

**MINUTES OF COMMUNITY BOARD #16 – SEPTEMBER 26, 2017**

Attendance

David Alexander	Shemene M. Minter
Margaret Brewer	Genese Morgan
Dr. Cleopatra Brown	Anita Pierce
Adrainer Coleman	Marie Pierre
Brenda Duchene	Linda Rivera
Christopher Durosinmi (A)	Johnnymae Robinson
Norman Frazier	Evelyn Sanchez (A)
Danny Goodine	Celina Trowell (A)
Chyanne Hairston (A)	Ernestine Turner
Sarah Hall	Rev. Dr. Miran Ukaegbu (E)
Balinda Harris	Deborah Williams
Mawuli Hormeku	Patricia Williamson (A)
Michael Howard (E)	Pat Winston
Carl Joseph (E)	Viola D. Greene-Walker, District Manager
Eula Key	Jimmi Brevil, Community Assistant
Danny King	Hon. Charles Barron
Bettie Kollock Wallace (E)	Hon. Inez Barron
Charles Ladson (A)	Hon. Jesse Hamilton, III
Wendy Lanier (A)	Hon. Velmanette Montgomery
Carolyn Lee (E)	Reginald Belon for Hon. Yvette Clarke
Albion Liburd	Frieda Menos for Hon. Hakeem Jeffries
Deborah Mack	Nick Perry for Hon. Scott Stringer
Yolanda Matthews	Malcolm McDaniel for Hon. Eric L. Adams
John McCadney, Jr.	Shelton Jones for Hon. Eric Gonzalez
Andrea McCullough (E)	Carlos Soto for Hon. Rafael Espinal, Jr.
Ronella Medica (A)	Carolyn Smith for Hon. Darlene Mealy
Melanie Mendonca	Marie Monk for Hon. Roxanne Persaud
	Rev. Eddie Karim for Hon. Latrice Walker

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

Chairperson Genese Morgan called the public hearing to order at 7:05 p.m. and invocation was said by Rev. David Demera.

District Manager Viola Greene-Walker read the first public hearing item:

IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by Administration for Children’s Services and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services, pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter, for the acquisition of property located at 2023 Pacific Street (Block 1431, Lot 54) for continued use as a child care center.

She stated that she met with the Director of the Center and toured the facility on September 18, 2017. The Center provides supervised care for 116 preschoolers between the ages of 6 months old and 5-years old between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. The structure is a two-story brick building with a roof level and a ground level play areas and is well maintained.

IN THE MATTER OF an application submitted by Administration for Children’s Services and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services, pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter, for the acquisition of property located at 69-71 Saratoga Avenue (Block 1498, Lot 6) for continued use as a child care center.

She also met with the Director on September 18, 2017 and toured the facility. They currently serve 87 children ages 3 to 4 years old. She noted that the facility needs the following repairs to make the building safer for its occupants: 1) pointing of the entire building to prevent further water damage, 2) repair of dumb waiter used to transport food from the kitchen to the classrooms, 3) paint interior walls of the entire building, 4) install sink in one (1) pre-k classroom, 5) replace safety surface on rooftop play area, 6) repair cooler in pantry, 7) repair

plumbing in auxiliary kitchen, 8) repair leak in kitchen from small roof, and 9) upgrade electrical wiring throughout the building.

She suggested that members of Community Board #16 vote to approve the lease renewal on condition that repairs as noted are made to the building.

Mr. Kenneth Robinson of the Administration for Children's Service General Counsel Office stated that he is present to advocate for the lease renewals. Regarding the lease renewal for 69-71 Saratoga Avenue, there is a scope of work slated for the facility. However, the lease will need to be in place in order to have the property owner commit to the repairs that are needed.

Mrs. Blanche Louise Peltonbusch asked how long has the facility been in operation?

Mr. Robinson stated that it has been in operation since 1973.

Mrs. Peltonbusch asked why was the building allowed to get to such a state of disrepair?

Mr. Robinson stated that repairs were likely made in 1993 with a 10-year warranty. He can research the issue and report back to District Manager Greene-Walker in about two days.

At the request of Chairperson Morgan, Councilmember Inez Barron administered the Oath of Office to new members of the Board and the Executive Officers of the Board.

The roll was called and a quorum was present.

A motion was made by Ms. Adrainer Coleman, seconded by Mr. David Alexander, and carried to close the public hearing.

Chairperson Morgan requested a moment of silence in memory of late Board member and longtime neighborhood advocate, Mrs. Jessie Hilliard who passed away during the summer.

A motion was made by Mr. David Alexander, seconded by Ms. Linda Rivera, and carried to waive the reading of the minutes of the June 27, 2017 Board meeting.

Chairperson Morgan again recognized Councilmember Inez Barron who stated that her husband, Assemblyman Charles Barron is also in the audience this evening.

She stated that Ebenezer Plaza is a housing project that will be erected on New Lots Avenue at Powell Street. The proposal was brought before and was supported by the Community Board. The Board's support was predicated on a reduction of the amount of studio units and that the size of the units be of sufficient square footage to be decently livable.

Additionally, the proposed height of the building, that would have impacted the sunlight needed by the nearby community garden, was reduced. A stipend of \$10,000 per year was also agreed upon to offset the loss of natural light to the garden.

As part of a community benefit negotiation with her and Assemblyman Barron, the developers have also agreed to fund \$15,000 per year in community scholarships. These things do not come without a fight. Just as it was a fight for the survival of the garden which the City wanted to take back. When we are justified in our actions and can show the shortcomings, we can make people come to the table and give us what we want. She is proud to be able to negotiate on the community's behalf on projects proposed for the District.

She is pushing for the financing portion of the Ebenezer Plaza project to come to closing this December. A meeting was recently held with the Department of Housing Preservation and Development to help make that a reality. They are seeking about 70 million dollars to bring the project together. If the funding does not materialize by December, they will need to wait for the March or June cycles.

A Black church which owns the property has teamed up with a development company owned by a Black woman and a woman of Mediterranean descent, who will each share equally in the profits of the venture. Initially, the third partner, a White developer, wanted to get 50% and have the others split the remainder. Councilmember Barron and Assemblyman Barron said no; all parties should share equally.

As other projects come to the community, she or Ms. Joy Simmons, her Chief-of-Staff, will keep the community informed. She also wants to hear from the community on ways that we can do to assure that community has an equity stake in projects brought to the neighborhood.

She brings up the issue of institutionalize racism to the City Council. Throughout city government, there is favoritism given to other people to come into our communities and to develop property and receive the benefits of the development. We need to fight for equity in

these projects and reap the benefits. She also seeks the help of the community in determining what we can do to ensure that we get the full benefit of development in our community.

Chairperson Morgan recognized Senator Velmanette Montgomery who stated that on November 7, 2017, citizens of the State of New York will be asked to vote on a proposition to hold a constitutional convention in 2018.

She will be voting against the convention, as she believes the voice of her district will likely not be properly represented. She is greatly concerned as this is the environment of “Dark Money”. The convention will give millionaires the opportunity to come into the community and overturn constitutional rights aimed at protecting the rights of the residents of Brownsville. The State Constitution provides for even greater protections than the Constitution of the United States. There is a move across the nation to privatize prisons, but the New York State Constitution does not allow for privatization of prisons. This is huge for our communities where many are affected by the prison industrial complex. There are many other reasons why we would not want to lose the protections provided to this community by the Constitution. Pensions would also be at risk if there is a constitutional convention.

Another way to make changes to the Constitution is through amendments. One such amendment will be on the ballot in November. You will be able to vote to take away the pensions of State officials. She is also voting no on this proposition as it goes against her self-interest. A total of three propositions will be on November’s ballot. Proposal 1 deals with the constitutional convention, proposal 2 relates to pensions of State officials, and proposal 3 concerns the environment. She encourages the community to vote in November to maintain, at least some, of the protections that they have grown to enjoy and expect.

Ms. Mabel Davis asked what qualifies a person to be a part of the convention?

Senator Montgomery stated that as the law now stands, you must be on the ballot as a delegate and elected to the post. Three elected delegates will represent her district and she fears that they will not support the will of the residents of our communities.

Someone stated that the opportunity for a constitutional convention comes once every twenty years. If we vote no to this convention, how do we address matters such as adding women to protected classes in the instances of hate crimes. There are many things that can be added to the constitution with courage and without fear.

Senator Montgomery stated that is an important point. There are two ways to make changes to the Constitution. A constitutional convention is but one. Over the years, there have been more than 200 changes made to the State Constitution; only seven of those changes were made through the constitutional convention process. The rest came through amendments which are voted on during, virtually every, legislative season. The issues that are raised during a constitutional convention may or may not be the ones you care about. Unless you are a member of the convention and have a majority with you, those issues will not be brought up. Furthermore, once an item is proposed by the convention, it must be placed on the ballot to be voted on by the citizens. Since 1967, there has never been a constitutional convention agenda passed by the citizens of the State. There have been numerous amendments made to the Constitution by the citizens through the referendum process. If a convention is called, every part of the State Constitution could be subject to replacement or revision.

Mr. David Alexander stated that he has heard that if one does not cast a vote on the proposal it amounts to a “yes” vote. Is there truth to that rumor?

Senator Montgomery stated that it would be a lost vote. It does not count as a vote for either position. She encourages voters to take a position and not just allow for a default vote. She stated that she has a limited amount of copies of the State Constitution with her if anyone would like a copy.

Chairperson Morgan thanked Senator Montgomery for her presentation and reminded the audience to review and vote on both sides of the ballot at the November election.

She recognized Assemblyman Charles Barron who counselled the audience to be wary of politicians who show up in the community and host “town hall meetings” in the weeks before an election. Their interest may only be in their self-preservation and not the betterment of the community. What he would like is for the politicians to hold the town hall meeting after elections and show the community what they have done for the community.

Chairperson Morgan recognized Deputy Inspector Rafael Mascol, Commanding Officer of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Precinct.

Deputy Inspector Mascol stated that the 73<sup>rd</sup> Precinct had historically low crime rates in 2016. They have been scratching their heads to come up with ways to continue the trend this year. What more can be done to improve the quality of life for Brownsville residents? They brought

together different units such as Gangs and Narcotics and asked how can they focus further on the few individuals who are the cause of the most crime?

He is pleased to report that violent crime is continuing to trend downward in the Precinct. Currently, homicides are down 45% year-to-date as compared to last year which was already a record low year. Shootings are down 17% year-to-date, again as compared to last year's historic low. Going forward, they will continue to work towards making Brownsville a better place to live and work.

Over the summer, Captain Terrell Anderson became the Executive Officer at the 75<sup>th</sup> Precinct and the 73<sup>rd</sup> added two captains to their ranks, Captain Allison Esposito and Captain John Breslin who each gave a brief biography of themselves.

Deputy Inspector Mascol stated that he is pleased to have them on board.

Year-to-date, the Precinct is experiencing a slight uptick on overall crime of 1.3%. Their greatest struggle is in the number of burglaries. Two years ago, they experienced a historic low with a slight increase last and now this year they are slightly up again. As an Executive Team, they are working to see what can be done to reduce burglaries. A number of arrests have been made of individuals responsible for many of these crimes.

They also need the assistance of the community. If you see something suspicious; i.e., someone entering a building that you believe should be vacant, call 9-1-1 and report it. If it happens to be a burglary in progress they have an opportunity to catch the burglars and arrest them perhaps preventing another burglary in the future.

Over the summer, they participated in several activities within the community. Prior to the start of the new school year, they hosted a book bag/school supply give away wherein they gave out 500 book bags with supplies. With the generosity of some of the Precinct's officers who cooked and donations from the community, they were also able to feed 700 people during the event.

100 cases of water were collected and sent to aid residents of Texas who were affected by hurricane Harvey. The people of Texas, Florida, and several Caribbean islands are going through a tough time, due to the impact of hurricanes. They are asking the community to donate whatever they can to assist the affected people. Collections are being accepted at local firehouses.

They received the most block party applications that they have in quite some time. Gratefully, they all went on without any substantial incident. They are looking to continue with this trend next year.

The Annual Old-timers' Day/Week celebrations were also very well attended with everyone in attendance having fun and they too had no incidents.

The 73<sup>rd</sup> Precinct now has a presence on facebook. We are in an era where social media plays a part in many of our lives. They have been on Twitter for some time and have now added facebook to their repertoire.

He displayed a photograph of an assault rifle and informed the audience that it was taken off the streets and the individual who was in possession of it has been arrested.

Someone stated that she has attempted to report stolen Citibikes to 3-1-1 which had difficulty in accepting the report and referred her to 9-1-1. 9-1-1 attempted to take the report as if the bicycles were hers or that she was in some way involved. What is the proper way to report something such as this?

Deputy Inspector Mascol stated that there are no Citibike stations located within the Precinct. Any abandoned Citibikes found in this community are likely to be stolen. He suggests that the Precinct's switchboard – (718) 495-5411 be called to report the bikes. In this way, they can retrieve the bikes and get them back to Citibikes. You can also reach out to your Neighborhood Coordinating Officers who can try to determine who is stealing the bikes.

Dr. Cleopatra Brown stated that the process of reporting a crime at the Precinct is too long. There is only one person handling this at a time and they are completing paper forms by hand. The process should be computerized.

Deputy Inspector Mascol stated that they are in the process of updating their lobby to make it more user friendly. Part of that process has been him instructing his desk sergeants to make use all available resources if the lobby becomes crowded. Unfortunately, at this time the reports can only be recorded by hand.

Ms. Dorothea Perry related an issue that she is experiencing with persons operating an Italian ice vending business out of her neighbor's garage which she believes is illegal and is affecting her

use of a common driveway. She is also concerned that they are selling the product in an unsanitary condition to the youth in the community.

Chairperson Morgan stated that Ms. Perry's concerns are notable. She suggested that she meet with the Board's committee to discuss the issue and come back to give a proper presentation.

Ms. Perry stated that she has reported the issue to 3-1-1 only to have the complaint immediately closed without resolving the issue.

Chairperson Morgan asked her to call the Board's office and arrange for a meeting with the committee to help address the issue with the proper agencies.

Ms. Carolyn Benjamin-Smith asked how is the investigation proceeding in regards the young pregnant woman who was recently shot?

Deputy Inspector Mascol clarified that two Sundays ago, a 19-year-old female who was 5-months pregnant was shot while going to a bodega. She is not believed to have been the target of the drive-by shooting. She is recovering from being shot twice in the head and the investigation is coming along. They were able to get pictures of the vehicle and have posted them on their social media pages. They have some additional information which he cannot divulge in a public forum. Of course, any additional information that can be provided by the community is welcomed.

Chairperson Morgan thanked Deputy Inspector Mascol for his report and the officers of the 73<sup>rd</sup> Precinct for their work in the community. There have been a number of incidents in the community where officers have responded in manners that showed respect to the community. While much needs to be improved in police/community relations in the nation, she sees the men and women of this Precinct making great strides towards that goal.

In a roll call vote of 23-in favor, 1-against, and 1-abstention, members of Community Board #16 elected to support the applications submitted by Administration for Children's Services and the Department of Citywide Administrative Services, pursuant to Section 197-c of the New York City Charter, for the acquisition of property located at 2023 Pacific Street (Block 1431, Lot 54) and property located at 69-71 Saratoga Avenue (Block 1498, Lot 6) for continued use as child care centers.

Chairperson Morgan recognized Senator Jesse Hamilton, III.

Senator Hamilton stated that much was done in this legislative year. Amongst them is the passing of the "Raise the Age" bill which was first proposed eight years ago. Raise the Age means that 15 and 16-year-olds will no longer be placed into adult prisons. Many young men from Brownsville were being sentenced to adult prisons. As 15 and 16-year-olds, their minds are just developing. Riker's Island has more severe mentally ill individuals than all the other mental health facilities combined. Placing 15 and 16-year-olds in that environment makes them 36% more likely to commit suicide. Dr. Torian Easterling, a Black man and a doctor who services this community, informs us that the second leading cause of death of young men in the Brownsville community is suicide.

Also passed this year was Brianna's Law which was in the legislature for 7 years. It was passed this year because of the death of a young man from Brownsville, Rysheen Ervin, who he saw die before his eyes. Mr. Ervin was shot outside of Howard Houses and the two police officers who responded to the incident did not know how to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). When EMT's arrived, they placed him on their gurney and transported him to Brookdale Hospital where he died.

Senator Hamilton vowed then to never allow another person in this city to die because a police officer did not know how to perform CPR. He persevered to ensure that this time around Brianna's Law was passed and requires that members of the division of state police and of the City of New York Police Department complete training in CPR upon entry and every 2 years thereafter.

Legislation has been introduced to decriminalize turnstile jumping cases, a criminal offense predominately affecting people of color with low incomes.

Every year, 2,000 young Black boys and girls get arrested for jumping the turnstiles. This can be an A-misdemeanor offense which remains on their record for the rest of their life. If he were to take his car over a bridge and not pay the toll, he would receive a civil fine. If he jumps the turnstile and does not pay the fine, he would receive an open warrant. With an open warrant against you, if you are stopped for any reason you will be arrested and brought to jail. Because of the lack of \$2.75, our youth are ending up in Riker's Island. To make things worse, it is usually young people of color who are going to jail for this offense. If he were to ride the subway

and get caught drinking a beer he would receive a ticket. On the Long Island Railroad, operated by the same agency, they offer a bar car. Why? Different demographics is the answer.

In collaboration with Assemblywoman Tremaine Wright, he is pushing forward a bill to decriminalize turnstile jumping.

Other issues he is working on include legislation that now allows NYCHA residents who are mobility impaired and may have the desire to move to a lower floor to have the ability to do so when a vacancy occurs. He continues to champion The Campus which gives our youth the opportunity to learn coding, a skill that allows them to earn \$80,000 per year out of high school. The program is doing well and they had a coding competition at Medgar Evers College.

Sadly, when he asked the students who Medgar Evers was, only one Arab-American young lady could tell him. He is saddened that our youth are not being thought their history to bring up their self-esteem. Regarding Black history, youth are only being taught about Martin Luther King, Jr. slavery, Harriet Tubman, and Fredrick Douglass, Jr. We have done much more than this as Black people. He has brought forward legislation that Black history be taught from K to 12, all year long.

He urges young people especially, to consider carefully before pleading guilty to criminal charges as the outcome may not be the best possible for them. Taking a plea means that it will be with you for the rest of your life. If you or anyone you know is arrested and needs an attorney who will advocate for them, please call his office.

He helped fund the Brownsville Collaborative Middle School with \$500,000 where Gregory Jackson, Jr. now serves as principal. A Black young man is 36% more likely to graduate college if he has a Black male teacher in school career. The Brownsville Collaborative Middle School has 9 such men. He has a new initiative to get young Black men to serve as teachers in our schools. We have to change the narrative of education in Brownsville. We can allow that only 13% of students are able to read at grade-level. If that happened in Park Slope or Brooklyn Heights, the school would be shutdown. Why do we accept it in Brownsville?

He is now the first person of color in New York State history to Chair the Banking Committee. He is looking to bring change to the Brownsville community. Check cashing services should not be serving as our banks. The money exists in the community but they want to charge us more for fees. He is attempting to bring Spring Bank or another bank into Brownsville. He has an objective to bring \$20,000,000 into Brownsville for business development.

Lastly, he has allocated two buses in order that youth from the community may have an opportunity to visit the African-American Museum in Washington, D.C.

His office can be reached by calling (718) 284-4700.

Ms. Lisa Kenner stated that there is need for all the elected officials serving the community to come together and stop acting in factions.

Senator Hamilton stated that working together will give us economies of scale.

District Manager Viola Greene-Walker read highlights of her report:

- 1) Applications are now being accepted for 64 newly constructed units at 91 Junius Street and for 107 newly constructed units at 428 Saratoga Avenue. Interested persons may apply online or through the mail. To apply online or receive information on how to apply by mail, please go to [nyc.gov/housingconnect](http://nyc.gov/housingconnect).
- 2) The Senior Citizens and Disabled Homeowner's Exemption Program - Seniors and New Yorkers with disabilities may be eligible for a tax break, if your annual income of \$58,399 or less.
- 3) Electronics Pick-Up will begin on October 1, 2017, in Community Districts 1,2,3,4,5,8,9,16,and 17. To schedule a pick up, visit [nyc.gov/electronics](http://nyc.gov/electronics) or call 3-1-1.

A motion was made by Mr. David Alexander, seconded by Ms. Linda Rivera, and carried to accept the District Manager's report.

Chairperson Morgan recognized Mr. Timothy Harrell of the Civilian Complaint Review Board.

Mr. Harrell stated that he is an Outreach Coordinator for the New York City Civilian Complaint Review Board. The Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB) is an independent municipal agency that investigates complaints of police misconduct. A "complaint" is defined as any incident within the Agency's jurisdiction that falls into one or more of the following categories

of misconduct specified by the New York City Charter: Force that is unnecessary or excessive, Abuse of Authority, Discourtesy, and Offensive Language, collectively known as “FADO”. Upon receiving a complaint, CCRB investigators gather evidence and interview witnesses to prepare reports on the allegations of misconduct.

If you were in a situation involving the police wherein you are made to feel uncomfortable or were witness to what you perceived as police misconduct, you may call 3-1-1 and ask for the CCRB to file a complaint. Within 24 hours of receiving a complaint, a CCRB Investigator will contact you. They will meet with you if necessary. They will visit the scene and question passersby and if need be subpoena video recordings from area cameras to determine if police misconduct has occurred. If an allegation is substantiated, it becomes a charge and trial will take place at One Police Plaza.

Disciplinary action ranges from formal retraining, loss of paid vacation days, suspension to outright dismissal from the Police Department.

CCRB hosts a public meeting every month. The next meeting will be held on October 11<sup>th</sup> on the 10<sup>th</sup> Floor of 100 Church Street in Manhattan. The meetings are conducted as town halls giving the public opportunity to voice their concerns. The only way to improve police/community relations is to have a dialogue take place between the two.

In July, they held their meeting in Brownsville. The 73<sup>rd</sup> Precinct is one of the most complained about precincts and there was a significant turnout of both officers and members of the community.

If you cannot attend in person, the meetings are live streamed and videos from past meetings are also available to be viewed.

The agency follows up on all complaints they receive. If a person calls them every day with a new complaint, they will follow up on each complaint. If they receive a call that does not fall into their purview, they will not hang up on them. They will refer them to the proper authority for their issue.

The CCRB is available to present to groups anywhere in the city. If you know of a group that can benefit from having a presentation, please have them contact the CCRB offices to arrange a presentation.

He can be reached by calling (212) 912-7280 or via email at [tharrell@ccrb.nyc.gov](mailto:tharrell@ccrb.nyc.gov).

They also use the data that they collect from complaints to influence policy. From 2015 to 2016, there were 580,000 “Stop and Frisk” performed in the City. They took that information to the City Council and policy changes were made. In 2016 to 2017, only 28,000 “Stop and Frisk” were reported. He encouraged the audience to file complaints when witnessing police misconduct.

Someone stated that she saw a uniformed officer performing a rap song using profane lyrics. Is this something that the CCRB can investigate?

Mr. Harrell stated that this would fall under the categories of disrespect and offensive language. CCRB would investigate each allegation individually. It only takes one allegation to be substantiated for a trial to take place.

Chairperson Morgan recognized Mr. Yuri Polansky of EmPower New York.

Mr. Polansky stated that EmPower New York provides no-cost energy efficiency solutions to income-eligible New Yorkers. The program is funded by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA), National Grid, and Con Edison. It is designed to help those who are financially challenged to weatherize their homes. They insulate homes, weatherize doors and windows, replace old and inefficient refrigerators and freezers, install energy-efficient lighting, and install carbon monoxide and smoke detectors.

The program is endorsed by Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams.

They encourage persons who are interested in applying to do so as soon as possible. As winter approaches, the approval process will take longer. A person applying in November may not see the work performed before February.

The savings made by these improvements are year-round with savings of up to 30% in the winter.

Beginning Monday, October 2, 2017, in collaboration with the Brooklyn Leader, applications will be available here at 444 Thomas S. Boyland Street, Monday through Thursday from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. He encourages the audience to spread the word about the program to their friends, family, and neighbors who were not able to be here tonight. They can be contacted by calling (718) 372-3000.

Mr. Albion Liburd, Chairperson of the Economic Development Committee, reported that the Equity Planning Work Group (EPG) held its first monthly meeting with the new work group format on Thursday, September 14<sup>th</sup>.

The Group's agenda included presentations by a consortium interested in developing the site at 416 Thatford Avenue, the former H. Fox Syrup Company. The developers want to create a mixed-use project consisting of low-income housing and commercial space. They consisted of The Bridge, an organization with a long history of supportive housing primarily for persons with mental illness, GMDC, a developer/owner of commercial and industrial spaces, and MEGA, a general contracting company.

The project is in its earliest stages of planning and sourcing funding. The EPG heard their presentation and acknowledged the need for low-income housing, and recognized that the project would create jobs. As part of their presentation, the developers indicated that approximately 60 permanent jobs would be created by the project.

The developers requested a letter of initial support to present to their funders, and the EPG agreed to provide the letter with the caveat that they in turn provide the Community Board with a 'commitment letter' outlining the community benefits of the project. A letter was provided to the Community Board, as was a sample letter of support for the project. The District Manager, Chairperson Morgan, and the EPG Chairpersons reviewed both letters and will respond as soon as possible. The development team will be back several times to the EPG as the project moves forward, and the EPG will make its recommendation to the Community Board.

The EPG also reviewed the situation at the Our Lady of Loreto Church site. Previously, the Committee recommended that the Community Board support the developer's plan for the site. However, the developer has moved forward without further input from the community. The EPG is now recommending that the Board withdraw its support for the site, and request that the developer abide by its initial agreement and provide the community with a commitment letter outlining the community benefit.

The EPG also discussed the following issues:

- Steps to be developed to improve community involvement in development sites throughout the District. This is a continuing issue that the EPG will be developing throughout the course of its business.
- HPD's response to an EPG request that the Community Board be advised of all development projects in the future and dating back to 2014.
- The Brownville Plan RFP (Request for Proposals) networking session
- And an introduction of the new format and announcement of the new Economic Development Committee Chairperson, Mr. Albion Liburd and Vice Chair, Ms. Anita Pierce.

The Work Group welcomes everyone to attend their meetings and be involved in improving our community. The next meeting will be Tuesday, October 10, 2017. For information on the next meeting, you can contact the District Manager.

A motion was made by Mr. David Alexander, seconded by Ms. Linda Rivera, and carried to accept the report of the Equity Planning Work Group and its recommendations.

Chairperson Morgan announced that Senator Jesse Hamilton, III, in collaboration with J.P. Morgan Chase Bank and Community Board #16, will host a financial literacy and future home ownership workshop on Tuesday, October 10<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. and on Wednesday, October 11<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Brownsville Branch of the Brooklyn Public Library, located at 61 Glenmore Avenue (between Watkins Street and Mother Gaston Boulevard). Fliers for the events are available on tonight's distribution table.

Ms. Margaret Brewer, Chairperson of the Public Safety Committee, reported that the City Services Planning Work Group met September 6, 2017 and reviewed the NYPD Compstat report which showed good results. Crime overall is down. The District is dealing with more burglaries than usual; however, NYPD is watching closely.

Last Saturday, the Department of Sanitation, in collaboration with NYC Parks held a "Talk Trash" event to encourage youth to keep the District clean; stressing the fact that we can all lend a hand in keeping the neighborhood clean.

The next meeting of the City Services Work Group will be on Wednesday, October 4, 2017 at 6:00 p.m.

A motion was made by Mr. John McCadney, Jr., seconded by Mr. David Alexander, and carried to accept the report of the City Services Planning Work Group.

Mr. David Alexander, Chairperson of the Youth Services Planning Committee, reported that on September 13, 2017, the Community Resident Planning Work Group (CRPG) met to discuss the Work Group's upcoming goals. The Youth Services Planning Committee (YSPC) is considering another youth conference next year. They also discussed the preparation of a Community March/Rally to display our appreciation for Ocean Hill-Brownsville resilience of its residents. A theme will be discussed at upcoming meetings. YSPC also discussed the status of our schools, where documentation will be gathered to determine what actions will be the necessary to take to improve the conditions in our schools. YSPC will reach out to community-based organizations to address youth employment services to ensure that when the youth are employed that they will remain employed. How to get youth ages 16-18 years old (a total of two) to join the Community Board as a member(s) was also considered by the YSPC.

The SONYC BIZ Entrepreneurial Program and GED Program continue to enroll students. For additional information, contact Central Brooklyn Economic Development Corporation, located on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor at 444 Thomas S. Boyland Street; telephone number: (718) 498-4513.

To enroll in the CAMPUS Afterschool Tech and Arts Program for Middle School Students, located at 85 Watkins Street, call (718) 284-4700.

If you are interested in attending the Fathers and Mentors program, call Mr. William Rochford at (718) 240-3657 or 917-42809647, to obtain the date and time of the meetings.

The United Federation of Teachers, The American Federation of Teachers, and First Book will be giving out 40,000 free books on October 7, 2017 from 8:00 am to 12:00 pm at 210 Chester Street between Blake and Sutter Avenues. Parents can obtain up to 15 books and education staff 50 books for their classroom or school library. Participants must register to receive any of the books.

The Senior Citizens and Women's Committees are having a Walk to Fight Breast Cancer on Thursday, October 12, 2017 at 1:00 p.m. in Betsy Head Park (Dumont Avenue at Strauss Street).

The Work Group thanks everyone who has participated in the actions taken by the committees that serve the community. The next CRPG will be on October 11, 2017. They encourage the community to join any committee that supports their concerns and again thanks all of the Ocean Hill-Brownsville residents who get involved.

A motion was made by Mr. John McCadney, Jr., seconded by Ms. Adrainer Coleman, and carried to accept the report of the Community Resident Planning Work Group.

Ms. Patricia Winston, Chairperson of the Senior Citizens Affairs Committee reported that they met on September 20, 2017 at the Mt Ararat Senior Center with Dr. Carol Marks, Associate Medical Director of the BMS Family Health Center, who engaged the seniors in a conversation about diabetes, causes and effects, types of diabetes, and treatment.

The next Senior Citizens Affairs Committee meeting will be held on October 18, 2017 at noon.

A motion was made by Mr. David Alexander, seconded by Ms. Linda Rivera, and carried to accept the report of the Senior Citizens Affairs Committee.

Ms. Marie Pierre, Chairperson of the Legislative Committee, reported that the Fiscal and Policy Work Group met on September 18, 2017. Due to time constraints, they decided to table the discussion on the New York State Constitutional Convention until their October meeting. The Work Group also reviewed Congressman Hakeem Jeffries' response to our concerns regarding the Area Median Income (AMI) formula used to determine eligibility for affordable housing.

Also discussed was reaching out to the Youth Services Planning Committee regarding parents and school supplies that was previously discussed by the Legislative Committee.

The Work Group further discussed issues that they would like to work on during year. One issue mentioned was the lack of voter participation, especially in local and primary elections. They are looking to hold education forums or town halls to address these issues. They intend to target community residents who have recently become citizens and hope to work with the Brooklyn District Attorney's office to educate our community members returning from prison. They also discussed the lack of knowledge of voters in our community who express some concern at not having enough knowledge on our civil court judge. Many people rely on the numerous brochures that are mailed to them while others randomly pick the numbers needed. The Work Group felt that although the civil court judges were selected for placement on the ballot, a forum should still be considered to meet with the candidates and be better prepared for the next election.

A Committee member brought up the issue of lack of compensation for workers who serve as jurors for an extended period without any compensation on their job. The Work Group hopes to further discuss this issue.

They invite members of the community who think of any legislative issues that are important to our community to please reach out to the Community Board office which will forward it to the Fiscal and Policy group.

At the next Fiscal and Policy Work Group meeting on October 17, 2017, the Work Group will discuss our Capital and Expense Budget Needs for the community.

A motion was made by Mr. David Alexander, seconded by Mr. John McCadney, Jr., and carried to accept the report of the Fiscal and Policy Work Group.

Chairperson Morgan thanked the work groups for their reports and stated that there is much to be done in the year. She recognized Ms. Lisa Kenner, President of the Van Dyke Houses Residents Association and informed her that the Board continues to work on remediating the traffic safety condition at Junius Street and Dumont Avenue.

She recognized Rev. Eddie Karim, representing the Office of Assemblywoman Latrice Walker.

Rev. Karim announced that in collaboration with ICL, Assemblywoman Walker will host a resource fair at 330 Powell Street on Thursday, September 28<sup>th</sup>. They will also be participating in Community Board #16's Senior Citizens Affairs Committee's Breast Cancer Awareness Walk on October 12<sup>th</sup>.

Assemblywoman Walker hosts her Advisory Board meeting on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of each month, the next meeting will be on October 21<sup>st</sup>.

Assemblywoman Walker was recently appointed Chair of the Black, Puerto Rican, and Asian Legislative Caucus. She invites the community to join them at their Annual Legislative Conference in Albany, New York, when it convenes in 2018.

Often people are directed to [nyc.gov/housingconnect](http://nyc.gov/housingconnect), New York City portal for housing opportunities. However, some people do not have access to the internet or are challenged with completing the application online. They offer assistance with completing the applications at their office, Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

He asked that the audience to keep Assemblywoman Walker and her family in prayer as they mourn the passing of her brother.

Mr. Mawuli Hormeku offered condolences to the family and stated that Level Solar, a company that installed solar electric panels in over 200 homes in the community, has gone out of business. He further stated that Assemblywoman Walker promised to take legal action if anything happened with the service. Now that Level Solar is out of business; leaving these homes without someone to maintain and service the panels, what is Assemblywoman Walker doing to rectify the situation?

Rev. Karim stated that Brownsville is what is called the Brooklyn-Queens Demand Management Area – meaning that the demand for power in the area would outpace what existing infrastructure could supply. Rather than have the community face service disruption due to the demand, a Request for Proposals (RFP) was issued by Governor Cuomo through the NYSERDA (New York State Energy Research and Development Authority) to find solar power providers to serve New York City. Level Solar won the bid. They were funded by NYSERDA to supply 200 homes in our community with solar power. This will help the owners of these homes pay less on their energy bills while also helping all residents of Brownsville by reducing the demand for power from the grid.

Level Solar won the bid, not because of the influence of Assemblywoman Walker, but simply because they met the requirements of the RFP. Last Friday, Malcolm Bliss came to Assemblywoman Walker's office and shared with them that some employees of Level Solar had received termination notices. They tried to find information on the company's website, but the website was down. They then contacted the Governor's Office to find out what the processes would be on all that needs to take place.

While nothing is official regarding the dissolution of Level Solar, rest assured that Assemblywoman Walker, as she always does, will continue to work to ensure that Brownsville resident are secure. All the homes that had the panels installed will continue to have and benefit from them. They should continue to pay their bills which are processed through Con Edison.

The concerns are that everyone who has solar panels will be able to have the panels serviced, if something goes wrong and that those who are in the queue to have panels installed will receive the installation. They are working with the Governor's office and NYSERDA to bring about a resolution. It is important to note that there will be no service interruption while this is taking place.

Ms. Marie Boone, representing the Office of Senator Roxanne Persaud, stated that Senator Persaud's office offers constituent services to the community at their office, located at 1222 East 96<sup>th</sup> Street and their telephone number is (718) 649-7653.

Mr. Nicholas Perry, representing the Office of Comptroller Scott Stringer, reported that the Comptroller's office conducted several audits during the summer, one of which was an audit of the Special Education Division of the Department of Education. The audit found that the Department failed to keep tabs on \$84 million it paid to outside vendors for services to students with disabilities.

Comptroller Stringer's report shows that the city did not track payments for services such as physical therapy, speech therapy and psychological counseling in 2016. As a result, thousands of bad payments for bogus treatments and services were made, wasting taxpayers' money. These are some of the most vulnerable residents of our city. The audit also found a deeply flawed verification system which makes it extremely difficult for families who speak languages other than English to participate.

At the end of the day, this is about right and wrong. This is why Comptroller Stringer will continue to look "under the hood" at the Department of Education to hold the agency accountable and protect taxpayer dollars.

Anyone seeking to receive a copy of the report can email him at [nperry@comptroller.nyc.gov](mailto:nperry@comptroller.nyc.gov) or call him at (212) 669-3811.

Mr. Malcolm McDaniel, representing the Office of Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams, reminded the audience that the Borough President is making turkeys available to community organizations providing Thanksgiving dinners to the community. Groups should contact

Ms. Eileen Newman at (718) 302-3806 or email her at [enewman@brooklynbp.nyc.gov](mailto:enewman@brooklynbp.nyc.gov). He urges that the groups not wait until the last minute to make their requests.

He announced that a resource fair will be held at Borough Hall on October 10<sup>th</sup>.

The Borough President's Office can be reached by calling, (718) 802-3700, (718) 802-2681 for Constituent Services, and (347) 942-1692 (cell) or (718) 802-3777 (office) to reach Mr. McDaniel.

Chairperson Morgan recognized Ms. Charmaine Bourbon of Brownsville Job Plus.

Ms. Bourbon stated that she is the Program's Director for the program which operates at 330 Powell Street. Under the terms of their contract, they serve residents of Brownsville and Van Dyke I Houses. Having said that, if someone does not reside in one of these two complexes, they still will offer them assistance.

The "Job" in the name of the program is for job training. The "Plus" is for academics, vocational training, health, finance, and career readiness. They have 1,500 members and have placed 614 members in jobs with a full quarter remaining in the year (Their contract called for 492 placements). Seventy-six percent of those they have placed remain employed 13 months afterward.

In terms of the Plus services they are expected to have 880 unique outcomes in finance, education, training, and such. Their contract ends in October and they are about 20% shy of the goal.

They offer training in OSHA certification, CPR, and customer service – a program brought in to the community through LaGuardia Community College.

Regarding financial literacy, since coming on board, she has discovered that their challenge is around child support. Brownsville and East New York have the highest debts owed to the Department of Social Services. There is a forgiveness program in place, but it requires that the debtor go to Manhattan. She has been in conversation with Senator Hamilton on having the judge come to Brownsville. When notices are received about child support people are not likely to go to Manhattan not knowing what the outcome will be.

Another goal about finance is a savings goal. Most of the people who join their program have no savings and have expressed that they are very uncomfortable with their financial situation. Many have no bank account and several have been flagged on the Check System for having kited checks and therefore are banned from having checking accounts for five years.

They have a finance coach who assist members in improving their credit scores, opening bank accounts, assist with getting child support payment up to date, and getting them to save. They established a 52-week savings challenge wherein participants were asked to save \$5 in the first week of the year, and then gradually increase their savings by 5 dollars a week throughout the year. So, they would save \$10 in week 2, then \$15 in week 3, and so on. They found that for many, it was too much; so they reduced the amount to as little as \$.25. The importance of building a habit of saving was what they wanted to establish. They originally wanted to have residents of Brownsville and Van Dyke I save \$150,000. The 37 participants have thus far saved \$137,000.

The program is not just about jobs. Of their 1,500 members, 680 do not have a high school education. There is much work to be done in the community and she is able and willing to do the work and wants the community's support to get it done.

They have two part-time (20-hours per week) positions open for Community Coaches with a stipend of about \$13 per hour. The ideal candidate should be an outgoing person and must be a resident of either Brownsville or Van Dyke I Houses. Their office is open Monday through Friday. They are open until 7:00 p.m. on Wednesdays and on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of each month.

Chairperson Morgan recognized Mr. Joel Lock from the City Parks Foundation.

Mr. Lock informed the audience that in collaboration with the Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD), they are offering the Teen P.A.S.S. – parks, arts, science, sports – a free, project-based after school club for middle school students to learn about

environmental science, urban nature, arts, sports, and fitness. Students grow into aspiring scientists, artists, nature lovers, and healthy individuals by participating in the program. In Brownsville, they are located at Brownsville Recreation Center. The program will help youth learn how to become leaders and help their community. The program operates from 3:00 to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Ms. Shari Rose stated that she is the Program Director for the Learning Garden Program which falls under the umbrella of the City Parks Foundation. The program operates out of four different parks in the city. Locally, they are at the community garden at the corner of Osborn Street and New Lots Avenue. They provide environmental education to 2<sup>nd</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. If you know of any schools in the community that would be interested in their programming, please have them visit the City Parks Foundation for additional information.

Mr. Lock stated that he can be reached by calling (212) 360-2745.

Ms. Sharon Devonish-Leid, Director of Community and Governmental Relations at Brookdale Hospital, announced that Brookdale is now officially part of One Brooklyn and remains committed to being a quality health provider for the community. They have a new stroke unit, neurology department, a bone and joint center, and a cancer center. All with state-of-the-art equipment. There is no need to go into Manhattan to receive quality. If you do your research, you will find that it is available right here in the community.

Their cancer center offers tours. You may call her at (718) 240-8670 to arrange a tour.

In collaboration with the Pitkin Avenue Business Improvement District, they will host a pop-up health screening in front of Shoppers World, this coming Saturday.

Ms. Ash announced that Bike New York offers an Afterschool program, a Youth Ride Club and an Adult Weekend Bike Class, at Gershwin Park a.k.a. Linden Park, located at Linden Boulevard and Vermont Street. The free programs teach the mechanics of riding a bike, the rules of the road, best practices for riding in a group and on the city streets, and—of course—the joy and freedom of biking.

For additional information, please visit their website at [bike.nyc](http://bike.nyc) or call (212) 870-2080.

Mr. Marvin King announced that there will be a rally in front of City Hall on October 9<sup>th</sup> where a coalition of activists from various religious organizations will call on Mayor Bill de Blasio to build more affordable housing units for the city's seniors and prioritize public housing repairs. He asks anyone who is able to please attend.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned.