

MINUTES OF COMMUNITY BOARD #16 – DECEMBER 27, 2011

Attendance

David Alexander (E)	Sadie McNamara (E)
Carolyn A. Benjamin-Smith (A)	Ted McQueen (A)
Margaret Brewer-Seck	Genese Morgan
Adrainer Coleman	Terry Norfleet
Essie Duggan	Rev. Joseph Norton
Norman Frazier	Deidre Olivera-Douglas (A)
Helen Giles (A)	Blanche L. Peltonbusch (A)
Shirley Gonsalves	Marie Pierre
Daniel Goodine (E)	Rev. Devon Ponds
Chanel Haliburton (E)	Mattie Pusey (E)
Sarah Hall	Linda Rivera
Kofi Hormeku	Melaine Rochford (A)
Michael Howard	Wendy Rutherford (A)
Allene Ingram (A)	Beatrice Saunders (A)
Min. Prince Issachar (A)	Melina Terry (A)
Daisy Jackson (E)	Evang. Hellen Thomas-Purdie (A)
Minyarn Johnson	Ernestine Turner (A)
Carl Joseph	Rev. Dr. Miran Ukaegbu (A)
Pamela Junior (A)	Annie Walkes (E)
Eula Key	Jennifer Williams (A)
Bettie Kollock-Wallace	Yvette Williams-Lawson
Charles Ladson	Viola D. Greene-Walker, District Manager
Deborah Mack	E. Jane Coleman, Assistant District Manager
James Mack (E)	Jimmi Brevil, Community Assistant
Yolanda Matthews (E)	Ms. Tammy Braithwaite for Hon. Darlene Mealy
Linda Mayo	Essie Duggan for Hon. Velmanette Montgomery
John McCadney, Jr.	

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

Acting Chairperson Bettie Kollock-Wallace called the public hearing to order at 7:05 p.m. and requested Rev. Joseph Norton to give an invocation. She requested that he and the audience keep the families' of the late Hazel A. Younger and Herman Winston in prayer.

District Manager Viola D. Greene-Walker stated that the public hearing is IN THE MATTER OF a proposal by Services for the UnderServed to establish a community residence for six persons with mental retardation and developmental disabilities at 125 Hull Street.

She read a letter dated November 22, 2011 from Services for the UnderServed advising the Board of their intent.

District Manager Greene-Walker requested Ms. Figueroa, Ms. Judith Jackson, and Mr. Luis Cavaleri to come forward and elaborate on their proposal.

Ms. Jackson stated that she is the Chief-of-Staff for Services for the UnderServed, Inc.. She extended condolences on the loss of Ms. Younger and Mr. Winston, both personal and in behalf of Services for the UnderServed.

She gave a brief overview of Services for the UnderServed (SUS), stating that SUS has been in operation since 1978. They provide services for people with disabilities, mental illness, and people living with AIDS. They formerly provided home health aide services but no longer offer those services.

SUS has a large presence in Brooklyn, which is where they provide the largest concentration of services to their clients. They are also present in the Bronx, Queens, and have a small presence in Manhattan. They currently operate out of several locations within Community District #16. They have a residence at 86 Mother Gaston Boulevard, 421 Chester Street, and 407 Bristol Street. There is a fourth residence in the early stages of development that will be at 21 Truxton Street. The proposed 125 Hull Street site would be the fifth location for SUS within the District.

Ms. Doris Figueroa stated that they currently operate twelve residences in the Borough of

Brooklyn. Additionally, they operate a fairly large Intermediate Care Facility for people with developmental disabilities. The proposed site at 125 Hull Street will be for six individuals with developmental disabilities who will occupy two separate apartments in the building. There will be staff on hand twenty-four hours a day to provide support services. A manager will also be available along with medical personnel such as a nurse who will provide weekly visits, psychiatrist, and others. There will also be employment opportunities for neighborhood job seekers to fill these positions.

Mr. Cavaleri, Senior Vice-President of Developmental Disabilities Services for SUS, stated that it is their preference to hire from the local communities whenever possible. This has advantages such as proximity to the site – especially important because they operate twenty-four hours a day and knowledge of the community makes it easier to have their clients active in the neighborhood. They proudly state that they have been good neighbors wherever they have operated and strive to continue that practice. He and Ms. Figueroa will make unannounced visits to the sites at any hour, any day to insure services are being provided as per standards. He is pleased that they have rarely found any deficiencies.

Ms. Jackson stated that it has been their practice to host a community day event prior to the opening of a new location. This event not only introduces them to their new neighbors, but it is also used as a recruit vehicle for all their facilities.

Ms. Essie Duggan stated that with regard to the SUS residence on Mother Gaston Boulevard, it appears that most residents of Somers Street between Rockaway Avenue and Broadway are unaware of the type of residence that is there. Is there an advisory board for that location?

Ms. Jackson stated that by law they are required to notify the community whenever they seek to open a residential facility in the community. They have been diligent in sending such notifications. Public hearings such as tonight's usually arise from their notifications. Regarding the Mother Gaston Residence, this is a mixed residential facility and a number of the nineteen apartments were made available to neighborhood residence through a lottery. Applications were made available through the Community Board. They made a reasonable effort to make the community aware of their presence at the location.

Ms. Duggan stated that her particular concern is the non-existence of an advisory board.

Ms. Jackson stated that the advisory board is a function of residents of the community coming together and meeting with them. There have been cases where they have reached out to a community but received no responses. They are very open to having the advisory boards.

Ms. Duggan expressed the need to have the residents in the surrounding area involved in decisions that will affect them.

Ms. Genese Morgan asked how can the community be assured that the individuals who are to be housed in the proposed site are financially stable enough that they will not be a criminal element because of a lack of funds?

Mr. Cavalerie stated that they are funded by the New York State Office for People with Disabilities. Their clients are eligible for stipends from various sources that insure that they are financially stable.

Ms. Figueroa stated that additionally, the Office for People with Disabilities also makes unannounced visits to the residences to assure that appropriate services are being provided for the clients.

Mr. Norman Frazier stated that he is familiar with SUS through their presence on Chester Street and has been a member of their Advisory Board. He commends their work and believes they will make a good addition to the community.

Ms. Eula Key spoke of an organization called the Bedford Stuyvesant Mental Hygiene Program and stated that it was a program similar to the one being proposed, designed to help keep mentally disabled persons from having to enter large scale institutions where care for the individual patient is sometimes lacking.

District Manager Greene-Walker stated that with regard to the Mother Gaston Residence, SUS did in-fact make the Community Board aware of their intent to open the facility. Notice was sent

to the Board and a meeting was held with the local residents as well as a public hearing here at 444 Thomas S. Boyland Street. SUS also hosted an open-house and a job fair prior to opening the building.

Ms. Duggan stated that she is aware of those actions; her concern is with an advisory board not being formed.

Rev. Joseph Norton asked for clarification of what would happen in the event the Board votes against the proposal.

Mr. Cavalerie stated that there is the option to offer an alternate site. Failing that, a Commissioner's Hearing would be held where both sides would offer their reasons as to why the proposal should or should not be allowed. However, by law the only allowable reason not to place the units would be because too many such facilities already exist in the community and as part of the process, the site has already been vetted by a third party for its acceptability. They would not allow them to proceed if the findings were that there is an oversaturation of like facilities and/or programs.

Rev. Norton stated that his travels through the community leave him with a sense that there is an oversaturation of such facilities.

Mr. Cavalerie stated that based upon the information provided in the social service directories, this is not the case.

Ms. Duggan asked how many like services and/or programs currently exist in the community?

District Manager Greene-Walker stated that presently, along with residences operated by SUS, the Federation of Multicultural Programs operate similar programs at 470 Chester Street – 12 beds, 163 Riverdale Avenue – 9 beds, 342A Chester Street – 5 beds, 342B Chester Street – 5 beds, 446 Bristol Street – 10 beds, and 12 beds at 300 Riverdale Avenue.

There being no further comments the public hearing was closed.

REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING

A motion was made by Ms. Deborah Mack, seconded by Mr. Norman Frazier and carried to waive the reading of the minutes.

District Manager Greene-Walker highlighted articles found in her report concerning the availability of applications for The Hegeman, affordable rental apartments currently under construction at 39 Hegeman Avenue. Applications may be downloaded from commonground.org or requested by mail from: Common Ground Community Housing Operations – The Hegeman, 505 8th Avenue, 12th Floor, New York, New York 10018.

The New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) and the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) are inviting developers to submit proposals for a mixed-use, new construction project at the site of the former Prospect Plaza Housing.

The RFP was issued on December 19th and a pre-submission conference will be held at NYCHA, 250 Broadway, 12th Floor Board Room, New York, NY, on January 17, 2012 at 10:00 a.m. If you plan to attend this conference, please RSVP to ProspectPlazaRFP@nycha.nyc.gov.

All proposals are due in hand no later than 4:00 p.m. on Friday, March 30, 2012.

Help is available at the Brooklyn Children's Center for parents and guardians of children having behavioral problems or emotional disturbances. To find out about services for children and youth between the ages of 5 and 21, call the Brooklyn Children's Center Access Team, Dorothy Hutchinson, Intake Coordinator, at (718) 613-3123.

She requested Ms. Judy Kamilhor, a representative from the Brooklyn Public Library to elaborate about a program listed in the District Manager's Report.

Ms. Kamilhor stated that laptop computers are now available for use at the Brownsville, Saratoga, and Stone Avenue Branch Libraries for up to two-hour sessions. This will allow users to complete job applications, prepare/refresh resumes, etcetera. They also offer free computer

classes and job readiness classes at these branches. Another popular class is their Teen Tech Time which teaches teens how to get help with homework, cool websites, and tech help.

Acting Chairperson Kollock-Wallace asked how successful has the program been?

Ms. Kamilhor stated that the turnout has been very good.

Acting Chairperson Kollock-Wallace asked if there has been any issues concerning waiting times?

Ms. Kamilhor stated that depending on the time of day, there are some waiting times. However, the wait times are much less than before they had the laptops, which essentially doubled the number of computers in the libraries. One of the things that has happened is that they now offer two-hour sessions so the turnover rate has decreased which allows the user to be much more productive.

Acting Chairperson Kollock-Wallace asked how do they deal with the aggravated waiter?

Ms. Kamilhor stated that for the most part the users are at peace with waiting. There are those who are never happy and staff is adept at providing good customer service. Also, because of the close proximity of the Stone Avenue and Brownsville Branches, users may elect to try the other branch if waiting times are long at the one they are at.

District Manager Greene-Walker stated that her report also contains information on available grants and she urges everyone to read it and take advantage of the offerings.

A motion was made by Rev. Dr. Miran Ukaegbu, seconded by Ms. Linda Rivera and carried to waive further reading of the District Manager's report.

Acting Chairperson Kollock-Wallace recognized Mr. Nick Ponzio from Bank of America.

Mr. Ponzio thanked the Board for the opportunity to present this evening and announced that Bank of America has opened a local office at 555 Atlantic Avenue (between Third and Fourth Avenues) to assist their clients with problematic mortgages. They are providing the opportunity to meet with a specialist in a one-on-one environment to resolve clients' mortgage problems.

They assist clients with the loan modification process. One of the difficulties that they have found, which frustrates their clients, is the completion of the necessary documentation for loan modifications. Once a client meets with a specialist, that specialist will be the same person that they will deal with throughout the process. It is the hope that this will aid in speeding up the process.

Rev. Norton questioned the idea of the office being termed as local when it is located Downtown Brooklyn.

Mr. Ponzio stated that it is centrally located in Brooklyn. One of the reasons they selected that locale was its accessibility to the entire borough.

Ms. Mabel Davis stated that it has been in the news that Bank of America has had part in overcharging Black and Hispanic borrowers. How is the bank rectifying this?

Mr. Ponzio stated that he cannot speak on what took place in the past. His function is to assist those who do have issues to alleviate them. It is not his intent to "pass the buck", but it should be noted that Bank of America purchased Countrywide Mortgage in 2008 and many of these issues stem from that acquisition. They are not shirking their responsibility, they bought it – they own it and are working to repair it. One of the advantages of loan modifications is the reduction of interest rates. They are working hard on out reaching to those who may be in need of the modifications. They have a toll-free number and have opened this office with a desire to work with their clients to correct the problems. Most of his associates are bilingual so that they can assist those who speak foreign languages such as Haitian Creole, Spanish, Russian, Portuguese, and a couple of Chinese dialects.

Ms. Genese Morgan asked if there were any plans by Bank of America to open a location in this community?

Mr. Ponzo stated that his team is more than willing to meet with clients at bank branches that may be closer to them. They feel that the current office is centrally located and can serve most of their customers.

Ms. Morgan asked if the office is a temporary office?

Mr. Ponzo stated that based upon the numbers that he has seen, the office will be there for quite some time. In his experience, many banks have set events to offer assistance with loan modification only to lose track of the paperwork after the event, which in-turn frustrates the customer as they are unable to track the agent who helped them or their paperwork. Their hope is that with clients dealing with only one specialist, keeping track of the documentation will be simplified.

Ms. Morgan asked if this office was setup specifically for Brooklyn based clients with other similar offices available to the other boroughs?

Mr. Ponzo stated that the office services all five boroughs. They are equipped to service any Bank of America mortgage in the country. If need be, they will open offices in other locations within the city.

Someone asked if they handle Veteran's Administration loans?

Mr. Ponzo stated that there is a special department within the bank that handles Veteran's Administration loans.

Mr. Charles Ladson asked if they assist with water bill arrears?

Mr. Ponzo stated that they only handle Bank of America mortgages. However, there are agencies throughout the city where assistance with water bills are available.

Acting Chairperson Kollock-Wallace recognized Mr. Brent Cohen, Ms. Catrina Prioleau, and Mr. Glenn Moises from the New York City Department of Probation.

Ms. Prioleau stated that the Department of Probation is an alternative to incarceration. People often confuse probation and parole. Probation is a decision handed down by the judge at trial in lieu of jail time or in combination with some jail time. It allows the convicted person to live in the community for a specified period under the supervision of a probation officer. If an offender violates the conditions or rules of probation, he or she may be sentenced to imprisonment by the judge. Parole is the early release of an inmate who has served part of his or her prison sentence. The inmate is allowed to return to the community under the conditions of parole and the supervision of a parole agent. The decision to grant parole is the responsibility of the Parole Commission.

The Department of Probation supervises 25,000 to 26,000 adults (ages 16 years and older) in New York City as well as approximately 2,500 juveniles (ages 15 years and younger).

Mr. Cohen stated that their clients are from the community and are on the front side of the criminal justice system. The agency seeks to preemptively keep their clients from entering further into the system both while on probation and in the future. They are taking a three-pronged approach: doing less harm, doing more good, and doing more in the community.

Doing less harm comes from a realization that not every interaction between the client and the agency is a good thing. If a client is doing well, employed or attending high school and staying out of trouble, the Department will step back while still providing support. This means that the client does not need to miss a day of work each week in order to report to a probation officer. Anecdotally, if he missed work one day every week his employer would be dissatisfied. Imagine the thoughts of an employer who has in his employ someone who already has a history with problems now compounded by missing work once a week.

The do more good part is about having an active part in the client's ability to achieve, by doing things such as making introductions to people and programs that can assist them.

They want to be a part of the community and work together to help their clients become positive members of the community.

Ms. Morgan asked what resources does the Department of Probation offer that will assist the community in providing help for their clients?

Ms. Prioleau stated that there are about thirty million dollars in grants available to community-based organizations that are able to provide some of the services needed by their clients.

Mr. Cohen stated that as Request for Proposal (RFPs) are issued, they will insure that the Community Board is advised of the issuance.

Someone asked why the community was not consulted prior to opening of the Neighborhood Opportunity Network Program in the community.

Mr. Cohen stated that this was a shortsighted error on his part and promised to be more inclusive going forward. Their being here this evening is a step towards that goal.

Ms. Genese Morgan, Chairperson of the Economic Development Committee, reported that the Committee met on Thursday, December 15, 2011 at 6:30 p.m. to discuss economic development and revitalization efforts within our community.

The State Liquor Authority has scheduled a hearing regarding the Ooh La La Lounge, located at 391 Howard Avenue, Brooklyn, New York 11233. This hearing is the State Liquor Authority's response to the Board's opposition on granting a full liquor license to Ooh La La Lounge due to the establishment being located within 200 feet of a place of worship (Mt. Ararat Baptist Church); within 500 feet of a schoolhouse (P.S. 12) and within close proximity to Berean Senior Housing and the Domenech Senior Housing. The hearing will take place on Tuesday, January 3, 2011, 11:00 a.m. on the 4th Floor of the Adam Clayton Powell State Building (317 Lenox Avenue at 125th Street in Harlem).

Additionally, the Committee reviewed the application process for obtaining a liquor license in New York; and will continuously review the process to ensure that applicants are in full compliance with fulfilling requirements before Board consideration is granted. The Community Board must be notified at least thirty days before applying to the State Liquor License Authority for a liquor license and proof of notification must be provided before the State Liquor License Authority will consider an application.

Hunter College has provided the Committee with a final work plan for the studio project which is currently in progress. The vision of the studio project will be to revitalize Ocean Hill-Brownsville through a comprehensive inclusive economic and retail development plan that provides opportunities for all neighborhood residents. The objectives of the project are to improve conditions for businesses, improve and enlarge customer base and create a sense of place through economic development. Surveys will be conducted on customer satisfaction, business owner input and land use. A charette will be held in late January for a community discussion.

Emil Gomez, CPA and Manager of Community Tax Aid, Inc., presented to the Committee regarding his organization's desire to provide free tax preparation services to the Ocean Hill-Brownsville community. Community Tax Aid, Inc. has been in existence since 1969 and is a volunteer not-for-profit group capable of providing free income tax preparation for current and prior year tax returns. Currently, the organization is looking for a host location within the community. For more information please feel free to visit their website at www.communitytaxaidnyc.org or call (646) 200-5080 or call 311 for the nearest tax preparation location.

The next Committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, January 19, 2012 at 6:30 p.m. If anyone has any questions or comments regarding the contents of this report, please feel free contact Genese Morgan (genesemor@aol.com).

A motion was made by Ms. Margaret Brewer-Seck, seconded by Ms. Essie Duggan and carried to accept the report of the Economic Development Committee.

District Manager Viola Greene-Walker, in behalf of Sadie McNamara, Chairperson of the Health and Human Services Committee, reported that the Committee met on Wednesday, December 21, 2011.

In a letter dated December 16, 2011, the New York City Department of Homeless Services (DHS) informed the Board that a contract was registered to CAMBA for the operation of a 200-bed single-adult homeless shelter for women at 1424 Herkimer Street. DHS began occupying the site on December 19, 2011.

Also, in a letter dated December 16, 2011, the New York City Department of Homeless Services informed the Board that they have modified the arrangement with SCO Family Services to change the population of DHS' 200-bed facility at 599 Ralph Avenue from single adult women to single adult men, beginning on or about the week of December 26, 2011.

The Committee has also been notified by Volunteers of America, Institute for Community Living, Inc., and Communilife, Inc. that they are responding to a Request for Proposals issued by the NYC Department of Homeless Services to operate and manage an existing Single Room Occupancy (SRO) at 1381 East New York Avenue. The facility has been operated by Volunteers of America since 2004.

Ms. Deborah Mack asked what is the procedure that allowed the population of the shelter located at 599 Ralph Avenue to change virtually overnight, from women to men?

District Manager Greene-Walker stated that as was mentioned in the Committee's report a letter was sent to the Community Board from the Department of Homeless Services advising the Board that SCO Family Services which operates the shelter would be changing the population. It seems more than coincidental that a letter, bearing the same date, was also sent advising the Board that two hundred beds for women would now be at 1424 Herkimer Street.

Ms. Essie Duggan stated that the community needs to be informed on the background of the residents at the shelter.

A motion was made by Ms. Genese Morgan, seconded by Mr. Charles Ladson and carried to accept the report of the Health and Human Services Committee.

District Manager Viola Greene-Walker, in behalf of Bettie Kollock- Wallace, Chairperson of the Land Use, Planning and Zoning Committee, reported that the Committee met on December 13, 2011 with representatives from the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) and the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development regarding the Prospect Plaza project.

The Project will be developed in three phases of construction in the following order of Sites (The sites are bounded within the blocks of St. Mark's Avenue to the north, Saratoga Avenue to the east, Sterling Place to the south, and Howard Avenue to the west): 1) Prospect Place South Site; 2) Prospect Place North Site; and 3) Saratoga Site. The public housing units must be built in the earliest phases and distributed over two Sites: Prospect Place South and Prospect Place North Sites. At the Saratoga Site, the ground floor area along Saratoga Avenue is to be built with retail/commercial space and a community facility. Open space is to be developed as an integral part of the project.

Based on the Re-Vision Prospect Plaza Community Plan developed in June 2010, the RFP envisions that the Prospect Plaza sites will include approximately 360 affordable rental units, including at least 80 public housing units. Demolition of the three remaining Prospect Plaza towers will be completed by NYCHA prior to the conveyance of the sites.

A request for Proposals (RFP) was issued on December 19th, 2011. A developer will be selected through a competitive process in early 2012.

The NYCHA will host a meeting to update former Prospect Plaza residents and the community on Tuesday, January 11th, 2012 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Van Dyke Community Center, located at 392 Blake Avenue.

Someone asked why the Saratoga Site is the last to be developed in consideration to it being currently vacant as opposed to the other sites having to have demolition take place prior to further development?

District Manager Greene-Walker stated that she does not know the answer to the question and encouraged all interested persons to attend the January 11th meeting.

Ms. Mabel Davis asked where is the funding for the project coming from?

District Manager Greene-Walker stated that it is a federally funded project.

A motion was made by Ms. Deborah Mack, seconded by Ms. Linda Rivera and carried to accept the report of the Land Use, Planning, and Zoning Committee.

Mr. Kofi Hormeku, Chairperson of the Parks and Recreation Committee, stated that the Committee's Inspection Report can be found on tonight's distribution table and can be read at your leisure.

They were able to have some successes this year in their efforts to maintain and upgrade area parks and playgrounds. He thanks all who participated in those efforts. They look forward to seeing funding become available for additional work in the coming year.

The season has been particularly hard on Parks Department personnel which is being stretched thinly. Leaf removal was a particularly tedious task, but they managed to get the job done.

He asked for the audience's assistance in reporting damaged trees and cautioned all to be alert when walking under and around trees as a falling tree limb is very dangerous.

He asked that anyone who has any questions concerning the report to reach out to him after tonight's meeting and he will respond at the following meeting.

Leaves are now falling off the trees and all are cautioned to tread carefully when walking on leaves, especially when they are wet.

A motion was made by Ms. Deborah Mack, seconded by Ms. Linda Rivera and carried to accept the report of the Parks and Recreation Committee.

District Manager Viola Greene-Walker, in behalf of Ted McQueen, Vice Chairperson of the Youth Services Planning Committee, reported that the Committee met on Tuesday, December 20, 2011 with a representative from the Federation of Multicultural Programs' Youth on the Move, Victory Over Violence program which will be working with 10 schools in the district to conduct classroom presentations and develop mentorships and peace leaders. They will be offering twenty-five summer jobs for youths ages 14 to 18 and twenty-five jobs for parents of troubled youths. In addition, they will identify safe houses in various communities and ensure outreach with resource newsletters to be distributed in NYCHA buildings. For additional information about the program, contact Sonia Molina at (718) 345-9500.

The Committee also met with a representative from the Little Flower Children and Family Services Juvenile Justice Initiative which is an alternative to placement program that provides intensive in home services to court involved youth, ages 12 to 18, who would otherwise be placed in an institutional setting.

They are looking to identify resources within the community that may be able to provide job opportunities and/or volunteer/internship opportunities, as well as identify programs, agencies and individuals within the community that can provide positive activities and opportunities for the youths in their program. For additional information, call Shavonne Ceruti at (718) 935-1791 Ext. 4206.

The Committee also met with representatives from the New York City Department of Probation who you heard from earlier about the Brownsville Neighborhood Opportunity Network (NEON) at 444 Thomas S. Boyland Street.

The Committee also met with a representative from the Read and Succeed program which helps students in grades 6 to 12 develop reading comprehension by improving vocabulary and critical reasoning skills.

To qualify, your child must be enrolled in the Free and Reduced Price Lunch Program and attend a Title I school. At this time, a representative from the program was scheduled to elaborate on the program, however, he is not present tonight but will present at a future meeting.

A motion was made by Ms. Adrainer Coleman, seconded by Mr. Charles Ladson and carried to accept the report of the Youth Services Planning Committee.

A roll call vote was taken on the public hearing matter resulting in a vote of 10-in favor, 9-against, and 3-abstentions to support the proposal by Services for the UnderServed to establish a community residence for six persons with mental retardation and developmental disabilities at 125 Hull Street.

Ms. Essie Duggan, representing Senator Velmanette Montgomery, stated that a successful public education system is necessary for the future of our children. She encouraged everyone to attend a meeting on January 26th to discuss the proposed closing of some of our schools.

Ms. Tammy Braithwaite, representing Councilmember Darlene Mealy, stated that Councilmember Mealy requested that we each resolve to do more for our community for the coming year.

She hosts her monthly Advisory Board meetings on the first Saturday of each month, the next meeting will be at 10:30 a.m. on January 7th at her office, located at 1757 Union Street – 2nd Floor (between Utica and Rochester Avenues). Several of the local elected officials will host a combined advisory meeting sometime in the beginning of the coming year. As the plan develops, they will advise the community.

Councilmember Mealy will sponsor a Valentine's Day event at a local senior center on February 15th. Please contact her office at (718) 953-3097 for additional information.

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