



**Antonio Reynoso**  
Borough President

**THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
COMMUNITY BOARD 12**

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**Yidel Perlstein**  
Chairperson



**Barry Spitzer**  
District Manager

**COMMUNITY BOARD 12  
DECEMBER MINUTES**

**HELD ON  
TUESDAY,  
DECEMBER 26, 2023**

**VIA ZOOM  
& IN-PERSON  
AT AMICO SENIOR CENTER  
5901 13<sup>TH</sup> AVE.  
BROOKLYN, NY 11219**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

AAMAH KHAN  
ALAN DUBROW  
ANA CALI  
AVROHOM WOLFSON  
ARTURO ENAMORADO III  
BERNARD FREILICH  
BETH SLEPIAN  
CHAIM SCHNEIDER  
CHESKY BLAU  
DANIEL KERADNAM  
DAVID FRIEDLANDER  
DAVID SHLOMOVICH  
DOUGLAS JABLON  
EDGAR GLUCK  
ELLIE KASTEL  
ELLIOT SIDDIQUI  
JACOB HASS  
JACQUE FRIEDMAN  
JEFFREY DWECK  
JULES FLEISCHER  
LOUIE LIU  
MAMNUNUL HAQ  
MIRIAM HERSKO  
MORDECHAI KATZ  
MORRIS SENDEROVICH  
MOSHE FRIDMAN  
PETER REBENWURZEL  
SHLOMIE RIEGER  
WIL FISHER  
YAAKOV KAPLAN  
YERUCHIM SILBER  
YONAH MOSES

**STAFF PRESENT**

BARRY SPITZER – DISTRICT MANAGER  
GITTEL FEKETE – COMMUNITY COORDINATOR

**COMMUNITY RESIDENTS**

APPROXIMATELY 25 RESIDENTS PRESENT

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT**

ADRIANA VINK  
ALEXI SHALOM  
JACOB ASKAL  
JOHN TALMADGE  
JOSEPH GROSS  
JUDITH OJO-DIAZ  
MARIA ARETTINES  
NAFTALI TESSLER  
NICK BERGHALL  
ROMINA FERNANDEZ  
ROCHELLE ZAMI  
SHARON FUCHS  
SAM STOBBER  
SOL WAHBA  
YAAKOV SCHAPIRO  
YIDEL PERLSTEIN  
YITZCHOK MOSKOWITS

**ELECTED OFFICIALS AND REPRESENTATIVES**

ANASTIA YASAKOVA, REP. MAYOR ADAMS  
PINNY HIKIND, REP. COMPTROLLER BRAD  
LANDER  
ROSLYN JOINVIL, REP. CM RITA JOSEPH  
SHLOMIE RIEGER, REP. AM EICHENSTEIN  
CHAIM SCHNEIDER, REP. AM EICHENSTEIN  
INNA GUZENFELD AND MATT WASKIEWICZ,  
DEPARTMENT OF CITY PLANNING

## PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

## ATTENDANCE

## ADOPTION OF NOVEMBER MINUTES

### CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

**Delivered by First Vice Chair Yaakov Kaplan.**

- I hope everyone who celebrates had a nice Holiday.
- We had a few Chanuka celebrations in the district, including a menorah lighting ceremony at the 66 precinct.
- It was our pleasure to host NYPD Commissioner Edward Caban at the Community Board 12 offices.
- Our next board meeting will be on January 23. The Chairman wished all a wonderful Thanksgiving.

### PRESENTATION ON THE 'CITY OF YES FOR ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY' TEXT AMENDMENT PROPOSAL

Presentation by the Department of City Planning, Inna Guzenfeld and Matt Waskiewicz.

(Questions were answered by both presenters, so are identified only as Department of City Planning.)

- The Department of City Planning ("DCP") presented the proposed zoning amendments on the "City of Yes". The full presentation is available on the CB 12 website.
- The DCP opened the floor to questions from the Board Members.

**Alan Dubrow- Board Member-** asked if the proposed changes would allow commercial zoning on Ocean Parkway.

**Department of City Planning-** clarified that there would be no changes made immediately, whatever the current zoning is will remain.

**Beth Slepian- Board Member-** She followed up on the question from Alan Dubrow about no changes being made. Will there be no changes on corner store zoning. Would zoning changes allow for development of corner stores in residential districts like Ocean Parkway.

**Department of City Planning-** The changes would allow for a process. Assuming all 18 proposals are adopted, if a specific zoning lot is residential, it will remain so. Proposal 16, the corner store proposal, would allow for a public process and an environmental review. It will allow for review on a case-by-case basis to possibly allow for corner stores in residential districts.

**Beth Slepian- Board Member:** asked for clarification about auto repair shop changes. Would the changes kick out existing businesses? Specifically, on Coney Island Avenue where there are a lot of complaints about auto shops.

**Department of City Planning-** generally auto shop use is considered industrial use. If you are doing auto repair work, the business should be located in an industrial location. C8 zoning is an auto repair type district. The existing zoning allows auto repairs to be located anywhere around commercial areas. What ends up happening in those cases is you see cars spilling over onto streets. So, what we're doing in proposal 13 is making clear the distinction between commercial areas that are more appropriate for auto repair work and areas that are not as appropriate. With the changes in zoning there would now be additional site plans required by the Department of City Planning, not only the general requirements by DOB. Existing auto repair locations are grandfathered in and can remain so long as they are not doing something that would require substantial alteration, like a request for doubling their space.

**Beth Slepian- Board Member-** had a question about the documents. She wanted to know how the Economic Opportunity dovetails with Carbon Neutrality as it is not reflected in the zoning text.

There should be additional composting facilities allowed in all commercial areas, but it seems that composting would be disallowed in all commercial and residential areas based on this text.

**Department of City Planning** – Requested that Beth email him so they can follow up on this both to make sure they understand what Beth was saying and to clarify what was adopted in carbon neutrality. This proposed zoning text was released of republic review before the text on carbon neutrality was adopted. There is an internal process to reconcile those. Without knowing exactly how the process is going, they did not want to give a wrong answer before the reconciliation is done.

**Beth Slepian- Board Member-** She asked if review must come from the whole board or if it can come from individual board members.

**Department of City Planning** - individuals can also share their input by replying on the City Planning on the City of Yes website. DCP wants as much detailed feedback as they can.

**Wil Fisher- Board Member-** He thanked Ina Guzenfeld and Matt Waskiewicz for coming to the board. Based on some of the conversations the board had with rezoning 534 Coney Island Ave., and he wanted to reiterate this board's interest in seeing a full end-to-end review of the zoning on Coney Island Ave. There was a lot of discussion on piecemeal changes. Including a lot of auto use and dangers to pedestrians. This is unrelated to these proposals that seem like a lot of common-sense measures, we want to look into rezoning Coney Island Avenue.

**Department of City Planning** - if the Board wants this corridor looked into, please do notify DCP.

**Barry Spitzer- District Manager-** He wanted to know if, in theory, this is adding the ability to open auto repairs in more zoning areas.

**Department of City Planning** - in some areas you are allowed to open an auto repair shop as of right. In C4 and C2 districts, light auto repair use is allowed as of right. In the future you will only be allowed to do auto repair work with a BSA special permit. In the future you can only locate an auto repair shop after a special permit process.

**Barry Spitzer- District Manager-** Asked if it would be the BSA process now where Community Board issues recommendation and then BSA does whatever they want.

**Department of City Planning** - the process would be like the current one. The findings may be a little different.

**Barry Spitzer District Manager-** please follow up with clarification as to whether this will be the same as, for example, a special permit for a reduction in parking. Specifically, if Community Board recommendations will have any more effect than they do now. We get a lot of complaints about auto repair shops, so if this change will expand the ability to open more shops, then it is of concern to the board.

Mr. Spitzer also wanted to know about the expansion of home-based businesses, specifically if there will be rules for noise and who will oversee enforcement.

**Department of City Planning-** As is today, DOB oversees regulating home occupation.

**Barry Spitzer District Manager-** So, then just like now, if someone calls 311 and then DOB goes down to the site and can't do anything if they are not let in.

**Department of City Planning** – He clarifies that legal tenant agreements can restrict and supersede legal zoning.

They are raising the percentage to allow for more home businesses, because 25% is what is allowed today. And they were looking at different places in the city where they want to foster more business activity and raising the percentage allows that.

**Barry Spitzer District Manager-** Requested DCP follow up with board members and the district managers with questions. Please also email this presentation. He suggested that the vote be postponed so board members who have questions can get answers.

**Department of City Planning** - Offered to convene with the Land Use Committee to review any questions.

**Barry Spitzer District Manager**- asked David Shlomovich the chair of the Land Use Committee if he wants another presentation.

**David Shlomovich- Board Member**- This presentation seems very clear and there doesn't seem to be any need clarification.

**Department of City Planning** - They will be happy to respond to questions in writing. Board Members can email the DCP and they will follow up on those and on the questions that were brought up at the meeting.

## **DISTRICT MANAGER'S REPORT:**

### **Delivered by District Manager Barry Spitzer**

- He thanked NYPD Commissioner Edward Caban for taking the time to come to our office. The commissioner chose Community Board 12 office for his first in-district visit since he became commissioner. We had a very good discussion. The Commissioner came upon the invitation of the chair and came along with local elected officials and community organizations. We are grateful for it.
- There were some bomb threats targeting religious facilities in the Jewish neighborhoods, we are grateful that nothing substantive was found, nonetheless, we thank the police department and all law enforcement for taking this matter seriously.
- I want to briefly mention the water shutdown that we had on 49th street and 50th street by 11th Ave. I want to thank DEP, we got it resolved by working with Assemblyman Eichenstein and Councilman Yeger, and in the end, they did not shut down the water on Friday. They also promised they would notify us if they had to shut down the water in a sensitive time.
- We are very proud of the collaborative work we do with non-profit organizations in the district, especially such programs that help people train for and find good jobs so they can achieve their American dream. We have four courses going on now at our office, from Metcouncil and from the BPJCC. There are graphics classes, basic computer skills classes, QuickBooks classes, a data visualization course and more. We have gotten great feedback from thankful residents who have been able to use these skills learned and convert it to marketable skills in the job market.
- We just took on additional programming since the Mapleton Library is closing for renovations. The District Manager had a meeting with Anthony Loum, and together with Amico, we are taking over almost all the library programming during the renovation period.
- Just a quick note, the DSNY did not collect any garbage yesterday because of the holiday. As usual, after any holiday, we ask for your patience as they catch up with the missed work.

## **REPORTS FROM ELECTED OFFICIALS, REPRESENTATIVES & AGENCIES**

- **Anastasia Yasakova, representing Mayor Eric Adams.**
  - She had no updates to report, but just wanted to thank everyone for the tremendous work they do over the whole year.
  - Happy holidays and Happy New Year.
- **Pinny Hikind, representing Comptroller Brad Lander**
  - He wished everyone Happy Holidays and Happy New Year on behalf of the comptroller.
- **Alex Gurevich, representing District Attorney Gonzales**
  - He came to wish everyone a Happy Holidays. With 2023 coming to an end, he is not going to discuss statistics, but they are slated to finish the year with decent numbers and a decrease in shootings.
  - The office hosted a gun buyback and took back 50 guns.
  - About 2 weeks ago the DA hosted a Hannukah event and thanked all who attended.
  - The DA also hosted a Diwali event, thanks to all who attended.

- Happy new year on behalf of DA Gonzales
- **Roslyn Joinvil, representing Councilmember Rita Joseph**
  - The councilmember will have a few events over the month.
  - The office will host a NYLAG Jan 8 legal services from 10-3.
  - CM Joseph in conjunction with Speaker Adams are hosting a 220th Haitian Independence Celebration.
  - On Jan 20 CM Joseph in partnership with colleagues is hosting a free citizenship clinic.
  - Save the date for The CM's State of the District and swearing in to take place on Feb 25.
  - Happy holidays and Happy New Year.
- **Shloimy Reiger, representing Assemblyman Simcha Eichenstein**
- **Chaim Schneider, representing Assemblyman Simcha Eichenstein**
  - The assemblymember held a DMV event where they were able to help many people review their licenses, we want to thank the DMV for helping with this event.
  - Also hope everyone had Happy Chanuka.
  - Happy New Year.

### **Old Business/ New Business:**

#### **Beth Slepian- Board Member:**

- She wanted to revisit the question of committees that she keeps on bringing up meeting after meeting. Including questioning how board members can be part of committees and various other questions related to the memorandum that went out regarding attendance. There are some provisions she agrees with, but the problem is that the memo came out a few minutes before the meeting and some people have concerns about remote attendance. It would have been helpful to present the memorandum and then give a grace period giving board members time to read. The memo was distributed 2 hours before the meeting.  
I take this appointment very seriously. As board members we have many things going on. I don't disagree with the memo. But ruling with a heavy hand does not foster inclusion.

**Yakov Kaplan-First Vice Chair-** The chairman couldn't be here tonight. But there is a discussion going on about the committees, but I guess we will have to wait until the next meeting.

**Ana Cali- Secretary-** I spoke to Yidel today about the committees and he decided and said by the next meeting the committees will probably be set up by then. I will be on top of that and will continue discussing this with him. We are moving in the right direction.

A lot of the committees don't meet unless there is something to discuss. The Land Use and Variance committees come up a lot, which is why the committees meet a lot. In our community board, unless there is a reason to meet, we don't. The Parks and Education Committee don't meet often because there is no reason to meet.

**Beth Slepian- Board Member-** The next thing I would do is advocate for more meetings.

**Ana Cali- Secretary -**I have been on the community board for many years. A lot of times committee meetings are set up, and members show up, but there would not even be a quorum. We are volunteers and committee meetings take up a lot of time. We can advocate for more meetings, but if there isn't really anything to discuss. Then there isn't a reason to meet.

**Beth Slepian- Board Member-** There are other boards that meet quite a bit.

**Ana Cali- Secretary-** This board holds committee meetings based on the needs of the community.

#### **Chaim Schneider-Board Member**

He clarified that he is speaking only on behalf of himself and not the assemblymember.

“I’d like to express my gratitude to the chairman for providing me the opportunity to address the esteemed board.

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Vice Chair, and members of the board, in last month’s board meeting we sat quietly and respectfully while a member of our board made many anti-semitic remarks. In recent months, we have seen the increase of people making antisemitic comments and speeches under the guise of being pro-Palestinian. Therefore, I would like to address this head on.

In a Senate Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee hearing, FBI Director Christopher Wray testified regarding hate-crimes committed against Jewish people, that ‘when you look at groups that make up roughly 2% of the American population, it should be jarring to everyone, that that same population accounts for something like 60% of all religious-based hate crimes’

NBC News reported a story just two and a half weeks ago. On the first night of Chanukah, a man, here in Brooklyn, was robbed and beaten. The suspect, seeing the victim in Jewish attire, made an anti-Jewish statement, repeatedly punched him in the head, and stole his cell phone.

This surge in antisemitic incidents demands our immediate attention and collective condemnation. The recent increase in hate crimes against the Jewish community is not just an unfortunate statistic; it reflects a disturbing trend that we, as a board, cannot afford to ignore.

Let us confront this stark reality with apologetic force: a surge of over 60% in antisemitic incidents demands our immediate and unwavering attention. The rise in hate crimes targeting Jewish individuals and institutions is not just an abstract trend; it is an alarming threat that requires our collective condemnation and action.

In discussions concerning Israel, we must draw an unyielding line between legitimate criticism of policies and actions and the insidious anti-Semitism that seeks to delegitimize Israel’s right to exist. The recent trend of using humanitarian concerns for Palestinians as a guise for anti-Semitic sentiments is not just deceitful; it’s a malicious distortion of the principles we claim to uphold.

Being anti-Israel often masquerades as a thinly veiled disguise for antisemitism. It is not a virtuous stand for justice or peace; instead, it perpetuates age-old stereotypes, fosters division, and undermines the very essence of tolerance and understanding we strive to uphold.

This is a resounding call to action against an intolerable reality, supported by verifiable statistics and genuine stories that underscore the tangible and heart-wrenching impact of rising antisemitism. The surge in hate crimes reflected in a staggering 60% increase in incidents, demands our immediate and unyielding condemnation. Our collective commitment to eradicate this toxic prejudice from our society must be unwavering. Anything less is an affront to our shared humanity.

Thank You.”

**Amnah Khan- Board Member**

I want to echo and reiterate what Beth said about joining committees and how there is no transparency in the process. I’ve been a member for years and have been unable to join any committees.

I want to address what was just said and want to know how making space for Palestinians to grieve is anti-semitic. If you look at the minutes from last month’s meeting, I would like to know what about it is inappropriate when you have Palestinian- American citizens here.

**Beth Slepian- Board Member:** I want to respond to the remarks as well because I take personal offense.

**Yakov Kaplan- First Vice Chair-** advised Ms. Slepian that she already had a chance to speak and members must follow the rules.

**Beth Slepian- Board Member** interjected- I just feel very much attacked as a Jewish American if I say I am supportive of Palestinians I'm accused on antisemitism.

**Ana Cali- Secretary-** This is not the platform for this conversation. We live in a very tumultuous emotional time. We are Community Board members who represent the local community, and it is not fair that we are put in this position. We must understand that emotions are running high right now. We all recognize a loss of life and brutality, it is very concerning and upsetting, but this is not the platform. I read the minutes from last month, and it was very disturbing. I appreciate what the board member was saying but this is not the place for this conversation.

It is not the platform for this discussion.

**Yakov Kaplan- First Vice Chair-** I always advocated that everyone gets their 3 minutes to say what they want, but we can't have a back and forth. We all must live together. And we can all have different opinions, but we have to respect each other. We can't have this back and forth where people argue about political opinions. It's ok to disagree but we all have to live together.

Mr. Kaplan made a motion to adjourn.

## **MEETING ADJOURNED**

Respectfully submitted by: Gittel Fekete