

MINUTES OF COMMUNITY BOARD #16 – April 22, 2008

Attendance

David Alexander	Bettie Kollock-Wallace
Joyce Anderson (A)	Shawn Lewis (A)
Renee Archer (A)	Deborah Mack (E)
Octavius Bamberg	James Mack
Sissi Benitez (A)	Yolanda Matthews
Josephine Blakeley (E)	Sadie McNamara
Patricia Boone (E)	Rev. Joseph Norton (A)
James A. Bowens (E)	Edna Petty (A)
Gregory Coad (A)	Marie Pierre
Bonnie Crump (A)	Elder Devon Ponds
Essie Duggan (E)	Mattie Pusey (A)
Samantha Dunn	Melaine Rochford
Ivory Ellison (A)	Lashon Segar (A)
Helen Giles	Ernestine Turner (E)
Shirley Gonsalves	Rev. Miran Ukaegbu
Daniel Goodine (A)	Alice Vines (E)
Sarah Hall	Herman Winston
Henry Hill	Hazel Younger
Kofi Hormeku (E)	Viola D. Greene-Walker, DM
Michael Howard	E. Jane Coleman-Assistant ADM
Allene Ingram	Jimmi Brevil, Community Assistant
Daisy Jackson (E)	Latrice Walker for Hon. Yvette Clarke
Javonn Johnson (A)	Christopher Lundy for Hon Edolphus Towns
Troy Johnson (A)	Brandon Bloomfield for Hon. John Sampson
Dr. Cade Jones, III	William Whitaker for Hon. Marty Markowitz
Pamela Junior	R. Hermon for Hon. William F. Boyland, Jr.
Eula Key	Carolyn Sanders-James for Hon. Mike Bloomberg
Danny King (E)	Maurice Phillips for Hon. Darlene Mealy

MEETING HELD AT BROWNSVILLE MULTI-SERVICE CENTER, 444 THOMAS S. BOYLAND STREET, BROOKLYN

Chairperson Hazel Younger called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m. and an invocation was said by Ms. Bettie Kollock-Wallace.

A motion was made by Ms. Pamela Junior, seconded by Ms. Eula Key and carried to dispense with the reading of the minutes.

A motion was made by Ms. Bettie Kollock-Wallace, seconded by Mr. Henry Hill and carried to dispense with the reading of the District Manager's report.

A roll call of Board members was taken.

District Manager Viola Greene-Walker in behalf of Ms. Essie Duggan, Chairperson of the Economic Development Committee, reported that the Committee met on April 16th and completed a survey form which will be distributed to merchants on Belmont Avenue.

The purpose of the survey is to gather general information about the existing businesses and to gather information to assist the Committee in its efforts to bring new businesses to Belmont Avenue.

Following the next Committee meeting, which is scheduled for Wednesday, May 21st, 6:00p.m. in the Community Board Office, the Committee will distribute the surveys forms.

A motion was made by Ms. Pamela Junior, seconded by Mr. David Alexander and carried to accept the report of the Economic Development Committee.

Ms. Bettie Kollock-Wallace, Chairperson of the Land Use, Planning and Zoning Committee, reported that the Committee met jointly with the Economic Development Committee on April 8, 2008.

Representatives from the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) and

AKRF, Inc. gave an update of the Livonia Avenue Retail Market Study.

In 2006, HPD issued a Request for Proposals to select a consultant to prepare a retail market feasibility study of Livonia Avenue. AKRF was selected and they presented their final report in October 2007.

At the same time, HPD and EDC re-examined the vacant, city-owned land on and around Livonia Avenue for mixed use housing development.

The study focused on a 2 mile long stretch along Livonia Avenue between East 98th Street and New Lots Avenue (The study area encompasses both CD 16 and 5).

In CD #16, there are 110,448 square feet of vacant, city-owned land that can be included in the re-development plan.

The re-development goals are to strengthen the Livonia Avenue corridor, provide affordable rental housing opportunities with a mixed use component, and encourage community facilities uses where feasible.

A presentation will be made to the Community Board in May to get community feedback for incorporation in the Request for Proposals which will be issued in June.

A motion was made by Mr. Octavius Bamberg, seconded by Mr. David Alexander and carried to accept the report of the Land Use, Planning and Zoning Committee.

Ms. Sarah Hall, Chairperson of the Public Safety Committee, reported that on Thursday, April 3, 2008, eighteen volunteers began an 11-weeks training for the Community Emergency Response Team, also known as CERT.

The mission of the New York City Office of Emergency Management CERT program is to train their neighborhood and community-based volunteer teams that will:

- Inform, educate, and train their neighbors on disaster preparedness.
- Assist public safety agencies and local boards with public events.
- Respond to locally occurring disasters by strictly following New York City Office of Emergency Management CERT protocols and supporting emergency personnel upon their arrival and request.
- Assist agencies in managing spontaneous volunteers at a disaster site.

The training, thus far, has been very informative and enlightening (volunteers are still welcomed to join).

A motion was made by Ms. Marie Pierre, seconded by Dr. Cade Jones, III and carried to accept the report of the Public Safety Committee.

District Manager Viola Greene-Walker in behalf of Rev. Miran Ukaegbu, Chairperson of the Sanitation and Environmental Protection Committee, reported that the Committee met on April 21st and discussed garbage collection, recycling, and street cleaning in the district.

The Committee has seen an improvement in Sanitation services, however, it continues to need the cooperation of community residents to recycle bottles, cans, plastics, newspapers, etc.. Unfortunately, some of our neighbors continue to mix these items with their regular garbage. If this continues, the Committee will ask Sanitation Enforcement to issue summonses to persons who are violating the law.

Recyclable labels for garbage cans are available at the Community Board Office.

The next Sanitation and Environmental Protection meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, May 6th, 5:30 p.m. in the Lobby at 444 Thomas S. Boyland Street. A representative from the Department of Sanitation will be present to discuss garbage collection, recycling, street cleaning and other related matters.

A motion was made by Dr. Cade Jones, III, seconded by Mr. David Alexander to accept the report of the Sanitation and Environmental Protection Committee.

Mr. Henry Hill, member of the Senior Citizens Affairs Committee, reported that the Committee met on April 16, 2008 with Ms. Charise Lawrence from the New York City Department for the Aging (DFTA).

Ms. Lawrence informed the Committee that DFTA is leading a far-reaching effort to strengthen and improve the services seniors receive today and prepare for the growing and diverse needs of tomorrow's seniors. This modernization effort is part of Mayor Bloomberg's "All Ages Project" which will improve the City's capacity to support an increasing number of New Yorkers as they age.

By 2030 one-fifth of New York City's population will be over the age of 60, with seniors outnumbering school-aged children. In response to this "longevity revolution," the Department has spearheaded a year long consultative process with aging network providers, advocates, elected officials and community leaders to re-envision the future of aging services, a system that has not been re-examined since its inception in the late 1960's. This modernization effort will focus on the Department's three core services, case management, home delivered meals and senior centers.

In October of 2007, the Department released the case management request for proposals to further enhance senior services. The new case management system will assist older adults to age in place and to be engaged in their communities. The Department is expected to release its home delivered meals proposal on May 1, 2008. The citywide restructuring of the Department's home delivered meals program will provide greater efficiency, flexibility and choice to frail homebound seniors. Streamlining the system will help meet the growing demand of the City's most frail elderly, while providing them with healthy and specialized dietary meals. In addition, seniors will benefit from telephone reassurance, friendly visiting and other community supports to make certain that they are safe and secure in their homes. The home delivered meals request for proposals will be released at the conclusion of the public comment period.

In order to support a burgeoning, more active and diverse older adult population, the Department is transforming its current network of senior centers to Healthy Aging Centers. Originally created to provide meals as part of national anti-poverty programs, today nearly half of the Department's 325 senior centers throughout the five boroughs are underutilized, resulting in close to one million free meals going un-served annually.

Senior centers of tomorrow, by adopting a comprehensive "wellness" approach, will become places that promote social, physical, and mental wellness. While continuing to offer seniors meals and a support system, centers will also offer disease prevention programs, exercise classes, provide opportunities for meaningful volunteerism and civic engagement activities, and present creative opportunities, such as courses and lectures, performing and visual arts and career resources. Centers can promote social wellness not only by providing a physical space that allows for gathering and socializing, but also by exploring opportunities to create communities outside their material walls. The proposal for Healthy Aging Centers will be released in September 2008.

The Department's modernization efforts are in keeping with the reforms that are sweeping the nation in the field of aging, health and long-term care. New Yorkers are living longer and healthier than ever before with the number of older adults expected to increase dramatically by 2030. The time is now to strengthen the City's aging network in order to provide the best possible programs and services for seniors.

A motion was made by Mr. David Alexander, seconded by Dr. Cade Jones, III and carried to accept the report of the Senior Citizens Affairs Committee.

Chairperson Younger announced that the Senior Citizens Affairs Committee is seeking new members. Anyone interested in joining the Committee should contact District Manager Greene-Walker. She thanked Ms. Hazel Clark, Elder Devon Ponds, and Ms. Annie Walkes for their dedication to the Committee.

Ms. Marie Pierre, member of the Transportation and Franchises Committee, reported that the Committee met on April 8th.

Fliers about the telephone and e-mail blitzes to our local elected officials during the week of April 14th thru 18th were disseminated. Everyone is being encouraged to call or e-mail our local city, state and federal representatives to get their assistance to resolve several of the longstanding budgets requests concerning transportation.

Thanks to Congressman Ed Towns, the federal government has appropriated funds to upgrade the exterior of the area at the Broadway Junction station on Van Sinderen Avenue between Fulton Street and Broadway. The New York City Department of Transportation and the New York City Transit Authority are in the process of developing a plan for the project. As more information becomes available to the Committee, it will be shared with the community.

The next Transportation and Franchises Committee meeting will be on Wednesday, May 14th, 6:00 p.m. in the Community Board Office.

She thanked those who called and e-mailed the elected officials and asked that they continue to do so, as there have been reports the mailboxes of some the officials have been too full to accept additional messages.

District Manager Viola Greene-Walker, in behalf of Ms. Daisy Jackson, Chairperson of the Youth Services Planning Committee, reported that the Youth Services Planning Committee met on April 8th and 14th to discuss plans for a youth conference on Saturday, June 14th, from 12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m. for 13 to 19 year olds.

Workshop topics are: 1) Maintaining Your Power in the Midst of Controversy, 2) Surviving College Life (and Peer Pressure), 3) Health and HIV/AIDS, 4) Your Voice Matters (The Power of Voting), 5) Entrepreneurship, 6) Gang Violence and Coping with Domestic Violence.

The next Youth Conference Planning Committee will be held on Monday, April 28th, 6:00 p.m. in the Community Board Office.

A motion was made by Ms. Pamela Junior, seconded by Elder Devon Ponds and carried to accept the report of the Youth Services Planning Committee.

Chairperson Younger stated that in accordance with the By-laws of Community Board #16, at this month's meeting, she is to appoint members to a Nominating Committee which will meet and come back to the May Board meeting with suggested names of members to serve as Executive Officers of the Board for 2008-2009.

She has asked the following persons to serve on the Nominating Committee: Michael Howard, Allene Ingram, Eula Key, Elder Devon Pond, and Alice Vines.

Chairperson Younger recognized Mr. Christopher Lundy from the Office of Congressman Edolphus Towns.

Mr. Lundy stated that he will speak to Congressman Towns and his Chief-of-Staff on the concerns of the Board about the cutbacks to funding and/or closure of senior centers and report his findings to Board. He is happy to hear that the Board has been informed of the Congressman's appropriations for the transit hub at Broadway Junction.

He reminded the audience that beginning February 2009 analog television signals will cease to be broadcasted. After that time, you will need a converter box or have a television with a digital tuner in order to receive free over-the-air signals. If you subscribe to cable or satellite television, no additional equipment is necessary. Applications for a \$40.00 coupon towards the purchase of a converter box were distributed. (Additional applications may be requested by calling (888) 388-2009 or visiting the National Telecommunications & Information Administration's website at www.dtv2009.gov.)

Chairperson Younger recognized Ms. Carolyn Sanders-James, representing Mayor

Mike Bloomberg.

Ms. Sanders-James announced that the Mayor's Graffiti Removal program is back in operation. She encourages property owners with graffiti on their property to obtain an application by visiting their local precinct, calling 3-1-1, or via a download from the Mayor's Community Assistance Unit at nyc.gov/cau.

Sometime ago, she spoke to this Board about senior citizen discounts at the stores along Pitkin Avenue. She has been in communication with Mr. Gerald Coleman of the Pitkin Avenue Business Improvement District and she is happy to report the program will commence on May 10. A news conference will be held and as more information is known she will pass it along to the Board.

Chairperson Younger acknowledged the presence of Mr. Kevin McCall, Ms. Denese Forde of Kings County Hospital, Mr. Tony Rosa of the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation, and Ms. Corrine Turner and Mr. Dimitrius Bartholomew of the Municipal Arts Society.

Chairperson Younger recognized Ms. Ry-Ann Hermon from the Office of Assemblyman William F. Boyland, Jr..

Ms. Hermon stated that they are hiring staff for the Assemblyman's office. If you are or you know someone who is motivated to work on legislative issues, please contact Assemblyman Boyland's office at (718) 498-8681. She will be interviewing candidates next week.

Persons in need of free legal help should contact LIFT (Legal Information for Families Today) at (646) 613-9633. Anyone experiencing domestic abuse and is in need of permanent housing and/or counseling should contact Housing Link at (646) 472-0262 extension 15.

The season for block parties and family day events is here. Groups interested in assistance with their event should contact the Assemblyman's office.

Assemblyman Boyland will host his next Advisory Board meeting on Saturday, May 10th.

Mr. David Alexander asked what types of positions are available?

Ms. Hermon stated that there are two positions available and details about the positions can be received by calling the Assemblyman's office.

Chairperson Younger recognized Mr. Maurice Phillips, Special Assistant to City Councilmember Darlene Mealy.

Mr. Phillips stated that Councilmember Mealy is attending a vigil in honor of the Correction Officer who was slain earlier this week. She asked that he relay to the Board that there will be a mass rally at City Hall on May 1st, 12:00 noon to protest the impending cuts to the budget of the New York City Housing Authority. The rally is being organized by the Teamsters Union.

Councilmember Mealy will host her next Advisory Board meeting on Saturday, May 10th.

Chairperson Younger recognized Mr. William Whitaker from the Office of Borough President Marty Markowitz.

Mr. Whitaker stated that he would like to bring to the attention of the audience the passing into law of the Second Chance Act of 2008. The Act, which passed this week, is a law designed specifically to address issues of reintegrating criminal offenders into the community upon completion of their sentence.

Brooklyn Community Districts 3, 8, and 16 combined have the largest number of returning prisoners in the State of New York. As such, this law will have a great impact on this community. The returning prisoner has long been stigmatized when trying to obtain work, housing, and other services. The Act is intended to address many of these issues. He implores anyone who knows someone they care about who is a former offender to encourage them to get

information on this Act and see how it affects them.

Chairperson Younger recognized Mr. Brandon Bloomfield from the Office of Senator John Sampson.

Mr. Bloomfield stated that Senator Sampson is the Ranking Minority Member of the Senate Health Committee. In that capacity he has been advocating on many of the health issues that affect our community. Amongst the issues he is championing are: the extension of premiums for Child Care Plus, funding for nursing homes, funding for the retention and improvement of patient care, and re-investment in hospitals across the state (including Brookdale).

Chairperson Younger recognized Ms. Latrice Walker from the Office of Congresswoman Yvette Clarke.

Ms. Walker stated that the Congresswoman's Office will be taking on the issue of inadequate service at the Bristol Street Post Office that has been brought to their attention by a local community advocate. They will also be meeting with Mr. Tino Hernandez of the New York City Housing Authority to discuss the status of Prospect Plaza. The development as been vacant for nearly a decade, we need to get housing units back in use.

She reminded the audience to complete a tax return, even if they would not ordinarily be required to do so, in order that may receive the economic stimulus tax rebate that was recently approved by President Bush.

Someone asked if their relative receiving SSI (Social Security Supplemental Income) would be eligible for the rebate?

Ms. Walker stated that a separate IRS mailing was sent in late March to people who no longer file tax returns—certain recipients of Social Security and veterans disability benefits—explaining what they will need to do to receive their economic stimulus payment. There is time to get help and apply for the payment. April 15 is not the deadline for those who no longer file tax returns. The deadline for the economic stimulus payment form will likely be sometime in October 2008.

People who do not need to file a tax return, but received at least \$3,000 from Social Security benefits, veteran's benefits, certain railroad retirement benefits and/or earned income in 2007, must submit a simplified version of a 1040A tax form to the IRS in order to receive a stimulus payment. The minimum payment for this group will be \$300 for an individual and \$600 for a couple filing jointly.

Ms. Eula Key stated the local office of the IRS located downtown Brooklyn will assist in completing the necessary forms.

Chairperson Younger stated several of the area churches are offering assistance in completing the form as well. She requested that representatives of the elected officials speak to their respective officials about possibly setting up a desk in their offices for assisting the many seniors in their districts with the forms.

Chairperson Younger recognized Ms. Frances Brown of Joy of Life Seniors.

Ms. Brown stated that there are many things that take place in our community some we are aware of and some we are not. Joy of Life provides services for different groups in the community. As an example, she is a family care provider – she has men living with her who are mentally challenged. One of the men has an art talent and Joy of Life was able to provide a scholarship for him to attend an art program. In order to fund items such as the scholarships they have fund raising trips. On July 16th, they will be going to Sight and Sound, and at year's end, they will be going to San Francisco.

Fliers about the trips as well as fliers about Roots Revisited, an organization they work with who's origins are here in Brownsville are available on tonight's distribution table. Also available is information on Central Brooklyn Jazz Consortium's Jazz Festival co-sponsored by the Borough President with venues throughout the Borough, many of which are free.

Many of the consumers they serve are sometimes referred to as special needs clients or handicapped. She prefers to think of them simply as members of the community in need. She can be contacted at (718) 495-5470 or you may reach her colleague, Ms. Mamie Buncamper at (718) 345-3127 for information about Joy of Life or the trips.

District Manager Greene-Walker stated that there will be a memorial tribute to the late Ronald Ward from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 1st at the Betty Shabazz School (P.S. 298), located at 85 Watkins Street between Pitkin and Glenmore Avenues.

Mr. Ward was very active in this community. He was a great tenant leader, served on the School Board, and helped to organize the Malcolm X Day Parade. She encourages everyone to attend if possible.

Chairperson Younger recognized Mr. Willair St. Vil, representing Aspirations Diploma Plus and Metropolitan Diploma Plus High Schools.

Mr. St. Vil stated that statistically, only about 50% of students will complete high school in four years and another five to six will graduate in five years. It has been determined that a number the students that are not graduating are in our neighborhoods here in Brooklyn. To battle this, the Mayor and Chancellor Klein have worked to create small high schools and so-called transfer high schools. The intent of the transfer schools is to offer students, who are in some of the larger high schools and are progressing as well as they should and/or can, an opportunity to succeed in a smaller classroom environment. Three hundred of those seats will be located in this District beginning in September.

On May 6th, there will be a open house held here in the lobby of 444 Thomas S. Boyland Street from 2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.. The Principals of both of the schools (Aspirations Diploma Plus High School to be located at 1495 Herkimer Street and Metropolitan Diploma Plus High School to be located at 985 Rockaway Avenue), himself, and his colleague will be on hand to answer any questions. If you know of any 16 to 18 year old student who is struggling with high school, please encourage them to attend the session with their parent(s).

There being no further business to discuss, a motion was made by Ms. Marie Pierre, seconded by Ms. Eula Key and carried to adjourn the meeting.