



CITY OF NEW YORK
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 10
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HENRIETTA LYLE
Chairperson

ANDREW LASSALLE
District Manager

Health & Human Services Committee

Monday May 19, 2014 6:30pm

Present: Hazel Dukes, Jennifer Jones, Michelle Booker, Christine Curry, Cheryl Smith, Cicely Harris, Deborah Yates

Excused: Donna Gill

Absent: Ibrahima Diafoune, Khalifa Diop, Melvin Christian, Steven Watkins,

Community Guests:

Katherine Nickson, Community Advocate

Angela Jackson, Mount Morris Park Community Improvement Association

Sam McClendon, MMPCIA

The May Health & Human Services Committee meeting opened with an introduction of all Board Committee members and visitors.

Mount Morris Park Community Improvement Association

Angela Jackson of MMPCIA came before the committee to express concern regarding the number of methadone clinics in Harlem. Ms Jackson wanted to get a better understanding about how neighborhoods where clinics are located are chosen. Ms. Jackson is currently compiling information about the number of clinics in Harlem and how that number compares to other neighborhoods in New York City. Some questions she hopes to answer is how are they monitoring their clients once they leave the clinics and what is their responsibility. Ms. Jackson has printed out a sheet of all clinics in the five boroughs from the the New York State Office of Alcohol and Substance Abuse website. Then she highlighted how many were in Manhattan, she noted that out of 29 clinics in Manhattan roughly a third are in Harlem. Ms. Jackson has heard a rumor that four new clinics are due to open in Harlem. How will the community be contacted in regards to when and where these clinics will open. The organization MMPCIA is also concerned because there have been reports that when the clients leave the methadone clinics there is an exchange of drugs or loitering around the front of the clinics. What is the policy when patients

leave clinics, how are they monitoring them and if they are not monitoring them how can the community engage them to come up with some policies. They want to work with the community board going forward so that they get more information.

Ms. Dukes responded that we are aware where the clinics are located. Harlem United presented two months ago to tell us of a new location near the firehouse on w134 St. This committee elected not to give a letter of support even though they had received support from community members and elected officials. Ms. Dukes question to Harlem United was that Harlem Hospital has a Substance Abuse Clinic and why were they opening another clinic so close to one that already exists. Harlem United was not able to give a reasonable response so no letter of support was given. The new Harlem United location will not only offer substance abuse support but will also offer mental health services to the Community. The board has had several complaints regarding over saturation of clinics. MMPCIA should contact the Manhattan Borough Presidents Office because the State will contact that office before they come to Community Board 10 if a location is approved to open a new clinic.

Dr. Smith a Health Committee member added that she has looked into this matter. In terms of OASIS they are in the process of trying to figure out what they are going to be doing as an organization. Their Medical Director has left and a lot of their staff is leaving. Oasis plans are not clear as to whether or not they will continue to do business. They are not approving any additional licenses at this time. The rumor that they are is untrue because they do not know if they will be in existence. Don't expect any public statements until the City of New York is clearer about what path they will take in reference to OASIS. The suggestion of sending a letter to the Borough Presidents office and copying the Health Committee could be a good idea. Dr. Smith suggested inviting all of the programs in our area to have a discussion about the issues that are of concern.

Ms Dukes stated that the problem of what happens when clients leave the clinics is not the clinic responsibility. Stephane Howze who was Executive Director of Harlem United and a former Committee member. If in a neighborhood there are allegations of drugs being sold the police should be called. In some instance they do have security inside of the facilities. When C. Virginia Fields was Borough President she involved the police precincts after a wave of complaints. The Borough Presidents office has a Community Outreach Staff and they can be engaged to see what they can do or recommend.

Committee member Cicely Harris who is a Prosecutor added that what is supposed to happen with the cclinics that the clinic is supposed to arrange transportation. After their treatment they are high and could be staggering about and usually someone should be there to take them from the clinic. Unfortunately that does not always happen. There is usually a narcotics set of cops so if there is a sell going on the cops are there to make an arrest. Here in Manhattan we don't have very many cops who are stationed outside of these clinics. It happens more often in the Bronx. A former police Sergeant from the Bronx is now in the 32nd precinct and Ms. Harris has a connection to her and she will reach out to her. MMPCIA mentioned that they had already meet with her. There should be cops outside these clinics especially in Harlem because there are so many clinics and Ms. Harris has personally witnessed sales outside of a clinic. The more complaints that are logged the more officers and patrols will be available at these clinics.

Ms. Jackson had been told that Community Boards have the ability to determine how many clinics and how many slots for those clinics are allowed in our community. Ms. Jackson was told that that decision lies with OASIS. Ms. Dukes stated she has been here on the committee three years and no one has come before this committee and asked about clinic numbers. Dr. Cheryl Smith pointed out that OASIS believes the number of spots have not increased in the last 5 years. According to them they are seeing a decrease in the capacity for these clinics. They may have 90 slots for example but there are not 90 patients they may only be at 50% capacity. Oasis has been working on an alternative to methadone that can be prescribed in the general practitioners office. That way it would not be necessary for a patient to go to a methadone clinic but instead go to a primary care provider to receive this alternative. Ms. Dukes stated that when Harlem United came before the committee they were not opening a new clinic they were expanding their service base with a bldg they purchased some time ago. Once the Dept of Health rolls out their new plan we should invite them to come before the Health Committee. Thanks to Dr. Smith for her work on this subject.

Welcome to new Board member Michelle Booker this is her first meeting.

This committee is on record as stating that we do not support any new mental health clinics in our catchem. We fight to keep Harlem Hosp open all the time why would we support this initiative . We did not give support letter. HH has a clinic. It seemed to be a financial decision for HU to open new bldg near the firehouse.

Now that the 32 and 28 precincts have new leadership we should have a meeting with the leadership to discuss our concerns. Soon after we meet with the precincts we should meet with the Borough Presidents office local staff.. we should also schedule a joint meeting and invite Oasis. . We will and an email tomorrow to see if Oasis is available for June our meeting.

Also since this is a safety issue as well we will extend an invitation to our Safety Committee for our June meeting.

Vice Chair Jennifer Jones will recirculate the moratorium on clinics so that it can be finalized .

Meeting Adjourned

*** NEXT MEETING: Monday June 16th at 6:30pm ***