

Community Board #4 Regular Monthly Meeting
Wednesday, June 20, 2012
Hope Gardens Multi Service Center
195 Linden Street (corner of Wilson Avenue)
Brooklyn, New York 11221
6:00PM

The Chairperson, Ms. Julie Dent introduced herself and welcomed all in attendance to the Community Board #4 Wednesday, June 20th monthly board meeting at 6:40PM.

- Public Hearing Item -

1) New York City Department of Transportation: Department of Design and Construction – School Safety Projects, ID HWCSCH3H

JHS 291 - Roland Hayes School
I.S. 383 - Phillippa Schuyler School
P.S. 116 - Elizabeth L. Farrel School
P.S. 86 -The Irvington School

DOT introduced the Safe Routes to School initiative to focus safety improvements at city schools with the highest accident rates. This study began in 2003 with close to 1500 schools being studied. The study was largely based on accident data from the DMV, Police Department and other various sources. DOT examined accident histories around the city's approximately 1500 elementary and middle schools and established a list of the schools to be considered for traffic safety improvements. Each priority school underwent thorough study that included outreach to each principal, meeting with parents and other interested parties.

In addition to the improvements at the 135 priority schools, DOT upgraded school crosswalk signs around all 1,471 school locations and created and distributed traffic safety maps for each school.

Phrase 2 of the program will be finished in a couple of weeks. Phrase 3 is being designed now and that is why DOT and the DDC are here before the board.

Power Point Presentation:

Project Objectives:

- o Improve the overall pedestrian safety for students, parents and school employees going to and from the schools.
- o Construction of "neckdowns" at street intersections to shorten the length of crosswalks and to calm the traffic approaching the crosswalks.
- o Make it easier for pedestrians to look around park cars for crossing

A computer simulation was done in order to make sure that a bus or a truck will be able to turn a street corner with no problem.

Project Scope:

J.H.S. 291, Roland Hayes School

Installation of "neckdown" at:

- A) SE corner of intersection of Knickerbocker Avenue and Gates Avenue
- B) SW corner of intersection of Knickerbocker Avenue and Palmetto Street
- C) SW corner of intersection of Wilson Avenue and Palmetto Street

One parking space will be taken away from the north side corner of Palmetto Street and Knickerbocker Avenue in order to allow trucks to turn.

I.S. 383, Phillippa Schuyler School

Installation of "neckdown" at:

- A) SW corner of intersection of Myrtle Avenue and Greene Avenue

Since at present cars are not allowed to make a left turn at the intersection at Myrtle and Greene Avenues, the sidewalk on the left side of Greene Avenue will be extended to combine with the existing triangular sidewalk and subway column located in the middle of the street. (Intersection of Myrtle Avenue & Greene Avenue – Looking north towards intersection from Greene Avenue)

P.S. 116, Elizabeth L. Farrell

Installation of “neckdown” at:

- A) SE corner of intersection of Knickerbocker Avenue and Menahan Street
- B) NW corner of intersection of Knickerbocker Avenue and Grove Street

P.S. 86, The Irvington

Installation of “neckdown” at:

- A) NE corner of intersection of Irving Avenue and Harman Street
- B) NW corner of intersection of Irving Avenue and Greene Avenue

One parking space will be eliminated on Greene Avenue and the north side of Irving Avenue to allow a bus or a truck to turn, from Irving Avenue onto Greene Avenue.

In most cases the neckdowns will not take away parking spaces, however due to these changes, a total of five (5) parking spaces will be eliminated.

Questions were entertained:

Myrtle and Greene Avenues intersection: The extension will be built with a low curb in case a fire truck or an ambulance has to make a left turn at that corner during an emergency situation.

The work is scheduled to begin in the summer of 2013 and will take several months to complete.

Neckdowns are being used all over the country not just in New York City. They have been implemented in 32 schools thus far and are within the Federal Government guidelines. The results have been positive. For more information on neckdowns and the Department of Transportation’s study please go to their website at www.nyc.gov/dot and look under safety programs.

2) Eco-NY Station: Bushwick Farmer’s Market, Presentation by Sean Michael Fleming

Mr. Fleming is one of the co-founders and the executive director of Eco Station New York. Eco Station NY is focused on Urban Agriculture and Food Justice. Eco Station is growing food in Bushwick and teaching people about food and where food is grown. Bushwick Farmers Market has grown tremendously. Bushwick Farmer’s Market is currently in five weekly locations throughout Bushwick, and is open three days a week, June to mid November.

Bushwick Farmer’s Market carries a mix of organic, local and hyper-local grown at EcoStation’s nearby farms: Bushwick Campus Farm and Farm in the Sky.

They strive to make the markets friendly and accessible to all, both customer and farmers.

At Farm-In-the-Sky you can find vegetables, herbs, greens and microgreens. Future plans are to develop Farm-In-The-Sky as a learning center for rooftop farmers, gardeners and beekeepers.

EcoStation NY is looking to train others as an apprentice farmer for 3 months. For more information email Sean@EcoStationNY.org or call 646-393-9305

The Chairperson, Ms. Julie Dent welcomed the City of New York Comptroller, Mr. John Lui and invited him to speak before the board and audience.

Mr. Lui thanked Ms. Dent, Ms. Whitted and the board members for the hard work that they are doing for the community.

Community Boards are an important part of the planning process in the City of New York.

His office has been focused on reducing and eliminating wasteful spending in city government. Fortunately after his office stopped any additional funding from going into the CityTime project and after an audit and other

investigations was done, last month the contractor (CityTime) returned a half of a billion dollars to the City of New York.

Comptroller Liu stated that he is asking the Mayor and City Hall to recoup as much as \$163 million from Hewlett Packard as a result of overbilling and underperforming on the contract to upgrade the City's 911 call system, which was uncovered as a result of a recent audit. The recovery of such monies will allow daycares and after school programs to continue as well as stop the layoff of New York City Firemen.

Mr. Liu stated that his office is also looking for strategies on how they can get more money for the people of New York City without raising taxes. For the last two years since he has been in office he has made it a priority to take advantage of very favorable capital marketing conditions, meaning very low interest rates. The City has always had billion of dollars of outstanding debt, money that they owe on New York City Bonds. When the interest rates are low he has made it a priority to refinance those bonds therefore lowering the debt. Last week they completed another transaction of refinancing \$997 million of the City's debt and this transaction alone has yielded \$101.4 million for the City to use in this upcoming budget.

He stated that next week the Mayor and the City Council have to resolve their budget. As the comptroller and even though he is the CFO he does not have a role or responsibility in the budget negotiation process, that power is left up to the Representative Body and that is the City Council. They have to resolve their budget; however this gives them more room to work with in terms of keeping essential serves going and without having to charge people more money and without having to cut essential serves. His office is finding more resources and keeping an eye on the economic picture of the City. A City Mr. Liu states, that has been through some brutal years recently. The City has seen the worst recession since the great depression. We are now starting to see some light at the end of this very long tunnel, says the Comptroller.

In view of the currency issues and government issues that are currently occurring in Europe those problems are making everyone a little nervous, Mr. Liu stated. What happens there affects New York City.

Hopefully the City Of New York can get through the next political system unscathed and see some growth.

Mr. Liu stated that he hopes that if there is a recovery in the system and that it will be a shared recovery, meaning that the profits will go to everyone and not just to the top wage earners in the city. Mr. Liu relates that in the 2004-2007 recovery period 99% of the people saw a small increase in their earnings whereas 1% of the top earners saw an increase of 65% in their earnings. When there is a recovery there has to be policies in the city that helps everyone to share in the recovery as well, because everyone shared in the pain so they should be able to share in the recovery. There should be a progressive tax in place meaning that lower income payers pay a lower tax rate than someone who has a higher income. This is what is in place at the federal level, you start at 10% then it goes up 15% - 28% - 33% and into the high 30's. However in the City of New York a family that makes \$50,000 a year pays pretty much the same tax rate as a family who makes \$1,000,000 a year. Teachers, police officers and fireman are paying the same tax rate as Mayor Bloomberg and this is not equitable. If the 1% high earning tax payers pay just 1% more in their taxes then the 99% of the tax payers would see a reduction in their taxes and the city would come out whole, even if this was to be done. Mr. Liu stated that he is not talking about soaking the rich he is just talking about what is fare and what the tax code across the country was meant to be. This is a graduated system, a progressive set of tax rates where the wealthiest pay their fair share, which is a little bit more than the low income payers pays.

It has been a busy 2 ½ years for him as the Comptroller of the City of New York. Born in Taiwan Mr. Liu has spent most of his years growing up in New York City. He has gone to the public schools in New York and after going away to college he had returned to New York. He served many years in the private sector and served as City council for 8 years and has been the Comptroller for the last 2 ½ years.

Mr. Liu closes by thanking the board for the great work that they are doing and he thanked those in attendance for giving him the opportunity to serve them.

Ms. Dent thanked Mr. John Liu for all that he has done and continue to do for the City of New York. She thanked him for coming before the board and expressing such heartfelt words.

Ms. Dent relates that there was a graduation at her day care program. She stated that every year since Mr. John Liu has been in office, he has asked her at the Audrey Johnson Learning Center to pick two children who has done very, very well. He then sends two very nice certificates to the two children that were chosen.

Ms. Dent then presented him with a Certificate of Appreciation in behalf of the children from the Audrey Johnson Learning Center for his genuine concern for the children, parents, staff and the directors at the Audrey Johnson Learning Center.

The Chairperson, Ms. Julie Dent asked the District Manager, Ms. Nadine Whitted to call the first roll call.

Roll Call: 31 members present constituting a quorum.

Chairperson's Report:

The Chairperson, Ms. Julie Dent welcomed and thanked everyone in attendance to the Community Board #4's June 20, 2012 Regularly Scheduled Meeting.

Ms. Dent asked for the acceptance of the agenda with any necessary corrections. The agenda was accepted by Ms. Martha Brown and second by Ms. Barbara Smith. All board members present were in favor.

Ms. Dent asked the new board member to stand: Takiyah Ali and Julissa Gonzalez as the other members welcomed them.

Ms. Dent asked for the acceptance of the previous month's minutes with any necessary corrections. The previous month's minutes was tabled until the September Board meeting. Acceptance of tabling the previous month's minutes was noted by Ms. Martha Brown and second by Mr. Cyril Joseph. All members present were in favor.

Ms. Dent asked that the Elected Officials and /or their representatives introduce themselves and state their respective address and telephone numbers.

- 1) Yamilka Mena Representing Councilmember Diana Reyna, 217 Havemeyer Street, 2nd Floor, 718-963-3141
- 2) Alice Nacimiento Representing Assemblyman Vito Lopez, 434 South 5th Street, Brooklyn, 718-963-7029

Representatives from City, State or Federal Agencies:

- 1) Bill Fitchett, FDNY Battalion Chief – Battalion 28, 392 Himrod Street, 718-965-8328

The Board members were asked to fill out and submit the Committee Assignment Form for the upcoming year. This form will help formulate the committee structure list. In accordance with the Board's By-Laws-Article 10 section E 1 each member shall serve on at least two committees.

The chairperson asked that each board member take their selection seriously when selecting a committee.

District Manager's Report:

Meetings Attended

Ms. Nadine Whitted announced the Community Board's move on Monday, July 16, 2012 to 1420 Bushwick Avenue. The Board has been located at the 315 Wyckoff Avenue address since 1994 which was supposed to be a temporary address.

In preparation of the move the board has disposed of excess papers and electronic equipment.

Ms. Dent thanked the Hope Garden Center's staff for allowing the community board to host their meetings at their 195 Linden Street location. The community board meetings will resume their again in September 2012.

Committee Reports

Civic & Religious Committee (CRC): Ms. Elvena Davis, Committee Chairperson

The June 7, 2012 Parade was a success. She thanked everyone for coming out to help her.

Ms. Davis read a letter written by the District Manager to the audience, thanking them for their participation in the parade.

Ms. Dent announced the retirement of Det. Dennis Diaz who officially retires on June 29, 2012. All are welcomed to send him a card at the attention to PO D. Franco and she will make sure that he receives the card. The Chairperson stated that Detective Diaz is a top notch officer and he will be deeply missed.

Environmental/Protection/Transportation Committee (EPT): Mr. Eliseo Ruiz, Committee Chairperson, Tuesday, June 5, 2012

Location: 315 Wyckoff Avenue, 2nd Floor

Members Attended: Eliseo Ruiz

Others Attended: Nadine Whitted (District Manager), Albert Yam, Parsons, Kim Lua, Andrew Mason (DOT, School Safety), Hayden Benjamin, Nicholas Roland and Maria Centeno (DDC)

Items Discussed:

School Safety measures with the overall objective to improve pedestrian safety for students, parents and school employees going to and from the schools.

See public item #1

Parks & Recreation Committee (PRC): Mr. Robert Camacho, Committee Chairperson, June 11, 2012, 6PM

Location: 315 Wyckoff Avenue, 2nd floor

Member Attended: Robert Camacho, JoAnne Grant, Julie Dent

Others in Attendance: Willie Morales (Community Board #4 District Office), Jack Hammer (HPD), Ismael Feliciano (RBSCC), Ramon Zayzas, Jay Morales, Javonni Hines, Yeselis Delacruz, Verna Wise, Jeanett and Eddie Gonzales, Karina Almonte, Martha Chano, Yvette Perez, Raquel Martinez, Fernando Navarro, OJ Orinanni, Pilar Sanchez, Mary Salis, Angela Battaglia, Scott Short and Maggie Grady (RBSCC)

Items Discussed:

Block 3137 Lots 1, 6, 9 and 11 located at Beaver Street and Garden Street – City owned land currently under the jurisdiction of HPD. NYC Council Member Recchia and Assemblyman Vito Lopez secured \$1.5 dollars for this project. The HPD and the Department of Parks and Recreation have agreed to the transferring of the property from one city agency to another city agency. The Ridgewood Bushwick senior Citizens Inc. and the residents in the immediate area are interested in developing this site as a park. RBSCC hosted a planning session with the individuals listed above including: NYC Department of Parks & Recreation, HPD and the Parks Committee members.

The park will be open from dawn to dusk.

Public Safety Committee (PSC): Ms. Barbara Smith, Committee Chairperson, Tuesday, June 12, 2012, 6:00PM

Location: 83rd Pct., 480 Knickerbocker Avenue

Members Attended: Barbara Smith, Rev. Grace Aytes, Avellar Hansley, Linda Mckinley, Mary McClellan, Elvena Davis, Cirilo Nunez

Others in Attendance: Nadine Whitted, PO Franco & PO Cubells (83rd Precinct), Besemah Rogers, Caesar Montero, Matthew Winn, Valentin Villa, Patrick Agard, Paulino Rodriguez, Martha Rosado, Edna Pena, Gloria Estrada (Hope Gardens – TA President), Steven Greenstein (Hope Gardens Property Manager), Matilda Lopez, Adam Romero, Dora Benitz

Item Discussed:

Request for NYS Liquor Authority Licenses

- 1) Monteros Mexican Grill Corp. 173 Irving Avenue
- 2) Molasses Books, 770 Hart Street
- 3) Bushwick Coffee House, 44 Wilson Avenue
- 4) Dinorah's Bar and Grill Inc., 1260 Myrtle Avenue

NYC Housing Development Hope Gardens, concerning back yard / public space usage

140 and 160 Menahan Street, 343 Wilson Avenue, 399 Central and 1229 Greene Avenues

Residents must file an application for usage as long as they are residents. Keys are given to use the designated area only during the time from 10am to 8pm. The request to use the BBQ area is then faxed to NYPD. NO NYPD sound permits are to be issued.

Recommendations:

- 1) It is recommended that a letter be written stating that a sign be placed in a public area stating no BBQ and that the area must be closed at dusk.

The motion was made by Mr. Robert Camacho and second by Ms. Mary McClellan. All members were in favor. The letter will state to the tenants when and where bar-b-ques can take place.

A sign will be placed inside and outside of the building letting tenants know that they cannot BBQ in certain area.

2) Public Item #1 – DOT & DDC

The motion to accept the approval of neckdowns at the four schools discussed in public hearing Item #1 (see above) was made by Mr. Cyril Joseph and second by Ms. Gladys Puglla. All members present were in favor. Motion passed.

Motion to approve of the new park - Dept. of Parks and Recreation with reference to Block 3137 located at Beaver Street and Garden Street. Motioned made by Ms. Joanne Grant and second by Mr. Freddy Fowler. All members present were in favor. Motion passed.

Old Business:

Ms. Martha Brown - Letter to the Elected Official regarding down zoning: Will put off to September 2012.

Ms. Nadine Whitted: NYC Transit will start fixing the M Train station at Knickerbocker Avenue in August 2012. Information will be put on the Community Board #4 website.

Announcements:

NYPD – Community Affairs Bureau’s Juvenile Justice Division Presents Brooklyn North Youth Summit Monday, July 2, 2011, 11AM to 1PM, Woodhull Hospital, 760 Broadway, Brooklyn, NY

The youth Summit is being held to educate the community regarding youth crews/trend in their respective neighborhoods. Community leaders, representatives of community based organizations that deal with youth, teachers, administrators, clergy and concerned citizens are all invited to attend.

For further information contact: Sgt. Emmanuel Andre, NYPD Community Affairs Bureau, Juvenile Justice Division at 212-343-3707 or Lt. Marvin Luis, NYPD Community Affairs, Patrol Borough Brooklyn North at 718-573-5048

New York State Assembly Member Rafael L. Espinal, Jr.: Invites you to Attend Forum on “Stop & Frisk” Policies Wednesday, July 11th, 2012 – 6:30PM, St. John the Baptist Church (Parish Hall), 75 Lewis Avenue, Brooklyn, New York 11206

For more information please call 718-235-5627

Co-Sponsors: Senator Martin Malave Dilan & Stop & Frisk Policy Initiative

EBT – Opportunities for a Better Tomorrow: Free Computer Skills Training – Registration June 18th and 27th at 3:00PM

Improve your English, upgrade your job skills and receive job placement assistance
25 Thornton Street, Brooklyn, New York 11206 for more information call 718-387-1600

Also in attendance at the meeting were:

- Sam Goldman – Ridgewood Times – 718-821-7500

2nd Roll Call: Meeting adjourned 9:05PM