting department.

Peter Walsh, Coogan's Restaurant: Announced the upcoming 11th annual Coogan's Sals Sharocks & Blues 5k race on Sunday March 1st. This year's event will have an estimated 6,000 runner, and will start a little further up Ft. Washington Ave (near J. Hood Wright Park) and go around the Cloisters. This will provide a better turnaround, and also will alleviate pedestrian traffic around the hospital. The armory still will be used for registration, and the children's races still will be at 170th Street. Children who run do better in school. Julissa Gomez: why is the route being changed? A: The starting point was moved to 173rd Street because the runners were backed up all the way to Broadway, which was dangerous. Will go around cloisters and end just short of the armory. Road runners has several race categories; anyone can sign up at www.nyrr.org. Children's races are from one-year-old to age 12, with sign-up that morning.

George Espinal, 34th Precinct Community Council: NYPD crime prevention section will register your electronics at the next council meeting, tomorrow at 7:30pm. I encourage all to attend. 4295 bway. We generally meet the fourth Wednesday of every month.

Committee Reports: Please note in addition to minutes. (9:06pm)

Elizabeth Lorris Ritter for Parks & Cultural Affairs: please read minutes for detailed update on the plans for a Greenmarket somewhere near 181st Street; several sites under consideration, with much community input and participation. Next month's agenda will include a review of the

Parks Department's proposed plans for renovation of the retaining walls in Roger Morris Park as well as pathwork and ADA accessibility to the Morris-Jumel Mansion. Next meeting is Tuesday, February 3rd at 7:30.

Emilia Cardona for Public Safety (9:08pm): Please attend tomorrow's Precinct Community Council meetings so that you can get to know your local officers and beat officers. Biggest part of report is regarding the Street Activities Permit (SAP) task force. Many of these permits are issued for wonderful events that the community enjoys and finds beneficial. But often they are just trash and garbage that makes the community unhappy but makes a profitable event for outside businesses. CB12 came up with guidelines to try to mitigate these issues. We are meeting with businesses proposing street events, and trying to increase the number of permits given for neighborhood events, and fewer to outside concerns that are not bringing anything to the community. Mr. Simon: did the full Board approve these guidelines? A: yes, a long time ago; recent changes have been minor. We can e-mail these to Board members. Ms. Luna: who is on the task force? A: representation from several Committees, including Public Safety, Economic Development and Traffic/Transportation. Jim Berlin: with regard to the permitting guidelines, of course they're public; we can't have secret rules/regulations. A: these are given to anyone coming to the Board to get the application. Our guidelines follow what was written by the city. Applications for anything that is more than two blocks or more than two days goes straight to the Mayor's Street Activity Permits Offices, not to the Community Board.

Gloria Vanterpool for Aging (9:16pm) Our local electeds were very active in ensuring that the Department for the Aging (DFTA) proposal to close senior centers was rescinded. It was very powerful to see their support, and how effective their advocacy was for their community. I look upon this as a battle we won, but I think there's a war coming. Senior centers haven't begun to think about the approach that they want DFTA to take in assessing the effectiveness of our centers. She entreated board members to talk to their friends, neighbors and relatives who attend senior centers to see what kind of programming they would like to see at their centers. People must speak up soon and often, not just one time.

Mark Levine for Traffic & Transportation Committee (9:21pm): Presented a resolution to co-name SW corner of 159th & Amsterdam in honor of Lucille Bolger. He invited Yvonne Stennett up to speak about Ms. Bolger, a strong advocate in Washington Heights, and a powerful force in this community. Because of her efforts since 1952 when she created Community League of West 159th Street (now the Community League of the Heights, or CLOTH), thousands of people have homes and better lives. An amendment by Mr. Simon: change the co-naming to include the full block was accepted as friendly. There was some discussion about whether DOT will name more than the corner. Since this is a dividing line between Councilmanic districts, if both Councilmembers Martinez and Jackson introduce legislation, it could span the full block. Ms. Prentiss noted that a full-block co-naming elsewhere in the City has been approved for a disability person. Mr. Simon proposed that the language be strengthened; the resolution was tabled for a few minutes while he and Ms. Stennett worked out some additional proposed language, and the meeting proceeded with the agenda. A resolution calling on DOT to study 45-degree angle parking on 170th street – it is a very wide, one-way street, and this would accommodate more parked cars – passed unanimously (34 votes). A resolution to move the A-train weekend closure on Feb 13th-15th to Feb 27-March 1st on the grounds that it negatively impacts business, particularly a florist and four restaurants, on one of their busiest weekends which includes Valentine's Day – passed unanimously (34 votes). Having returned with Ms. Stennett, Mr. Simon's amendment to the co-naming resolution was accepted as friendly; the resolution passed unanimously (32 votes) without further discussion.

Wayne Benjamin for Land Use (9:40pm) gave a brief update on a proposal for landmarking on Audubon Terrace. An hour-long presentation at the last Committee meeting included the Landmarks Preservation Commissioner; it is nice to see this issue finally getting the attention it deserves. A resolution to reinstate and renew a BSA variance for the Exxon-Mobil station on Broadway & 155th Street passed unanimously (32 votes) with no questions or discussion.

Steve Simon for Health & Environment (9:45pm) reminded the Board of a resolution discussed at length and voted on at our November meeting. It received the unanimous support of the 22 Board members present, but as that did not constitute a quorum, it cannot be considered as having passed. Mr. Benjamin: is nothing needed in the 190th area by subways? A: these other locations would have a greater chance of success. The resolution passed unanimously (32 votes). At our next meeting we will discuss a community air survey monitoring plan. There are 150 locations throughout the City; we'll hear which locations in CB12, the data they hope to collect, and the improvements in air quality they hope to establish.

Zead Ramadan for Economic Development (9:48pm)

- Noted that La Terraza, Monkey Room, Melodia and Empire Szechuan already have received their SLA renewals, without CB input, which the agency does not require.
- Soon the SLA will be color-coding their certificates to show which kind of license it is.
- DCA application by El Nuevo Caridad for modifications to an existing enclosed sidewalk café is considered a "new" license.
- Ms. Prentiss plans to abstain from vote for restaurant wine license for De Café due to a 5" lip in doorway, making it inaccessible; an amendment to the resolution request that the ownership comply with the law by building an accessible entry was accepted as friendly.
- Washington Heights Billiards is 10,000 square feet with 17 pool tables; the restaurant area has seating and tables for 50. No expense was spared in renovation, which includes soundproofing and an extensive 50-camera security system. Inspector Capul was impressed with the security features. Also building bi-level lift system, totally ADA-compliant. Our concern is that pool cues and alcohol can be a dangerous mix, so we would like for the pool table area to have an interior architectural feature that separates the bar from the pool tables. The plan and concept were approved by CB12 two years ago, but there were some architectural issues that necessitated an extension, which the attorney didn't get, so the approval expired, and they need it anew. Mr. Ramadan introduced Robert Albert, the establishment's manager. Ms. McKee: how much of the space is for billiards? A: about 25-30% of space, but we will also be serving sandwiches and hot food. Q: Sound system? A: our intent is not a cabaret space. I run bars, and there will be music, karaoke, comedy night, but not concerts. We can host off-Broadway shows, fashion shows on a Sunday perhaps, but not concerts. Q: What is above you? A: All commercial, no residential. Mr. Simon: per the Committee minutes, Mr. Albert has had several licenses, but under children's names. A: my first two licenses were and are under my name. Jake's Steakhouse and Sidekicks are both successful longstanding businesses. The 34th precinct has no issues. Mr. Berlin: it is bad idea to mix liquor with a pool hall, it is dangerous. Ms. Lorris Ritter: noted successful, clean, safe and family-friendly operation on the Upper Westside (Amsterdam Ave in the 70's) for a pool hall with a full bar; a similar layout to the establishment proposed here.
- No one from Pachanga Sports bar showed up to the Committee meeting to discuss their application, so we strongly reject.

- International house: no issues
- Monkey room: there had been significant complaints about this establishment, but they have done a lot to clean up their acts, and they should be rewarded for their efforts. Ms. Lorris Ritter: aware still of several complaints. Ms. J. Gomez: they should have complained to the Precinct or the Board, so we can't count that input. Ms. North asked the District Manager to follow up on any complaints that are given to the board about establishments with liquor licenses so that we can include them in our future consideration.

There being no further discussion, the remaining resolutions received yes-no-abstention-not-voting tallies as follows in a roll call:

- #1 NO OBJECTION to new DCA Enclosed Café license for El Nuevo Caridad (1618 St. Nicholas Ave.) passed unanimously (30 votes).
- #2 NO OBJECTION to new SLA On-premise Liquor license for De Café (4842 Broadway @ Academy) passed 27-2-1-0.
- #3 NO OBJECTION to new SLA On-premise Liquor license for WH Billiards (500 W 207 btw. Nagle/Post Aves.) passed 28-2-0-0.
- #4 OBJECTING to new SLA On-premise Liquor license for Pachenga Sports Bar (561 W 163 near Broadway) passed unanimously (30 votes).
- #5 NO OBJECTION to renew SLA On-premise Liquor license for International Food House (4073 Broadway btw W 171/172) passed 29-1-0-0.
- #6 NO OBJECTION to renew SLA On-premise Liquor license for Monkey Room (589 Ft. Washington Ave. @ W 187th) passed 23-4-3-0.
- #7 NO OBJECTION to renew SLA On-premise Liquor license for Melodia (154 Post Ave (btw. W 207th & 10th Ave.) passed 24-2-4-0.
- #8 NO OBJECTION to renew SLA On-premise Liquor license for Empire Szechuan (4041 Broadway @ W 170th) passed 24-2-4-0.
- #9 NO OBJECTION to renew SLA On-premise Liquor license for Il Sole (229 Dyckman btw. Seaman/Broadway) passed 29-1-0-0.
- #10 OBJECTING to renew SLA On-premise Liquor license for El Fogon (3856 10th Ave @ W 206th) passed unanimously (30 votes).
- #11 NO OBJECTION to renew SLA Restaurant Wine license for El Pollo Provocon (1495 St. Nick btw. W 184/185) passed 24-2-4-0.
- #12 NO OBJECTION to renew SLA Restaurant Wine license for Ceci Restaurant (78 Sherman btw. Dyckman/Thayer) passed 29-1-0-0.
- #13 NO OBJECTION to renew SLA Restaurant Wine license for La Terraza (3881 Broadway btw. W 162/163) passed 24-2-4-0.

New Business/Announcements: (10:20pm)

- Ms. North asked: "are we getting any buzz on an uptick of closing of small businesses along Amsterdam Avenue" due to the economic downturn. No one had any specific observations in this regard.
- Ms. Luna offered congratulations to Ms. North, who just became a grandmother. There were applause and congratulations.

Socrates Solano for Congressman Charles Rangel, (10:22pm), who chose to give his presentation at the time stipulated in the original agenda, rather than moving to the top of the agenda, reported that the Congressman is looking for interns. The unpaid position is, but they get a lot of valuable experience. The Congressman, together with the Borough President and other local elected officials are offering free tax preparation this weekend. Congress also is (re)considering the American Recovery & Investment Act to create and save three- to four million jobs over the next two years, and to get the economy moving.

The meeting was **adjourned** by acclamation at 10:30pm.

Respectfully submitted, Elizabeth Lorris Ritter, Secretary.

**Public Safety Committee Meeting Minutes
January 7, 2009**

Committee Member

Emilia Cardona, Chair
George Cruz
Ingrid Dominques-Brito
Ninoska Uribe
Andria Reyes
Cleofis Sarete

Committee Absentees

Jennifer Araujo

Board Members Attending

Wayne Benjamin

Staff: Deborah Blow, Community Coordinator

Guests: Deputy Ins. Andrew Capul, NYPD 34th Pct., Emily Lopez, 33rd Pct., PO Robinson Hewitt, 33rd Pct., Joseline Minaya-Man. DA's Office, Shelda Washington-Edgewood Correctional Services, Elizabeth Porter-Resident, Michael Kolber-MBPO Fellowship Program

Meeting convened at 7:09pm, Chair Emilia Cardona. Ms. Cardona ask group to introduce themselves.

Deputy Inspector Andrew Capul of the 34th Pct. provided the group with an update of comp year end stats. He reported that the overall crime was reduced 3.1% in the 7 index crime categories. He commented that there were 3 homicides and grand larceny crimes that impacted our community this year.

Ms. Cardona ask if budget cuts would affect enforcement services. Dep. Inspector Capul said it varies, some officers who graduated will be filtered out to the outlining precincts, but that hasn't happen yet. There is not much movement among other officers due to the uncertainty of these economic hardships.

Ms. Porter, a resident of the community shared her concerns with Inspector Capul regarding a previous complaint about officers from the 34th Pct. The matter is still under investigation by Internal Affairs.

Ms. Cardona explained to Ms. Porter the board works in an advisory capacity and since the case is under investigation no further discussion is required.

Ms. Cardona introduced Officer Washington from the Edgewood Correctional Facility. Ms. Washington reported that the mission for the Correctional Facility is to promote "Public Safety". She reported that up until April 2008, the facility was a work release program. It is now a technical parole violated program. The program contains up to 100 parolees. Substance/Alcohol abuse is the primary reason why parolees are remanded to this program. The program mandates that parolees stay in the program for up to 30 days before being released to other intervention services and their communities. These measures are instituted to provide pre intervention to avoid parolee's from having to do time up state.

Points of interest:

- Edgecombe was a Work Release facility but as of 4/08 it became a Parole Technical Violation program facility, a type of re-entry /discharge planning program.
- The residents all have a history of substance abuse and are on parole. Residents are generally referred to the facility because they are not doing well on parole (e.g.: always late to meetings with parole officer or have tested positive for drugs in urine). They can also be referred directly from Riker's Island. It is an alternative to violating the parolee and sending him back to prison.
- The Parole Technical Violation program is a 30-day intensive program of group counseling, lectures and individual counseling. Counseling is provided 7 days a week.

Residents are not permitted to leave the facility during the 30-day period. Limited social activities are provided. Residents may repeat the 30-day program

- It is a minimum-security correctional facility.
- The facility does not accept people with mental health problems. No alcohol or drug detox programs are provided.
- Residents/clients are accepted from the five boroughs, Westchester and Long Island – does not serve solely a Washington Heights and Inwood clientele.
- Edgecombe does not provide after-care programs. Residents are referred to community-based programs.
- Residents are all men 16 years of age or older. The current capacity of the facility is 100 inmates. Currently there are approx. 80 inmates. It is staffed by 95 department of Corrections employees, 4 employees of the Parole Department and 12 employees from Odyssey House, has the contract to run the facility since December 2008.
- The facility generally includes dorm-style rooms (six or more to a room), classrooms and offices.
- Since April 2008 500 inmates have gone through the program: 60 (72%) have completed it successfully, 140 (28%) did not complete the program or were unsuccessfully discharged.

Points of Interest submitted by Wayne Benjamin.

Meeting adjourned 8:30pm

Minutes respectfully recorded by Emilia Cardona, and transcribed by Deborah Blow.

HOUSING & HUMAN SERVICES - MINUTES

January 15, 2009

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Cheryl Pahaham, Chair
Pamela Palanque-North

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

Richard Allman (Excused)
Kotie Canon (Absent)
Rolando Cespedes (Excused)
Carole Mulligan (Excused)
Rolando Rodriguez (Excused)
Glenda Swanson-Massa (Excused)

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Staff Member Present: Debra Blow

Guests: Elena Cunneely and Justin Crum--Food Bank of New York; Hannah Kellogg, Ramona McFarlan, Beverly Clark Griggsby, Eduard Sprinkler, Mary Yearwood--Residents

=====

Chairperson Cheryl Pahaham convened the meeting at 7:10 PM. No quorum.

The purpose of the committee meeting was to learn about hunger and food stamps, and to hear from Food Bank of New York policy analysts about the kinds of policies Community Board 12 could advocate for its residents. Justin Crum opened with a discussion of trends on food insecurity in New York City. He noted that between 2003 and 2007, Food Bank documented in its annual survey, a significant rise in the need for food assistance. Citywide, 4 million people are estimated to have trouble affording food. Of these, 1.3 million are estimated rely on emergency food providers (EFPs) on a regular basis, up from 300,000 in 2004. Justin did not have community district-level data, but commented that in Manhattan, even though there was a 43 percent decrease in visits to EFPs, Manhattan pantries were still turning people away because of a lack of food and a lack of volunteers. A 2008 survey not yet released found that 2 million people citywide were considering using an EFP for the first time. Justin raised the point that even if a 20 percent of 2 million people contemplating using EFPs actually did so, that this would be a huge increase in demand for emergency food during a downturn in donations of food and volunteer hours for EFPs. According to Food Bank's survey results, people are increasingly turning to EFPs because of 1) higher food costs, which have been rising faster than other basic living costs; 2) loss or lack of savings; 3) health care expenses; and 4) food stamps benefits' declining value relative to the cost of food. Justin also noted that since 2003, the rate of elderly persons have trouble affording food doubled and in 2007, 60 percent of Latinos reported having difficulty affording food.

Justin then went into some background on the organization, Food Bank of New York. It recently merged with Food Change, an organization with an office on 125th and St. Nicholas Avenue that provides the largest free program of assistance claiming the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) in the nation (assistance claiming the refund began January 15th). Food Bank provides food to over 1,000 emergency food providers citywide, primarily from corporate donations. Food Bank also, through research and advocacy, works to provide better access to food stamps benefits; bring supermarkets to underserved neighborhoods instead of bodegas through the use of zoning and tax policies; and bring green carts to neighborhoods lacking sources of fresh produce. Food Bank also operates in New York City schools, teaching nutrition, cooking lessons and leadership development. Right now, there are Food Bank programs in the Food and Finance High School, Brandeis High School, JFK High School, and the Manhattan Center for Science and Mathematics, and in 500 elementary school classrooms. Interested schools can contact Justin Crum. Food Bank

also works in WIC centers and pantry sites, teaching about nutrition and providing cooking lessons. Justin emphasized the organization's multifaceted approach to hunger--Food Bank not only provides emergency food, but also does advocacy, lobbying for legislation--such as the farm bill and child nutrition program--research and community education. Food Bank also recommends that CB 12 consider advocating the following: 1) universal school meals free to all students regardless of income, which would eliminate paperwork associated with the free and reduced price school meals program, relieve demand for emergency food providers, and encourage more kids to eat school meals; 2) in-classroom breakfasts, which by making eating school breakfasts a communal activity would lead to fewer hungry children who might not eat school breakfasts because of stigma; 3) raise public awareness of the shortages of food and staff experienced by emergency food providers; 4) work with schools in district to advocate universal school meals and in-classroom breakfasts. Anyone interested in advocating these issues or setting up nutrition and cooking programs in schools should contact Justin at the Food Bank at 212-566-7855.

Elena Cunneely then spoke about the food stamps program. As of November 2008, 1.3 million New York City residents used food stamps. Many New York City residents are eligible but not enrolled in food stamps. In June 2008, the New York City Human Resources Administration (HRA) matched Medicaid data with food stamps data and estimated that an additional 635,000 people who were receiving Medicaid but not food stamps might be eligible for food stamps, of which 91,317 reside in Manhattan. To give a sense of the economic impact of higher food stamps enrollment, if all of these potentially eligible did enroll in the food stamps program, the Food Bank estimates that another \$720 million annually would be injected into the city economy through food purchases. Typical characteristics of persons eligible but not enrolled in food stamps follow. Such persons tend to be employed and low-income; associate food stamps with welfare and reject the stigma; have misconceptions about the income requirements; are senior citizens who can't wait on line for benefits or who are discouraged by what they think will be a miserly benefit; or, are immigrants who are afraid of backlash from immigration authorities and who might have language issues that deter them from obtaining benefits.

Income guidelines (pre-tax) for food stamps effective October 2008 are: \$260 per week for an individual; \$350 for a 2-person household; \$440 for 3 persons; \$530 for 4 persons; \$620 for 5 persons and \$710 for 6 persons. Most households (if within 130 percent of the federal poverty level and if household includes a disabled person, the limit is 200 percent of the federal poverty level but if sanctioned in the public assistance programs, must pass resource test) have no resource test (a determination of eligibility based on assets other than income), which means that people can retain their savings, and households with child care and dependent care expenses are eligible for higher benefit levels. Monthly food stamps allotments are \$176 per month for an individual; \$323 for 2; \$463 for 3; \$588 for 4; \$838 for 6. In addition, effective March 1, 2009 people will be able to claim documented (with receipts) out-of-pocket medical expenses such as transportation, supplies and equipment, Medicaid spend-down and home attendants, of up to \$35 per month in order to obtain a higher food stamps allotment. The State is also providing a \$1 Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP) benefit to public housing households so that these households can get a higher food stamps benefit level. Previously, the eligibility formula paid a lower benefit to residents of public housing because their rents were lower. The \$1 HEAP benefit eliminates this variance and anyone who complains about receiving a check for \$1 from the State should be encouraged to apply for food stamps. The State is also increasing credit for utility costs, which will increase household food stamps benefits by \$513 annually as of February 1, 2009.

The food stamps application is four pages of detailed questions, but HRA is required to accept any application as long as it has the applicant's name, address and signature. HRA staff can assist the applicants in filling out the rest of the application. Normally, applications take 30 days to process but some clients are eligible for expedited processing for emergency food stamps that can be received within 5 days or on the day of application. Such clients typically have a monthly income of \$150 or less and resources of \$100 or less; or, their rent and utilities exceed their total resources and they cannot wait another month for assistance. Elena did not have data on the number of persons receiving emergency food stamps. Elena noted that Food Bank hosted a hunger and nutrition task force every third Thursday of the month from 1 to 3 PM and invited anyone interested to attend.

Cheryl thanked Justin and Elena for their presentation and then began a discussion with Pam Palanque North and district residents regarding a troubled building in the district. The landlord appeared to be harassing tenants, seeking to evict them for organizing a tenants' association, not making repairs and charging MCIs for unnecessary renovations, such as closing the front entrance of building and constructing a camera-monitored digitally-accessed side entrance in an alley along the side of the building. Several tenants had been mugged entering the building through the alley, which is also rat-ridden. The building contained long-time residents, many of them elderly, as well as newer residents, some who apparently used or dealt drugs, and others who were paying rents far in excess of most tenants. Cheryl and Pam suggested several potential responses that the residents could take to protect themselves such as joining the local neighborhood association, and Cheryl promised to follow-up with the residents next week with more information and assistance.

The meeting ended at 9:15 PM.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Cheryl Pahaham, 01/25/08

Land Use Committee - Meeting Minutes

January 14, 2009

Committee Members Present

Wayne Benjamin, Chair
Anita Barberis, Asst. Chair
James Berlin
Dora Maria Abreu
Vivian Ducat
Richard Allman
Isaiah Bing

Committee Members Absent

Ines Saldana-Olesen
Tamara Rivera (excused)
Ruddy Santana

Board Members

Steve Simon

Staffer: Ebenezer Smith, District Manager

Guests: Eric McLaughlin-resident, Sonnia Marmo-Resident, Paul Proux – Wolf Block, Laura Tourminz, Paimaan Lodhi-Manhattan Borough President, Annice M. Alt, Gail Addiss, Simeon Bankoff – Historic Districts Council, Robert Tierney – Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC), Kate Daly – LPC, Mary Betts – LPC, Sarah Carol - LPC, Michael Kolber-MBPO Intern, Sarah Morgridge-Council Member Jackson's Office, Edwin Marshall – Department of City Planning

1. The meeting was called to order at 7:15 PM. Land Use Chair Wayne Benjamin welcomed committee members and guests, asked committee members to introduce themselves and acknowledged the representatives of Borough President Stringer, Councilman Jackson and the Department of City Planning present at the meeting. He then noted that the Land Use Committee ("LU" or the "Committee") is hosting a public meeting for the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission (LPC) to make an initial presentation concerning the proposed Audubon Park Historic District at the southern end of Washington Heights, introduced the LPC Chairman Robert Tierney and gave the floor to Mr. Tierney.

2. Mr. Tierney introduced LPC staff present at the meeting, provided a general overview of LPC, LPC's responsibilities and what it does and does not mean for a building or an area to be designated as a historic building or district. He noted that LPC has been working on the proposed Audubon Park Historic District for sometime, LPC staffers have made site visits and engaged in initial conversations with interested parties and that LPC has undertaken initial outreach to property owners. Mr. Tierney then introduced LPC Executive Director, Kate Daly, who continued the presentation.

Ms. Daly indicated that tonight's informal public meeting represents the first stage of the designation process and is intended to introduce property owners to the landmarking / designation process. The first formal stage is for LPC to calendar a public hearing to determine if a proposed district meets the threshold for being a historic district. If the LPC concurs that the proposed district meets threshold requirements the LPC staff prepare a report on the district. The report is used to document as-is / existing conditions of properties in the district and to establish the extent of original and modified architectural/historic fabric and detail as of the time of proposed designation. The report is circulated to property owners who are asked to review the description of their

properties. Ms. Daly advised that LPC would also prepare a summary frequently asked questions to provide to property owners. The approval of property owners is not required. If LPC votes to designate a proposed district, it is then forwarded to the Department of City Planning and the City Council for consideration. Ms. Daly indicated that, at present, LPC does not have a schedule to calendar a public hearing for Audubon Park. She then introduced May Beth Betts to discuss the proposed Audubon Park Historic District.

Ms. Betts discussed the historic significance of the area and the boundaries of the proposed district. Ms. Betts advised that the proposed Audubon Park Historic District includes 19 large apartment houses and one freestanding duplex house indicative of the area's transformation in the late 19th and early 20th centuries from a rural enclave of country estates to a densely developed residential neighborhood. The boundaries of the proposed district, encompassing all or part of five square blocks, are the north side of West 158th Street to the north; the north side of West 155th Street to the south; the east side of Riverside Drive and West to the west; and the west side of Edward Morgan Place to the east. The proposed district would complement the existing Audubon Terrace Historic District located directly to the east. Audubon Park is named for John James Audubon (1785-1851), the famous naturalist and illustrator of birds. The area was known as Audubon Park as early as the 1860s. The proposed district does not include the brownstones on West 158th Street, west of Riverside Drive, or the Upper and Lower Drives, i.e.: Riverside Drive north of West 158th Street. Ms. Betts introduced Sarah Carol who continued the presentation.

Ms. Carol explained that in a historic district LPC reviews all work that takes place that requires building department approval but that designation is made "as-is", existing conditions are grandfathered and that designation regulates only the exterior of buildings. A property owner in a historic district will not have to interact with LPC unless a change to the building is proposed. Although LPC does not regulate interior changes, if an interior change is proposed that requires the approval of the Department of Buildings (DOB) LPC must also review. DOB will not issue a permit for a work on a designated building or a building in a designated district if LPC has not signed-off. Ms. Carol stressed that landmarking does not mean that everything must stay the same and noted that in 2008 LPC issued 10,000 permits for changes to designated structures. LPC staff typically handles most approvals (90%- 95%). Proposed changes that are complicated, high profile or entail major additions are reviewed by the LPC Commissioners. A simple one-page application is used for all projects. Ms. Carol's comments concluded LPC's presentation.

Chairman Tierney and LPC staff took questions on the proposed Audubon Park Historic District. The Committee and guests expressed interest in more public meetings and offered to assist with outreach; the LPC representatives welcomed the assistance. The Committee and guests also expressed interest either in broader district boundaries for Audubon Park, to include the West 158th Street brownstones and RSD west of 158th Street (as suggested by LU to LPC in 2004), or additional districts, contiguous to Audubon Park to include these areas. LPC reps noted that they wanted to begin with a tight, manageable district, that the proposed district has a strong sense of place / architectural character that distinguishes it from the brownstones and upper/lower drive areas and that expanding the boundaries would slow the schedule for advancing Audubon Park. After further discussion LPC expressed interest in considering future additions to the Audubon Park, noted that the evaluation request submitted to it in 2003 for Audubon Park was a high-quality document that help LPC to advance the project and again welcomed the assistance of the community board and members of the public to provide similar background information and documents on the other areas where there is interest in designation.

3. The Committee discussed modifications to the resolution in support of the BSA application submitted for the West 155th Street Exxon Mobile Station passed by LU in November 2008 that have been proposed by the Health and Environment Committee (HEC). LU did not present this resolution to the Board in November or December because it asked HEC to follow-up on a gasoline spill that occurred at this site several years ago and HEC had not completed its investigation into the status of the matter. LU member Obie Bing, who is also a member of HEC, provided the Committee with an overview of HEC's discussions and activities with respect to investigating the gasoline spill. After further discussion a motion was made (Obie Bing) and seconded (Dora M. Abreu) to approve the West 155th Street Exxon Mobile BSA application, as amended by recommendations from HEC that condition approval upon the local gas station operator expediting the clean-up of the gasoline spill in coordination with DEC, informing the tenants of 3750 Broadway of the vapor abatement system in the building and the results of annual air sampling and providing CB12-M with copies of the annual sampling results as well as annual reports on the efforts being made to clean-up the gasoline spill. **The resolution was passed base on the following vote.**

	<u>In Favor</u>	<u>Against</u>	<u>Abstaining</u>
LU Members	7	0	0
Other Board Members	0	0	0
Member of the Public	0	0	0

4. The Committee discussed aspects of zoning overrides, in general and in the context of the proposed BSA application submitted by Rocky Mount Baptist Church, with Edwin Marshall, Department of City Planning and Paimaan Lodhi, Office of the Manhattan Borough President. Mr. Benjamin noted that the Rocky Mount project is the most complicated BSA application that the Committee has considered and that while the proposed building height (19 stories) was discussed at length at the December 2008 LU Meeting other aspects of the project did not receive as much attention. The BSA application seeks for a number of zoning variances. The as of right building height is approximately 75 feet but a variance to allow a building height of 175 feet is requested. The maximum residential density is approximately 70,000 square feet but a variance to allow approximately 100,000 square feet of residential space is requested.

Mr. Benjamin indicated that he had a preliminary conversation with Mr. Marshall concerning the merits of creating a special zoning district along Hillside Avenue that tailors zoning to accommodate the local topography.

The Committee asked Mr. Marshall and Mr. Lodhi to share their perspectives on the challenges posed by this application. It was noted that this or any BSA applications must address its impact on neighborhood character and context, demonstrate that a constructing a zoning-compliant building is in no way feasible and demonstrate that the project meets the requirements to obtain a zoning variance.

The extent to which the variances requested are needed because of the design approach being pursued by Rock Mount and its development partner (essentially two stand-alone buildings) was discussed. It was generally agreed that the applicants may pursue a design of their choice / preference but that ones choice of a design does not justify a zoning variance.

The 2004 Municipal Arts Society report on BSA variances was referenced, in particular some of the court opinions cited therein concerning what does and does not qualify as justification for a zoning variance.

Mr. Benjamin provided copies of the Sandborn map (land map) of the Hillside Avenue area to the Committee. The map documents that the 20- and 21-story buildings on Fort George Hill and Fairway Avenue that are referenced in the BSA application as justification for the proposed 19-story building height actually are on zoning lots that are significantly larger than the Rocky Mount site. The height and density of these existing buildings are zoning-compliant given the size of their lots.

Support for the project was reiterated but it was generally agreed that the applicants need to make a more convincing case for the zoning variances requested and ensure that the community board is provided with all of the information provided to BSA. Mr. Benjamin noted that on January 12th the applicant submitted answers to questions posed after the December 2008 LU meeting and that copies of four sets of alternative design scenarios. The district manager will be asked to provide with copies of the plans the Committee, which is asked to review and comment on them. Copies of the plans will also be provided to Mr. Marshall and Mr. Lodhi.

5. The Committee agreed to defer its discussion of City Planning's proposed Bicycle Text Zoning Amendment to its February 2009 meeting.

6. Planning Intern Michael Kolber provided the Committee with an update on the status of the soft site analysis of Washington Heights and Inwood he is preparing pursuant to discussions with the Committee and the MBPO. Mr. Kolber indicated that he met with the MBPO to understand the parameters for undertaking a soft site analysis and has obtained the data needed for the analysis from the library at Columbia University. Mr. Kolber indicated that he is still working on the analysis. Initial work shows that there are approximately 2,745 zoning lots in Washington Heights and Inwood; 2,474 are zoned R7 or R8. Approximately 129 are built to less than 50% of their permitted bulk; i.e.: they meet the definition of soft sites. Mr. Kolber also indicated that LU Chair Wayne Benjamin asked him to look at sites with C8-3 or C8-4 zoning; these zoning districts do not permit residential uses. He advised the Committee that there are approximately 73 properties subject to C8-3 or C8-4 zoning and asked for further direction as to the objective of reviewing the C8-3 and C8-4 sites. The Committee advised Michael that he should review these sites, the buildings/environment around them and recommend which would be appropriate for rezoning to permit residential uses.

7. The meeting was adjourned at 9:20 PM

Respectfully submitted by: Wayne A. Benjamin

Community Board 12, Manhattan Parks & Cultural Affairs Committee
January 6, 2009 -- 40 Haven Avenue

Present: Elizabeth Lorris Ritter (Chair); Ninoska Uribe; **Excused:** Ariel Hart; **Absent:** Jennifer Araújo; Emilia Cardona

Guests: Mitch Glen; Judy O'Neill; Pat Young; Carol Dunn; Ellis Mercer; Steve Simon, Jennifer Hoppa, Douglas Nash, Department of Parks & Recreation; Andrew Engelhard; Alex Castex-Porter; Marcelo Martin; Chris Lyons; Jerry Culligan; Andrea Bachrach Mata; Erin Franke; Joe Wojak & Joe Butasek, Inwood Canoe Club; Tracey Eberhart, Harlem River Community Rowing; Leslie Peoples & Frank Barbour, Stantec; Caroline Sickinger, Carol Blagman.

The meeting was called to order at 7:30pm with **welcome & opening remarks** by Committee Chair Elizabeth Lorris Ritter.

PANYNJ Homeland Security renovation in Ft. Washington Park (base of GWB's NY tower): Although the Greenway detour signs have been posted since early December, the Greenway was only closed for two days mid-month while the bollards were being installed. As soon as there are five consecutive 40-degree days (so that it is warm enough to pour concrete) the Greenway will be closed for five days for re-paving, at the conclusion of which the detour signs will be removed.

Highbridge Park Rec Center: Jennifer Hoppa, DPR's Northern Manhattan Parks Administrator, introduced Ellis Mercer, the new Director of the Highbridge Recreation Center. Mr. Mercer was formerly at Jackie Robinson Rec Center for six years, as well as the Chelsea Rec Center and a center in Brooklyn. He begins next week, replacing Artie Rollins, who moved to the Bronx. He gave information about programs at Highbridge and expressed interest in working with the Committee in the future.

PlaNYC renovation of Fort Washington and Riverside Parks, Doug Nash, Consultant Project Manager for DPR's Capital: Earlier this month we finally received approval for the concept from the Public Design Commission, which took several months and was not forthcoming with scheduling information until the last minute. They had concerns and questions about Interagency Coordination (with Amtrak, at the Light House Link and the over-track access bridge; NYSDEC regarding the Light House Link River Edge; NYCDOT regarding the W 181st Street pedestrian bridge; and NYSDOT regarding the 151st Street pedestrian bridge) and the general funding priorities for phase I versus overall project (a reconstructed step-ramp at 161st Street and a new ADA Ramp at 163rd Street; a new ADA Ramp at Dyckman/Staff Streets). They also had questions regarding views of the Park from the River, and the Revolutionary War Historic Remnants, and the rising water table.

Leslie Peoples and Frank Barbour, Landscape Architects from Stantec, the design firm for this project, gave a presentation on the plan, which includes the northern end of Riverside Park, all of Fort Washington Park, and into Inwood Hill Park in the north. Community input included listening sessions and meetings this spring, surveys on paper and via the web, Community Board meetings, and on-site scoping meetings.

According to the surveys, community-ranked responses included particular problems with specific locations in the park; improvement of existing park facilities; security and lighting concerns; transportation, access and trail systems; environmental conservation and education; restoration and historic preservation; access to water, both for passive and recreational use; general gratitude for/support of the park; bathroom improvements; request for more food, concessions & cultural events; request for fewer park facilities and preservation of natural areas; access for strollers, elderly, handicapped; and general concern about PlaNYC's impact on local users.

A component breakdown of Phase I is as follows: improve park access from adjacent neighborhoods (32% / \$11.2 million); improve active and passive recreation facilities (35% / \$12.25 million); improve bikeway & pedestrian paths/greenways (21% / \$7.35 million); enhance/protect natural & historic landscapes (12% / \$4.2 million).

The majority of expenditures are in the mid-park cluster (155th – 172nd Streets) to improve ADA access, pathways and both active and passive recreation; renovation of the comfort station at 172nd Street and the bathroom at 145th Street, as well as an additional bathroom between the discovery playground and the ball fields. There will also be improvements to the picnic area near the lighthouse. The Daughters of the American Revolution's Revolutionary War monument will be restored. (The monument, built in 1910, predates the GW Bridge. Most of the wall from the old fort redoubt are not visible due to overgrowth, but Phase I hopes to uncover the top of the wall.) An inspection of the pedestrian bridge over the Amtrak tracks has been scheduled; this repair may be executed as part of Phase I. Other features of the plan include improved connections to Dyckman Street and Inwood Hill Park, and shoreline stabilization at pinch point by the ball fields. (That path currently consists of 2x4 planks atop rocky outcroppings. This is clearly dangerous, and there is debate between the competing need to make the area safe and accessible, while not opening it up to bicycles such that a passive-use area is disturbed.)

Stantec anticipates presenting schematics to CB12 in March, followed by Design Commission review pending their scheduling procedures.

There followed an extensive Q&A. Chris Lyons: is the revised plan available on-line? A (Ms. Hoppa): yes; easiest access is to go to DPR website (www.nyc.gov/parks) and click on PlaNYC icon, then "Regional Parks" then under "Fort Washington Park" click "read more". Has the bark-chip trail been moved to Phase I? A: yes, if we have agreement from Amtrak to move the fence, we would have bark chips for roughly 1600 linear feet from the rock outcroppings just north of the Little Red Lighthouse, up to the pinch point of the waterfront at approximately 181st Street. The area to the north of this would be a paved greenway with bike racks and a turnaround that continued north to the Dyckman Marina.

Judy O'Neill: Is the funding secure given the current economic situation? A (Mr. Nash): yes, \$35 million in hard construction costs is in place

now for this next fiscal. This includes both NYC and additional federal and state funding. It is important to begin construction before the end of the year.

Andrew Engelhardt: What version of the plan is this? A (Ms. Peoples): 11/24/08 version. Q: Why not have the bark-chip trail all the way to Dyckman? A (Ms. Hoppa): The funding paying for this portion of the renovation is federal transportation money, which must be spent on alternative modes of transportation. This includes hike and bike trails to recreation. Q: What will keep bikes off wood-chip trail? A: it is not conducive to bikes. Ms. Lorris Ritter noted that the placement of bike racks would suggest that the biking area has come to an end.

Joe Wojak: regarding water line for the Inwood Canoe Club, we would like to coordinate with DPR and Stantec so construction does not disturb water line. A (Ms. Peoples): Yes, we would like very much to work with you on that.

Ms. Hoppa noted that a State DEP grant for restoration and removal of construction debris near the marina has been discontinued.

Jerry Culligan: What kinds of improvements will there be to the step ramp at 161st Street? It is useful access point, but also a terrible drug/crime area. A (Ms. Hoppa): we can improve the lighting, and also install a "flash cam," which has been used to great effect in problem sites at Highbridge Park. A "flash cam" is a solar-operated camera; costs about \$7k.

Alex Castex-Porter: in any area where there are drugs, drinking and other inappropriate use, anything that makes the area more accessible will make it safer by increasing legitimate foot traffic. Also suggested increased lighting and flash cams in the 172nd/Haven tunnel entrance.

Marcel Martin: How do we know that our input will be counted? A (Ms. Lorris Ritter): we will review the schematics at our next meeting; hopefully these will incorporate many of the public's suggestions. If they do to our satisfaction, then we would be inclined to approve them. Mr. Engelhardt expressed some concern about passing a resolution at the same meeting that an item was discussed. Ms. Lorris Ritter noted that because this review is in the context of several meetings over the course of almost a year of discussion on this project, it is not as if the issues are being considered for the first time. For a large-scale capital project such as this, the usual process would be to review and discuss the schematics, and to vote on the general sense of either approval or disapproval, noting the salient points. Rather than engaging in a group writing exercise, the actual resolution would be written later, including the salient points agreed to at the meeting. The resolution would be circulated to ensure that it accurately captured the discussion during the Committee meeting; this would then be voted on by the full Board at its general meeting at the end of the month, several weeks after the Committee meeting. The public also is welcome to attend the General meeting, and provide input – in favor or opposed – to the resolution.

Steve Simon: we will do a mailing to the people who attended listening sessions, to let them know of the March meeting to review the schematics. Ms. Hoppa: we will do an "e-blast" to our North Manhattan Parks e-list (about 2,000 e-mail addresses). These same people were notified of the December 22nd public scoping meetings.

With regard to when would work start, Mr. Nash noted that once approvals are received, it is 2-3 months to finalize construction documents and another 2-3 months to bid. The best scenario would be design approval by April and breaking ground by October. Hopefully we will break ground at least by December.

There was a brief discussion regarding sand volleyball versus paved courts, with a strong consensus of both the public and representatives of DPR in favor of paved courts.

There was a brief discussion of artificial turf and possible health issues. This is not an issue as there is none proposed for Phase I.

Greenmarket: no update; still waiting to hear from CENYC/Greenmarket staff as to suitability of various sites discussed at the December meeting.

The February agenda will include further discussion of this issue. Hopefully we will be able to agree on a resolution at that time to present to the full Board. Ms. O'Neill mentioned that she visited Abington Square to observe the configuration of buses and traffic, though she was not able to visit when the Greenmarket was in session there. Based on her observations, she believes that Margaret Corbin Circle could be a workable site.

There was no mail to review. There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:58pm.

Respectfully submitted: Elizabeth Lorris Ritter

Traffic & Transportation Committee Minutes

January 5, 2009

Committee Members Present

Mark Levine
Anita Barberis
James Berlin
George Cruz

Committee Members Excused

Dr. James Freeman
Edith Prentiss
Rita McKee

C.B. 12 Members Present : Martin Collins, Obie Bing.

Guests: William Stanford, Jacob Morris, Josh Orzeck – NYC DOT, T.Porter, Charles Thompson.

Chair Levine opened the meeting at 7:10pm and amended the Agenda to include:

3. Harlem Historical Society –Jacob Morris
4. MTA's abuse of Isham Street for the B#12 Express bus
5. Resolution on angle parking on 170th St. between Broadway & Ft. Washington Avenue.

After the Committee introduced themselves, Chair Levine shared the resolution of co-naming West 158th St. in honor of the late Lucille Bulger (corner to be determined). Those who knew her spoke of her dedication to the community and the founder of the Community League of the Heights (CLOTH) which provided social services, affordable housing, health care and programs for youth. The resolution passed: In favor: T&T=4, CB12 Board=2, Public=4. No one opposed or abstained.

Jacob Morris of the Harlem Historical Society requested that we amend our approved resolutions for "Paul Robeson Blvd" and "Count Basie Place." by moving the Count Basie Place to St. Albans, Queens, where he lived and replacing that corner with "Carol Baker Motley Place" on 160th St. between St Nicholas Avenue to Edgecombe. Avenue. We agreed and will request this change.

Resident Katherine O'Sullivan requesting the removal of the B#12 Express Bus on Isham Street, a narrow two lane residential street, to 215th St, a wide four lane street. It is a function of the quality of life and the safety of our children, as they cross Isham Street to two different schools (PS 98 and Good Shepherd) and only a stop sign exists (which is ignored by the busses). She showed a video of the problems to the Board and the public. Further the #20 bus is still using Isham Street when MTA advised the community that it would stop as of last October, 2008. Recommended a different route that would clear Isham Street of all busses, but MTA responded that this would inconvenience riders. Martin Collins will respond to MTA on behalf of Assemblyman Espaillet. Maybe, this corner would meet the warrants of a stop light. However, it was suggested that enforcement by the 34th Police Precinct be part of the remedy.

A resolution asking DOT to study the viability of 45 degree angle back-in parking (after the meters close to Broadway) on 170th Street between Broadway and Ft Washington Avenue.

It is a one-way street with light traffic flowing west. Resolution passed: T&T=4, CB12=2, Public=6 in favor. No one opposed or abstained.

With the potential rehab of the uptown Port Authority, requested an Illumination study as it is presently very dark around the building.

Meeting adjourned: 8:08pm

Respectfully submitted: Anita Barberis

YOUTH AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE – MINUTES

January 5, 2009

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Albania Jiménez, Chair
George Espinal
Jackie Rowe Adams

COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT

Rafael Osoria
Maria Luna
Carol Mulligan

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Martin Collins

PUBLIC MEMBERS

Judith Rodríguez

Staff Member Present: Deborah Blow

Guests: Siegfried Aoher, Christina Hykes, Jocelyn Rodriguez

Committee chair Albania Jimenez called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. Quorum not established, awaiting additional members.

Chairwoman Jimenez welcomed everyone and wished everyone a Happy New Year and looking forward towards working with everyone in the Youth and Education fields this year.

Motion to adjourn – George Espinal seconded by Albania Jimenez 8:15pm