

GENERAL MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 25, 2002

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Jacqueline Aristy	Rafael Escano	Kirk Miller	Glenda Swanson Massa
Anita Barberis	Luis Facundo	Helen Morik	Milagros Vicente
Rafael Beaumont	Ivelisse Fairchild	Norma Nadien	Sandra Wachspress
Abby Belkin	Leslie Foster	Marcos Navarro	Msgr. Gerald Walsh
James Berlin	William A. Garcia	Dr. Pamela Palanque North	Elouise Whitehurst
Emilia G. Cardona	Beatrice Hall	Julio Peguero	
Nelson Castro	Herbert Harwitt	Ron Peterson	
Martin Collins	Joyce F. Holland	Zead Ramadan	BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT
Mireya Cruz	Jose Lopez	Nelson Rojas	Venecia Fernandez
Fredericka Cuenca	Elizabeth Lorris Ritter	Jerry Marie Saunders	Nelson Gomez (excused)
Walther G. Delgado	Maria Luna	Steve Simon	Benjamin Mantell
Sybil R. Dodson	Renato Mena	Barbara Smith Ramos	

Meeting called to order at 7:31pm; open and welcome from Chair. Chair suggested that agenda be changed to move minutes to later in the meeting, to give members a chance to read the minutes, which had not been previously distributed in the packettes.

(7:32) **Motion to adopt agenda** by Leslie Foster; seconded by Helen Morik; unanimous.

(7:35) **Chair's Report**, Walther G. Delgado: Significant neighborhood developments:

- No state budget yet; City budget
- New school, Amber Charter School, on 172nd/173rd Streets&Amsterdam Avenue. Will be built by the Economic Development Corporation, not School Construction Authority as it is a charter school. Association for Progressive Dominicans is the local sponsor.
- Lot on West 184th Street & Overlook Terrace is being cleared to make way for a building, possibly as high as a 17 story tower, possibly atop the A train tunnel exit. Originally slated for development as an assisted living facility. Some difficulty in ascertaining what exactly is the situation, and who owns the property and what are plans, but it appears that Mike Diangilitis is the contractor and Rudolph Thompson is the owner. There are no clear plans yet, but trees have been cleared, which is the property owner's right – it is privately owned property, not owned by NYC parks or MTA or other government agency. The owner is attempting to assemble the two separate lots together to make one lot. Possibility of increased air rights based on public amenities.

(7:47) **Nominating Committee**, Fredericka Cuenca: Explained voting procedure; all ballots must be signed. Candidates for office made brief remarks as to their experience, qualifications, and goals for the coming year on the Executive Committee. With 41 members attending and 41 ballots cast, the nominating committee left to count.

(8:22) **Motion to adopt minutes** of May meeting by Kirk Miller and seconded by Emilia Cardona; unanimous.

(8:22) **District Manager's Report**: Gregoria Feliciano:

- Introduced Miguel Reyes, new staff member who started last week.
- Sprinklers in parks will be on during the summer even with drought.
- Distributed schedule of one-day single-block events approved by board, and multi-day +/-or multi-block events approved by Mayor's Office.
- Comfort stations in parks are open from 7 AM to 8 PM.
- Renovations of Lily Brown and Gorman Parks scheduled for completion July 31st.
- DOT paving is proceeding ahead of schedule.
- Meetings scheduled with agencies for budget priorities in anticipation of Borough Consultations in September. Gave schedule, which also is available at the board office. Invited all Board members to attend.
- GWHS fields are underutilized. Shared contact info for scheduling.
- Borough Service Cabinet will be meeting with the Dept. of Consumer Affairs and the Dept. of Buildings. Asked members if there were specific issues they would like raised.

Q: Leslie Foster: Quiet zone signs at Isabella?

A: I raise it every month at the District Service Cabinet. DEP has just submitted design to DOT. There was several discontent at DOT's lack of progress on this issue.

(8:34) **Nominating Committee**: Election results were as follows:

Zead Ramadan	40	Barbara Smith Ramos	37
Sybil Dodson	40	Elizabeth Lorris Ritter	37
Martin Collins	40	Emilia Cardona	39

(8:36) **Public Session**

Cecil Mark, WEACT: Filed Title VI complaint regarding bus depots. Citing of so many depots violates civil rights due to excess placement in this community. DOT responded to complaint; WEACT is responding and will make copies available at Board and on website (www.WEACT.org), including relief being sought.

Helen Morik: Suit against private bus companies for their idling buses; settled for \$100,000.

A: It was Attorney General's suit, and they invited WEACT to join suit. They sent inspectors out and surprisingly the idling stopped.

Luis Facundo: What about pollution from trans-Manhattan highway.

A: Urged EPA to measure pollutants and soot. Recorded complaints from residents of Bridge Apartments. Not surprisingly, it is among the highest areas in the neighborhood for pollution.

Chair acknowledged presence of 33rd Pct. Captain Wilcox.

Liz Hernandez – SRO Law Project: Spoke in support of Executive Committee Housing resolution regarding 203K HUD scandal that has robbed Harlem and, to a lesser extent, CB12 of affordable housing. Resolution offers several viable models for proposed management of these affected buildings. Two tenants from affected buildings addressed the Board to describe their plight and ask for support of resolution.

Tee Williams – BETA (Being Extraordinary Through the Arts): An arts leadership training program in Washington Heights. Is from Washington Heights and has recently moved back; is looking to network.

Milagros Vicente: What about youth with special needs?

A: looking to get involved with that as well.

Leslie Ann Cardona, Community Resident: Concerned about development at 184th and Overlook, specifically loss of trees, and possible effects of blasting on adjacent buildings.

Chair encouraged to attend the Housing Committee in the fall.

Jane Jackson, New York Restoration Project: Described work at Ft. Tryon, Highbridge and Ft. Washington Parks. Planning to have festival in Ft. Tryon Park on July 27th. Also working with DOT on Swindler Cove Park near PS 5, including development of a boathouse. Anticipating completion of park and boathouse by spring '03.

Elizabeth Lorris Ritter: invited to attend Parks & Cultural Affairs and Youth & Education Committees in the fall.

Sybil Dodson: Why not do more outreach to Dyckman Houses for work being done at Swindler's Cove? Encouraged NYRP to reach out to Dyckman House residents to increase their support.

A: grateful for feedback.

Elouise Whitehurst: Echoed concerns regarding lack of outreach to the Dyckman Houses.

A: apologized and vowed to work with Dyckman House. Got contact information.

Michael Haynes & Sadie Bragg – Borough of Manhattan Community College: announced uptown location at City College campus. Described programs and credentials in awarding degrees and emphasized on education opportunity especially for minorities. Priorities are in business and liberal arts. Capacity is a thousand seats; offer scholarships and many services including on-line tutoring. Shared literature and pamphlets.

Steve Simon: This is a really positive development for upper Manhattan. Can we include this information in the next mailing?

Walther Delgado: any classes at George Washington High School?

A: Not since change over to smaller academies within the High School.

Marianna DePaola, Community Resident: Likes name of neighborhood for Washington Heights; opposed to calling it "Northern Manhattan/Harlem" Heritage area. Also opposed to lack of funding for education. In favor of new fines for people over 15 who write on sidewalks. Shared some history on building of IRT in early 20th century. Also opposed to Marble Hill being considered part of the Bronx, not Manhattan. Finally, she shared a movingly patriotic tribute read by Walther Delgado.

Ed Flynn, Community Resident: Has not attended meetings in over three years due to extended illness. Came to honor Walther on his last meeting as Chair. Spoke about Board and also praised quality of care in Presbyterian Hospital's Emergency Room.

Susan Razavi – Alta Classica: performing traditional classical music in Bennett Park on August 13th, in cooperation with Artists Unite. Announced receipt of new grants. Performing 10/5 at Donnell Library and 10/6 at Hebrew Tabernacle. Has some funding to perform in senior centers. For more information, go to website: www.altaclassica.org.

Sander Dultz for Councilman Martinez: provided support to 20 local organizations. This number has tripled, and many organizations are receiving funds for the first time. \$178k funding to local cultural, adult and youth education programs. Major capital projects include: \$300,000 for Business Outreach Center on Dyckman and 207th Street; \$350,000 to the Fort George Enrichment Center to expand Day Care facilities; \$700,000 to complete rehabilitation and renovation of Highbridge Recreational Center. Jointly with Councilman Jackson, \$1.5 million allocated for the expansion of a sewer line to Dyckman ballfields for bathrooms. Citywide, no cuts to education in terms of classroom instruction, but major cuts in central administration. No cuts to senior services. Councilman Martinez is working to establish a TLC handbook, and to create a complaint/advisory board for the drivers.

Edith Prentiss – Community Resident: problems in community with access, especially with Broadway and 166th St by Babies Hospital (southbound M5) and also St. Nicholas Avenue from 170th to 181st Street. There are other problems with sidewalk obstructions and other unfinished projects which results in four curb cuts and uncovered manholes. Also accessibility issues at post office and library.

Milagros Vicente: echoed concerns as a Board member and mother of a special needs child. Willing to work on survey, with specific emphasis on "one step" campaign (ie. businesses with the significant barrier of "only" one step at entrance.)

Robert Remington – Community Resident: voiced concerns regarding 184th St. and Overlook Terrace development, including impact on environment, infrastructure, and property values.

Carlos Rodriguez – Manhattan Borough President's Office: Thanked Board Members who attended lead safe house ribbon cutting ceremony as well as Councilmen Jackson and Martinez, and NYS Senator Schneiderman for their attendance and support. Described changes in office; including new Director of Northern Manhattan office.

(9:40) Public Officials

Councilman Robert Jackson: passed City budget (~\$42 billion) on Friday evening. This is a public document; will make copies available. (Ivy Fairchild and Helen Morik offered to make copies). Approximately \$9 million was approved in capital budget for the 7th district, including \$1.5 million for the Cloisters. Major news today is 4-1 decision by appellate court overturning Judge Leland DeGrasse's ruling in the CFE case. Also warned of tough budget times, especially for CBOs with state and/or City funding. Thanked all for public service, especially new and outgoing officers.

State Senator Eric Schneiderman: also congratulations to new officers and thanks to outgoing. Distressing news from Albany that legislature did not deal with a number of important issues including: reform of Rockefeller drug laws; raising minimum wage; reforming workers compensation; renewal of rent regulations and issue of affordable housing, which is a problem throughout the state. Disappointed in Governor's lack of leadership. Accomplishments include Health & Wellness Act; and the modification of SUNY and CUNY rules on charging out-of-state tuition rates to resident aliens graduating from NY high school. Spoke in support of CFE. Also spoke in support of raising taxes rather than just cutting programs to the bone, to the detriment of vital public services.

Kirk Miller, re: unfair tax rates for property owners: why not equalize rates for single-family houses and multiple dwellings (i.e. rentals and co-ops)?

A: met with resistance from the boroughs.

(9:55) By-laws Committee Resolutions

1. Term limit for requesting excusal from meetings
2. Reduce from seven to five the minimum number of members required appointed to each standing committee.
3. Outlining duties of Committee Chairs
4. Create and define the Assistant Chair's committee.
5. Change term of appointments to 9/1–8/31 from 5/1–4/30

Thanked the committee members (Rafael Beaumont, Emilia Cardona, Helen Morik and Zead Ramadan) for their help. Proposed that all resolutions be discussed altogether and voted on as one roll call.

Jim Berlin moved that only the 1st and 2nd resolution be discussed and voted on and the other three be tabled. Seconded by Ivy Fairchild. 18 yes, 20 no, 1 abstention; motion fails.

Resolution 1: move question on first item by Steve Simon; seconded by Beatrice Hall. No objection

Resolution on Minimum number on Committee:

Jim Berlin: this is an embarrassment and contrary to the Manhattan Borough President/

Joyce Holland: Resents the implications. We are volunteers and we work hard.

Zead Ramadan: only 45 members; quorum would only be reduced from four to three.

William Garcia: we are in violation of the By-laws and resolutions passed by such committees could be in question.

Resolution 3

Jim Berlin: unnecessary.

Msgr. Walsh: move question; seconded by Ron Peterson.

Resolution 4

Jim Berlin: whole issue of Assistant Chair is problematic and needs to be discussed in more detail. Not clear if we need Assistant Chairs, or why the Board Chair should have any role in appointing the Assistant Chair as opposed to Chair of Committee appointing the Assistant Chair.

Marcos Navarro: Parks & Cultural Affairs has no Assistant Chair by choice of committee, and while committee functions well, sometimes lack of Assistant Chair has been a problem.

Steve Simon: friendly amendment that Assistant Chairs be appointed in consultation with members of the committee, added as sub section to 7.07. Accepted as friendly amendment.

Dr. Palanque North: clarify "consult" not "decide" with committee. Group as a whole should come to a consensus.

Luis Facundo: point of information – why is it important for appointment to be done by Board Chair?

A: this would require another By-laws amendment but it should be discussed.

Milagros Vicente: appropriate for committee to have input into selection process. They should consult and recommend.

After some confusion it was realized that the language was already in the resolution, rendering the friendly amendment unnecessary.

Sybil Dodson: clarified that the use of the word "may" appoint, not "shall" makes the whole thing discretionary, not mandatory.

Steve Simon: offered insertion of "and" in item A, to clarify grammar.

Ron Peterson: motion to amend the resolution to require that committee members vote on Assistant Chair. Seconded by Jim Berlin. No discussion. 16 yes, 19 no, 3 abstentions; motion fails.

Resolution 5

Emilia Cardona: this is not a good idea as new members then are not working on committees.

William Garcia: new members must attend at least one committee in May and one in June, and can contribute and try out interests. This way, appointments of outgoing chair do not unduly influence new Board.

Emilia Cardona: understands the rationale but still not comfortable with the wording.

Fredericka Cuenca: thinks it's good – doesn't force new members to make premature choices; enhances learning process and increases flexibility for new Chair.

Sandra Wachspress: people don't necessarily get to pick their committees. New Chair in June meeting also changed composition of Committees and this may affect people's choices.

Jim Berlin: good intent, but problem with details. Formalized good intent of new members shopping around for committees, but raises problems with quorum. Opposed because language needs reworking.

Steve Simon: proposed friendly amendments regarding committee appointments made based on member interests to max extent practicable.

Walther Delgado: Clarified that these are housekeeping changes.

William Garcia: pointed out that Chair can appoint new members to committees if the need arises due to going below the required minimum. Chair has discretion to make appointments at any time.

Roll call vote results:

Resolution 1: passes unanimously (38 votes)

Resolution 2: passes unanimously (38 votes)

Resolution 3: 30 yes, 8 no; motion carries

Resolution 4: 18 yes, 20 no; motion fails

Resolution 5: 27 yes, 11 no; motion carries

(10:58) Housing & Human Services Committee Resolution

Joyce Holland: Suggested limiting ownership to co-op rather than not-for-profit landlord or mutual housing association (MHA). No one seconded.

Jim Berlin: Sees no reason to limit the type of ownership.

Maria Luna: What is a mutual housing association?

Steve Simon: A variation on co-op in which a number of buildings get together and own several buildings.

Sybil R. Dodson: Gave some examples of MHAs, which have worked in Harlem.

Liz Hemandex (from SRO Law Project): Some tenants cannot afford to buy and therefore would like landlord.

Kirk Miller: Called the question; multiple seconds; no objection.

Vote on resolution: 31 in favor, 1 opposed, 1 abstention, 2 not voting due to conflict; motion carries.

(11:11) Land Use/ Economic Development Resolution regarding Hess gas station & quick-stop shop @ B'way/Nagle

Steve Simon: Brought to his attention by Nagle Ave. "Y" that restrooms not maintained clean and propose condition. Recommended friendly amendment requiring this. Accepted.

Helen Morik: Any full service islands?

A: No. We can request this, but probably cannot dictate those terms, though they are open to ideas.

Milagros: Wants friendly amendment that must be handicap accessible.

A: Such an amendment is not necessary as it is a new building, and therefore subject to ADA accessibility requirements.

Luis Facundo: Objected to form of presentation to committee. Board should clarify with presenters that they should be clear in their presentations. Chair clarified some points from previous Committee meeting on this issue.

Maria Luna: Clarification regarding beer license

A: SLA has a process. This resolution doesn't grant beer license.

Elizabeth Loris Ritter: Supported proposal, but also in favor of friendly amendment regarding supporting full service island and ADA compliance. Even though these things may not be necessary, they will help to show CB12's priorities and wishes.

Helen Morik: Friendly amendment: add "...at least one full service island" to protect elderly, parents with infants in car, etc. Accepted.

Steve Simon: Question relating to special permit or variance.

Zead Ramadan: Specified permit relates to variance.

Fredericka Cuenca: BSA clarified that the applicant does not need to come before us; they can develop as- of- right.

Jacqueline Aristy: Friendly amendment: add " and tobacco" to fourth whereas. Accepted.

Ivelisse Fairchild: Why did public oppose this?

Fredericka Cuenca: They didn't like convenience store due to loitering concerns, but it is as- of- right so it was felt that it was best to take opportunity to send a message to Hess.

Helen Mork: Called the question; multiple seconds; no objection;

Vote on resolution: 26 yes, 5 no, 3 abstentions; motion carries.

Meeting Adjourned at 11:22

Respectfully submitted by : Elizabeth Loris Ritter.