



# BRONX COMMUNITY BOARD #1

3024 THIRD AVENUE

BRONX, NEW YORK 10455

(718) 585-7117 • Fax (718) 292-0558 • E-mail: brxcb1@optonline.net

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RUBEN DIAZ, JR.  
BOROUGH PRESIDENT

GEORGE L. RODRIQUEZ  
CHAIRPERSON

CEDRIC L. LOFTIN  
DISTRICT MANAGER

## FULL BOARD MEETING

MINUTES

April 27, 2017

**Attendance:** George Rodriguez, Ngande Ambroise, Steven Benedith, Carol Boddie, Betty Bryant-Brown, Carolyn Chamorro, Linda Duke, Lynda D. Gaines, Lucas Henriquez, Richard Iyasere, John M. Lemon, Nellie M McKay, Mohammed Mutawakil, Walter C. Nash, Arline Parks, Freddy Perez, Jr., Mohammed Sheikh, Alice Simmons, Tracy A. Woodall, Hakiem A. Yahmadi, Cesar Yoc.

**Absent:** Barbara Alvarez, Carmen Aquino, Nathaniel Aviles, Maria Garcia-Baltazar, Daniel Barber, Passyna Bula-Bula, Josephine Fernandez-Byrne, Ronnie Caraballo, Maura Cosme, Isabel Figueroa, Brenda Goodwin, John Johnson, Arcelis Lucero, Brenda Rodriguez, Carmen Santos, Sandra Stone, Delores Waller-Worrell.

### Public Session

#### Eugenio Maria de Hostos Community College – Allied Pipeline Program

**Ms. Denise A. Pagan Outreach Coordinator** said that the Continuing Education and Workforce Development at Hosts Community College has been awarded a \$10 million dollar Health Profession Opportunity Grant to offer the Allied Career Pipeline free to our low-income population. We are part of a National Impact Study and the goal is to see how this free program will impact our community. Also I want to share that at this moment for those that meet the criteria requirements will qualify for the program. This is an enhanced career job training program for those who qualify and are accepted into the program it is 100 percent free including the tuition, uniform, books, and assistance with the Metro Card. Public Assistance will help with the Metro Card. Also those who participate in the program will be part of the National Impact Study and also with our program the idea is to help them acquire the skills to pass the state and federal exams to qualify for a license to work in the Allied Health Field. Those accepted into the program will also have a one-on-one Case Manager who will work with them to help them overcome any barriers related to the classes that they're taking or any roadblocks. After they finish their training successfully they will be working directly with Career Services closing the bridge from the classroom to employment. The idea is to help them acquire a job in the course that they took so that they could start developing a career. The benefit of this program is that you can acquire a career. On the flyer that you have you can see the courses that we are presently offering. At this moment we are recruiting for Certified Nursing Assistant it's pending to start now in May. We're also offering the Health Information Technician which is like data entry. Something else that I want to share is that they must be 18 years of

Age to participate it doesn't matter 20, 30, 40, 50 as long as their interested in working. What I want to do is give everybody my direct office number is 718 – 664-2620. If I don't pick up the phone please leave the message and I will be calling you within 48 hours because I'm out in the field a lot making presentations and I will be glad to answer your questions. If you have anybody that you think would be interested in this job training feel free to refer them to us. There are five key documents that they're going to need in order to come in when I give them the appointment their photo ID, social security and able to work in the United States, birth certificate, proof of income and the High School Diploma or GED is required for the majority of these trainings except for Home Health Aide.

### **Questions and Comments**

**Councilman Rafael Salamanca** said good evening everyone I just wanted to come and say hi and I have a few locations that I've got to hit and wanted to make sure that I came to Community Board 1. I just want to pass around some of my mailers I don't know if you live in my district you may have received them so it's just some of the information on some of the work that I'm doing in the Council District. Just read it, it has some good information and as to where my district office is at. If you have any questions or issues or any concerns with any city agency please feel free to come to my office we're here to assist you. I wanted to come here briefly and just talk about US Post Office. I don't know how many of you saw in News 12 yesterday in terms of the audit that I have questioned in the US Post Office back in October because of the lack of services that we were getting throughout the South Bronx. So they did respond with their audit there are some findings in terms of some serious issues that we have in the South Bronx terms of our Post Office and I want to share it with you. It clearly identifies the long lines the issues that we have with the long lines, the issues we have in the Post Office in terms of the packages not being in alphabetical order one of the reasons why there's long lines. But we too have to help out apparently there's 23 hundred buildings in this Council District where the Mail Carrier does not have access to the buildings. So I'm meeting with all District Managers and the Bronx Post Master a Ms. Lillian Rodriguez they're going to give us a list of all the buildings throughout the Boards that I represent and I'm going to work with them to see how we can be helpful that they can deliver our mail on time. You guys have a good evening.

### **End of Public Session**

#### **The Chairman called for the roll.**

The roll was called and there were twenty-one members present constituting a quorum.

#### **The Chairman called for a motion on the Agenda.**

Motion made to approve the Agenda as presented. Motion duly seconded. Motion called and passed unanimously.

#### **The Chairman called for a motion on the prior meeting minutes.**

Motion made to approve the minutes as presented. Motion duly seconded. Motion called and passed unanimously with 1 abstention.



**Chairman and District Manager's Report**

**Mr. Cedric L. Lofting District Manager** introduced Mr. Oscar Oliver-Didier Senior Urban Designer New York City Department of City Planning who would be giving a presentation on the Special Harlem River Waterfront District.

**Mr. Oscar Oliver-Didier Senior Urban Designer** said that I do want to share some visuals with you on the project we're developing. This is something that was already planned and sort of implemented in 2009. We really looking not only to do much needed amendments to the plan but also expanding it to waterfront access.

As again as I was mentioning this is really a project that's about amendments and with the expanding the waterfront access plan itself. It is important to note that the date that we're proposing to certify this is June 5th, we originally had a plan to certify this back in April however we really wanted to make sure that we had everything to the level that we wanted to in terms of implementation and so forth so we decided to go with the June date instead. You'll see like the level of engagement that we have in the presentation and we have a couple of slides showing that. We really sort of had some level of engagement and discussions with even with some of you folks here from the Community Board and other members from the surrounding geography. This is the geography of that area we're talking about that area in orange is The existing Special District itself and what we're proposing as part of the actions is both a zoning map and text amendment to do two things one is to update the Special Harlem River Waterfront District regulation and the other one is to expand that district and its waterfront access plan. Just so that we know where we are that orange border sort of ends up at 149<sup>th</sup> Street and this is sort of red south district which is the expansion area is actually south of Park Avenue this is sort of Third Avenue Bridge here and coming up through there you sort of see the Concourse you also see Metro North going up and through 149<sup>th</sup>. The area that's in yellow is actually a city owned site. These are sort of the two actions that are sort of on the table and what we want to do is sort of try to get certified in June this is not a full ULURP it is not a re-zoning I believe the hearing when its scheduled is an optional hearing so we will be glad to do that when the date comes. Then moving on when we created this 09 Special District we really took back then sort of underutilized manufacturing uses that were on the waterfront and sort of redeveloped it into a mixed use area that did the following ensure development maintained human scale, guaranteed varied buildings and a varied skyline, and more importantly maximize waterfront views and facilitate a strong streetscape and make sure that the street felt safe and accessible for pedestrians, residents and community members, ensuring a range of uses on the waterfront itself so that you would draw people into the waterfront and finally encourage people to use open spaces that would be created as part of the Waterfront Access Plan itself.

So as I was saying again this sort of rezoning was part of a larger Concourse rezoning that took place in 09 you see the Special District itself in red was created back then. Then the orange area was actually an area that was rezoned back in 04 into a mixed use district that was created in 1977. So really we are expanding the Access Waterfront Plan not rezoning to make sure that whatever happens there because these are mostly private properties to ensure access to the waterfront for existing residents and community members. We know the area quite well we know the institutions Lincoln Hospital, Hosts College, the transportation system 2 and 5 on 149<sup>th</sup> Street you have the 4 and 6 around 138<sup>th</sup> Street. We've also been getting a lot of affordable housing like in blue outlined there across the area. To make sure that when development occurs on the Harlem River Waterfront that there is not only accessibility to the water but we also get affordable housing as well. Very importantly too in 09 when this was approved super storm Sandy had not occurred yet. I believe there have been a lot of changes that occurred in terms of citywide



regulations regarding resiliency and it's very important that the rules we implemented in 09 sort of are aligned with the new rules to see that this area and the adjacencies remain safe from future flooding. When the Access Plan and the Special District were created we really wanted to hone in and understand what was happening on the ground. Again you can see that there's two very important infrastructural factors that currently impact if you can access or not the water. Currently the Major Deegan Expressway creates a barrier one can say along Exterior Street to actually get to the water and you see some of the uses that are there currently they're walled off and fenced off they have storage areas and that kind of use is not publicly accessible. Then on the other side as some of you may know there's the Oak Point rail line that actually runs along the water. Getting again a lot of challenges in getting to the water and what we see when we get there so that's something that we also take into consideration as part of this Plan. This is what we approved in 09 and you can sort of see the different aspects that were sort of incorporated into that Access Plan and some visuals. Again this is private development it's sort of foreseeing what could occur so creating special rules that instead of you doing what you want we somehow control how you actually get there. These are the things that we put in place as tools to be able to achieve that. One is to split up the Special District into parcels and have specific controls and rules for each one and that includes the Waterfront Access Plan. What the Waterfront Access Plan incorporates or puts place is a 40 ft. required shore line public walkway that need to be publicly accessible even though that may be on private land. Guaranteed in terms of that Waterfront Access Plan you have to have visual corridors when you're walking along the street we don't want black walls to the water. It's fine if it's private property it still has to be accessible the waterfront is for all members of the community.

Upland connections making sure that you actually get to the water not only see it from Exterior Street but get to the waterfront and actually enjoy that 40 ft. publicly accessible walkway. Then supplemental public access area it actually gets very specific each parcel has to comply with 20 percent of their sq. footage has to be publicly accessible and if they can't do that or achieve that through the upland connections and shore public walkway they are obliged to provide extra space in an open area such as a park that again has to be publicly accessible. Another thing that we wanted to make sure was to require active uses and wrap parking. Wrap parking is making sure that if they place enclosed parking garages on the ground floor that you cannot see that from the waterfront. That it is covered somehow either through screening or uses such as small coffee shops or different community facilities. Then bulk regulations making sure that towers are placed in a way that do not obstruct views. That we have a constancy in terms of the base site how you relate to the buildings when you're in those different open spaces. More importantly and this is something that EDC is moving forward with in terms of acquiring the space and developing it, it's a mapped park between 144<sup>th</sup> and 146<sup>th</sup> Street you sort of see it there just south of parcel 1. So we would have that new park right in the middle I would say or the northern edge of the Harlem Waterfront District itself.

So what are we looking to amend as part of the map amendments and text amendments one we would update the Special Harlem River to create the following things provide flexible building forms to encourage the development of affordable housing, it's really about construction methods. What construction methods are best to incentivize affordable housing and if we only get a chance to put in place towers then really we're not creating more space to actually have the possibility of someone saying no I want to create a building that's actually 100 percent affordable housing and that the construction methods that do that is actually achievable here and we're creating some rules regarding that. We also want to create special rules that actually make for a public walkway to the waterfront itself more to a human and I have visuals that help show that. We also know more now about easements and restrictions these are very challenging there are easements regarding subways, sewer easements that really make it difficult to fit buildings in there. So we're providing a bit of flexibility to make sure that we get the building and that we get the open space that comes with it. As I mentioned before to make sure that we're meeting flood

resiliency needs. Then in terms of the southern area the expansion area itself we want to expand these same rule the Special District rules that would sort of incorporate waterfront access opportunities to the waterfront block just south of it and that sort of runs through Park and Third Avenue. I just remind folks it's not a rezoning of this area this process does not include a rezoning it is the current zoning will remain completely intact.

So the core district itself and when I say the core district it's again I'm pointing to the current Special District which is in orange. This is what we're doing provide building block options and flexibility that incorporate non-tower options, you can still do a tower on a base and incorporate affordable housing there but block and plank is actually a construction method that is more likely to incentivize and create affordable housing and that usually taps and that's just because of the construction method it usually taps at 15 stories you can't do more because it's structurally not possible. So we want to create the opportunities that you can actually create this envelope here on the waterfront and actually encourage that we get affordable housing here. I also want to simplify tower rules it was very restrictive what we were creating back in 09 we still want to create that level of variety and articulation on the buildings we also want to make sure that people are able to build housing here they're actually encouraged to build affordable housing have the flexibility to do so. As I was saying before actually one of the parcels that has most of the easements in terms of sewer and subway easements is actually parcel 1 just south of the 145<sup>th</sup> street Bridge we're providing some flexibility in terms of where the parcel and how it could be placed to make sure that its again creating the open space requirements that they're sort of obliged to do but also can actually build the mixed use buildings that we want to see here and have envisioned since 09 occurring here. Then we want to limit ground floor active uses to specific corners we really find the most important places to have active uses such as a coffee shop, a laundromat, a restaurant something that really gives the eyes on the street to have people coming in and out of them is on the corners because that's where you going down to the water. So we want to require again developers to sort of put those active uses more along the line of mom and pop shops and small retail stores that again can sort of incentivize having people and having them come to the waterfront area. Then allowing greater options for resiliency. Although the current rules post Sandy oblige buildings to be raised depending on the specific flood elevation of that area that's very important to do we want to make sure that this area feels safe for visitors and residents at the same time we want to make sure also that they're not creating adverse impacts to that open space. In other words their raising the buildings we don't want black walls we want to make sure that they screen it with planting, landscaping, seating, lighting stuff that really makes this place inviting and welcoming to the visitors as well as the residents that would likely move here.

Then this is sort of what we're sort of envisioning again this is sort of a quick sketch but you sort of see the before and you see the after. This is sort of what I wanted to tell you about the short public walkway as well it's a bit small but you could sort of see that the height of the short public walkway was incentivized back in 09 ranged from 60 to 85 ft. Now we're providing more flexibility in terms of what you can actually do and we're lowering that base site in specific areas and they can drop all the way down to 30 ft. and even drop down and create nice green open areas as you sort of see here. You create that variety as that sort of looked at as something positive to have along the waterfront and not something too tall or burdensome to have in that open space. In the meantime and in that process we also reduce shadows in that area which again is where we want people to sort of be and enjoy the public spaces that would be created there. Then the expansion area itself and I'm wrapping up here which is the red area that I was just talking about earlier we're going to address unique conditions to ensure lively accessible waterfront open space. It's important to note that actually this area is just one big waterfront block but unfortunately it's composed of multiple independently owned lots so really it's very difficult because each of these people are different owners. Again these are all private owners that can develop right now as-of-right. We want to make sure that we incorporate similar rules for that Special District I just



talked about so that when they come in they're not only thinking about themselves and how they're providing access for the residents but also thinking about too how to get and draw people to the waterfront. So this is the geography this Ariel kind of helps to see the area itself. You see Lincoln Avenue hereto the east of the proposed expansion area you see again the amenities like Hostos and Lincoln Hospital you also see similar infrastructure challenges such as the Deegan Expressway which kind of limits the accessibility to this area and again some of the Bridges that sort of get you into Manhattan. A good thing that I forgot to mention is that Economic Development Corporation of New York is actually investing a lot of money in this area. So we're sort of working together to make sure that Exterior Street gets improved because it's kind of useless if you're fixing and making sure that the waterfront is inviting and Exterior Street is not inviting as well and feels sort of safe. They're investing close to \$200 million dollars in sort of different sort of improvements and that includes that Park and building out that Park I just mentioned but also making sure that the intersections to cross to the waterfront feel safe because again that's the only way we insure that whatever happens here is easily accessible and feels welcoming safe and inviting to the existing community in the adjacent areas.

We did different sessions with community members and Board 1 was greatly involved with this and helped us sort of spread the word. This is probably the fourth or fifth time we've been doing a presentation regarding this project by now. Back in May of 2016 we did a workshop with folks and from what we heard from that and another survey we conducted both in person and some in different places but also on line we got input and that's sort of what we're actually proposing in this area. Again very similar to the rules you already saw you heard about the short public walkway, the upland connection, the supplemental public access area and the visual corridors all those same rules that apply in the current Special District would also apply in this geography. Take a look at this quick diagram that sort of helps shows what I'm trying to say. Remember that previous diagram I had that previous map it just showed a big waterfront land lock block. So what this is trying to do is break it up and make sure that we have access onto the short public walkway. So you can imagine people coming down Exterior Street or this sort of continuation of Canal Street west but more importantly you can envision a lot of people from a lot of the residences in NYCHA in here and coming in through 134<sup>th</sup> to make sure that they get to the waterfront when that development takes place. You could also sort of see the 40 ft. shore walkway a supplemental public access area. I don't know if some folks have actually had the chance to go there but there's a nice natural inlet and you could actually imagine what it could be to have that accessible short public walkway supplemental public area right on that sort of inlet that's there that actually is important to not that's the portion most distance from the rail line. That's really where you want to draw people and have them there separated from that train.

Finally, you have some of the active uses we were just mentioning we want to make sure that when you're walking through there it kind of feels like the existing streetscape they're walking through stores passed a community facility into something that sort of feels safe and inviting something that is sort of land locked and exclusive to the residents that are there.

So, in conclusion as part of the changes we're trying to create and amend and expand this district. We're trying to make sure that the expansion to the south will create a welcoming lively area and encourage greater connectivity to the waterfront for the community and the means to create that is creating flexible building form, encourage the development of affordable housing, to address easements and other restrictions, to meet flood resiliency needs, finally to address unique conditions to ensure we have accessible open space to the waterfront.

### Questions and Comments

**The Chairman called for a motion on his and the District Manager's Report.**

Motion made to approve the Chairman and District Manager's Report as presented. Motion duly seconded. Motion called and passed unanimously.

**Committee Reports**

**The District Manager** said that the Economic Development-Land Use & Housing Committee meeting report was in the Board Member folders.

**The Municipal Services Committee Chairman** provided an overview of the following presentation a voting item.

- **The Chairman called a vote of support for the renaming of East 149<sup>th</sup> Street corner of Walton Avenue and Grand Concourse to the Ramon J. Jimenez Corner.**

Motion made to approve letter of support for the renaming of East 149<sup>th</sup> Street corner of Walton Avenue and Grand Concourse to the Ramon J. Jimenez corner. Motion duly seconded. Motion called and passed unanimously.

**The Chairman called for a motion on the Committee Reports.**

Motion made to approve the Committee Reports as presented. Motion duly seconded. Motion called and passed unanimously.

**Elected Officials Reports**

**The representative from State Senator Jose M. Serrano's office** said I just wanted to tell you that next Tuesday we're going to hold constituent hours at Highbridge Public Library from 3 PM to 6 PM. If you have any questions about anything regarding housing you can feel free to come to our constituent hours. Next month we will be in your area at Mott Haven Public Library from 3 PM to 6 PM. One thing about legislation New York Senate passed two pieces of legislation by Senator Serrano focused on protecting and preserving parks. Senator Serrano's bill S3053 prohibits littering on state park lands. Senator Serrano supports Governor Cuomo's Empire State Trail proposal. The Empire State Trail will be a paved surface where trial-goer ca run, bike, and walk through parks, valleys and waterway across the state. It would connect Manhattan to northern New York, across to Albany and Buffalo.

**The representative from the Council Speaker's office** said that the Participatory Budgeting went well the new projects for approval are on her website. We're having a bike giveaway on May 13<sup>th</sup> at St. Mary's park they're going to do bike swaps. This is for the people that can't afford to buy bikes so they can trade in their old bikes for new ones and get brand new helmets. They're also going to show the children how to ride bikes. It starts 11 AM until 2:30 PM.

**The Chairman called for a vote on the Elected Officials Reports.**

Motion made to approve the Elected Officials Reports as presented. Motion duly seconded. Motion called and passed unanimously

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**Old Business**

**NONE**

**New Business**

**NONE**

**The Chairman called for a motion to adjourn.**

Motion made to adjourn. Motion duly seconded. Motion called and passed unanimously.

**Meeting adjourned.**