

HEALTH & ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE – July 10, 2006

Committee Members Present: S. Simon, I. Bing, B. Gomez, B. Hall, B. Statman.

Absent: H. Morik, E. Prentiss.

Public Member Absent: M. Chachere.

Board Members Present: M. Collins

1. S. Simon, chair, called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m. He reported that both guest speakers cancelled today and that they would be invited to the September meeting.

2. Con Edison's plan to install a new transmission line and build a new substation in Inwood.

- S. Simon: Con Edison's application is in the board office. Two alternative routes mentioned in the application cross over the Harlem River from Roberto Clemente State Park instead of at W. 220th St. in proposed route.

- I. Bing, who also reviewed the application: Con Ed is mandated by the Public Service Commission to bring in additional 600 MW by 2008. This line will provide 300 MW; will they have to bring in another line? Dielectric fluid around the three cables in the steel pipe is "problematic" in high-density areas because it tends to leak and steel pipe corrodes. It's very difficult to find leaks. Academy substation will contain 30,000 gallons of the fluid.

- S. Simon: concerned about lack of full-time security planned for substation and level of noise from the Horizontal Directional Drilling to be used to install pipe under Harlem River.

- M. Collins: we have to talk to elected officials. Con Ed should provide "givebacks" to community, especially affected businesses.

- B. Gomez: concerned about impact on schools at W. 219th St. and Ninth Ave.

- B. Statman: this is an opportunity to question Con Edison's standard practices.

- M. Collins: what is maintenance schedule for existing transmission lines?

It was agreed that the board will compile questions about the project and forward them to Con Edison in order to prepare for the PSC hearing in the fall.

3. Issues for District-Level Budget Consultations.

- The NY Post reported last week that Community District 12-Manhattan produces the largest number of noise complaints to the 311 hotline. Between July 1, 2005 and May 1, 2006, residents of this district called in 14,030 complaints, far surpassing any other district. S. Simon: we should ask DEP to assign a special unit to deal with this problem.

- I. Bing: ask for list of water sampling stations.

- M. Collins: DEP is supposed to have 30 teams to close fire hydrants; must do outreach to schools and CBOs to deal with this problem.

- The committee also reviewed questions for the Sanitation and Health Depts.

4. The meeting was adjourned at 9 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
S. Simon

Martin Collins
CB12 Chair's Report
July 25, 2006

Sherman Creek: City Planning & HPD's June 28th rezoning proposal miffed almost 300 residents. Recommendation for possible 18-20 story waterfront buildings was rejected while contextual zoning for the residential upland was palatable. The 80/20 offer and option to move the inclusionary (affordable housing) bonus within a ½ mile of Sherman Creek was unacceptable. We have a long-way to go on this project. The Environmental Impact Study and DOT's Traffic Study have just started; meanwhile, the Job Development & Business Assistance Study, strategy for working with community-based non-profits on housing, and the Con Edison resolution remain ahead.

Con Edison: We have expressed numerous concerns about the proposal to dig-up Broadway from 219-204 St. and eastward 204th to Academy St. to install power lines for the new substation. A traffic study was not done and Con Ed failed to sufficiently explore other routes/concerns, which we have addressed. I spoke with the MBPO, Council Member Jackson & Martinez's offices about this. Thanks Steve Simon & Obie Bing for your help.

Borough Board (7/20) included a presentation by Joshua Toas, CEO, State Liquor Authority. 42% of all licenses are from NYC. Only 11 investigators for NYC and Long Island! SLA needs to revamp its 1934 laws, which are still in place. Rapid Enforcement Unit has worked effectively with NYPD to address problems. SLA working-out details to attach Community Board recommendations to licenses. Elsewhere, we passed a resolution calling on the Governor to sign Assembly Bill A.9044/ Senate Bill S.5944 to allow Community Boards to apply for and receive Brownfield Opportunity Area Grants.

State Assembly Housing Committee Hearing (7/24) at the Milstein Bldg. was attended by more than 125 people. Julio Rodriguez and I delivered testimony about numerous housing problems, conditions, landlord malfeasance, enhanced legal services, tenant organizing, & increased DOB/HPD inspections.

Morris Jumel Mansion hosted Borough President Scott Stringer (6/29). Thanks Pam North for organizing the event. Local residents addressed numerous quality-of-life concerns and Shanifah Rieara, Director MBPO Northern Manhattan Office, will schedule a follow-up meeting.

Columbia University Environmental Health & Safety Office completed all three phases of its self-audit for the EPA on CUMC laboratory facilities. I had an opportunity to see the report July 18th and the Director Kathleen Crowley and the CUMC Health & Safety Office will make a full presentation to the board at a Health & Environment Committee meeting this fall. Phase I was presented to CB12 last winter.

District-Level Budget Consults with City agency reps are going very well. We've met with Small Business Services, Human Resources Administration, NYPD, Dept. Buildings, NY Public Library, and Dept. Environmental Protection. Minutes will be available shortly.

SCA: We continue to push the SCA for new school sites and I expect we'll hear from them shortly. They've received numerous sites from us. MBPO, Council Members, etc. have all urged SCA to respond.

UMEZ: Only two projects were funded in CB12 last year. Unacceptable! I wrote to Chairman Baeza and requested a three-year investment analysis for Washington Heights-Inwood and a meeting to address our many concerns.

Edison Parking: They're building a new 212-car garage on the northwest corner of 10th Ave. & West 212 St. Great news because we've lost 400 parks spaces in Inwood this year. I recently contacted Edison about this vacant lot and am very pleased they've stepped-up and responded.

Greenmarket: I spoke with them about the lack of product variety and volume at the St. Nicholas Ave. market. There was a noticeable improvement last Saturday and we will continue to monitor the situation.

Apple Bank has expressed an interest in mixed-use development of their property on the southwest corner of West 159th St. & Broadway. I wrote to them four times about this vacant parcel and I'm happy that talks have started.

Winterlighting Meeting (7/19) at the board office saw many entities gather and discuss the plan to light-up the Broadway Malls from West 135th – 170th St. from November-February. The CLOTH, Broadway Malls Association and community activists are spearheading this program.

Flight 587 Memorial is scheduled to be completed for the fifth anniversary on November 12th. Commissioner Guillermo Linares, architect Freddy Rodriguez, and DPR Angelyn Chandler held a meeting last Saturday to update the families on the memorial's design & construction. Further information will be provided shortly.

MBPO Abandoned Bldg & Vacant Lot Survey (7/22) was very successful. Edith Prentiss, Eduardo Hoepelman and I reported about 45 such properties from West 155-167 Street. Information is available at the board office.

Parks Dept. Ribbon-Cuttings for the new J. Hood Wright Dog Run was (7/8), which the Borough President and I attended. The Inwood Park Boat Launch (7/19) and Angelo Ortiz and Zead Ramadan were on-hand. Thanks to DPR for their continued effort to enhance CB12 Parks.

207th St. Apple Bank Reader's Group for children takes place Saturday's from 11:00am-1:00pm through August 19. Thanks to CB12 member Albania Jimenez for initiating this program. Future guest readers include Liz Ritter and me.