



Chairman Nicholas Himidian & District Manager William Rivera

**Land & Zoning Committee Meeting Minutes**

March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018

**Meeting Location:** BRONX CB9 OFFICE

**Meeting Start Time:** 7:02 PM

**Board Members Present:** Mohammed N. Mujumder, Nicholas Himidian Jr., Cruz Garcia, Jaime Feliberty,

**Board Members Absent:** Benny Cuevas, Sarwar Jahan

### **Introduction**

- A. Committee Chair, Board Members & Guest
- B. The Land, Zoning, Planning Committee represents the community's interests with regard to the use of land, zoning, landmark, building, etc. and acts as a liaison between community members and Department of City Planning, Department of Buildings & the New York City Economic Development Corporation.

### **New Business**

#### **A. The Port Authority of NY & NJ Response Letter**

There was a presentation about expanding the George Washington Bridge, part of that construction is to widen lane. There was a request made from a gentleman to widen path to allow bike lanes. CB9 wrote a letter to The Port of Authority of NY & NJ and they replied in-kind to the letter. Copy of the reply letter was shared with all participants. Unfortunately they denied the request for the specific amount of space for these, however, it is pretty significant that a response letter was drafted by this agency. As per Chairman Himidian, there was a response that the gentleman who made the request wanted CB9 to send back. This will be discussed at a later time in regards next steps, however, Chairman Himidian feels that Port Authority will not budge on their decision.

### **Notices**

#### **A. DOB Notices**

Notices have been added to committee agenda so that everyone is aware of these projects. If there are any questions regarding any of these notices please feel free to contact District Manager Rivera for more details.

#### **B. At Public Safety Committee Meeting NYDOT came to present the new plan for the Bruckner Expressway Redesign with the Sheridan Expressway; the connection that they are going to make and new improvements to the Sheridan. It cost 1.7 billion, it is a 6 year project and it is scheduled to start this summer. Bids will go out June, July, and August. They will try to break ground right around this**

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time. Sheridan coming out the Bruckner will have 3 lights and include median. They have been multiple time to discuss presentation. As per Chairman Himidian, he is not really sure what effect this will have, it will probably be a good thing. The Bruckner is due not only for an expansion but also an upgrade.

## Speakers

### A. John Perez, Military Charter School

Inserts were shared with participants as full PowerPoint slides are not yet ready to be presented. Mr. Perez has been in the Army for the last 18 years and previously worked with Councilmember David Rosado and the Bathgate Local Development Corporation as well as established the We Stay/Nos Quedamos in the South Bronx. Mr. Perez upon being released in 2015 revisited the military academy project. It was supposed to be in the Melrose section of the Bronx where Boricua College is. The vision was disrupted when Giuliani sold the building so an alternate location had to be determined. The Academy would service 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders, a high school. As per Mr. Perez, this is the age (15+) where students need the most help as younger children have parent participation. Former parent leader spoke regarding gang members recruiting even 5<sup>th</sup> graders from public schools. He warned about false statics regarding prospering schools in NYC. Mr. Perez explained that going through the city to establish this school would take too long so charter schools is the easiest way to establish this school. Mr. Perez stated that “a military academy would make a serious difference, it would weed out those kids that want to learn, can learn and have the ability to learn. 98% of the kids in the South Bronx come from a single family home, no father structure. Now there is a different component to that, the court system has a lot to do with that, ACS has a lot to do with that, but there is no structure in the home. Unfortunately, the burden is on the parent. So right now if you look at it why are they failing? It’s because the mother is not doing what they’re supposed to be doing that’s the way they’re looking at it...We want to be big brothers, we want to be able to give these kids an opportunity and definitely discipline..the Military Academy Offers that.” The tentative name for the school is the Colin Powell Military Academy. Mission statement was shared. Students are considered candidates, not students, “candidates for success.” Six military schools in NY, none of which are high schools and as Per Mr. Perez, they are not nearby. As per Mr. Perez, only one individual from the Bronx has participated in Maritime which is the closest military school. This project is still at developmental stage. Their objective is to attract the Army National Guard. Their concept is to incorporate the Army National Guard with the military high school in the same facility. It would create a lot for the community. The presence is there. As per Mr. Perez, the property value will increase. This would be as a result of state and private money. As per Mr. Perez, “it is my understanding that in order for us to put a charter school together, we really do not need to address community boards...I’m taking the position where this is not a John Perez Project but a community Project. I’m here to present this and also to see if I can engender some commitment to work on the project as board members and some collaboration.” The curriculum that would be used would be one that is already in use at other military schools. There would be no commitments for students to enter the military after attaining their diploma. Pugsley Creek Park is the location selected for the project. As per Walter Nestler, this is a public park, how is it supposed to be used for this project? As per speaker, Park land can be alienated by the state as per Van Courtland Park. As per Mr. Perez the park was selected because it fits what we were looking for. It fits for what the Department of Defense looks for. As per Walter Nestler, to decommission Parks Land is very difficult and the ULURP Process would be necessary. As per Mr. Perez, he is asking CB9 community to help them put a plan together. Mr. Perez would like community board members to join the board of the school as part of their advisory or as voting members. As per Walter Nestler, I am in support of the project but not in support of the project site. As per Walter Nestler, what about the sites of the supposed other 40 charter schools Mr. Perez says are closing this year because they suck? As per Mr. Perez, Our program is so unique that we need to segregate from the public. They are giving other kids in this area something to hope

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for. Mr. Perez would like a letter of support from CB9. As per Chairperson Himidian, it is advised that Mr. Perez present at other committee meetings so that when this letter of recommendation is taken for a vote at the general board meeting, board members have already had an opportunity to ask questions.

- B.** As per resident Sharon there is an RV that seems to have people living there and an 18 wheeler parked on Pugsley Ave. Pictures of this should be sent to DM Rivera as per Chairman Himidian so that follow-up can be conducted with NYPD, possibly to request 43<sup>rd</sup> Precinct take a look in person. Lights are also needed on the side of Randall Ave between White Plains Road and Pugsley Ave. As per Chairman Himidian, as requested DM Rivera should share with resident Sharon copies of the sign-in sheets from Town Hall on March 1<sup>st</sup>. DM Rivera and Office to please update all requests on SR database and to provide updates at April's Committee Meeting. As per Chairman Himidian it is also helpful to log it into 311 so that the office can follow-up on these complaint numbers.
- C.** As per Walter Nestler, he has not received a response from Assemblyman Sepulveda to the letter that includes three questions that was sent via certified mail to his office and included a self-stamp envelope. As per Chairman Himidian, he will follow-up with DM Rivera regarding this letter that at the townhall was mistaken for a survey.

**Meeting adjourned at 8:19 P.M.**

Minutes created by CB9 Office Staff

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