



CITY OF NEW YORK
MANHATTAN COMMUNITY BOARD 10
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Parks Recreation & Transportation Committee Minutes

Wednesday, March 12th, 2014, 6:30pm

Hon. Deborah Gilliard, Chair
Hon. Karen Horry, Acting Chair
Hon. Daniel Clark, Co-Chair

Meeting began at 6:50 pm and was held in the 3rd floor conference room. The meeting was chaired by Hon. Karen Horry, Acting Chair.

Committee Members in attendance: Daniel Clark, Troy Gethers and Lupe Moreno. Melvin Christian and Deborah Gilliard, (Chair) were excused. A quorum was not present so no action items

Guests in attendance: Jonathan Riedel (227 Garden), Eduard Nunez (126th Street Garden & Apiary), Ryan Gaines(126th Street Garden & Apiary), Diego Quinones (Transportation Alternatives), Rene Calvo (Mandela Park), Connie Lee (Marcus Garvey Park Alliance), Susan Huck (MMPW/5th Avenue Takes Action), Paul Huck, Darrin Price (227 Garden), Kieishsha Y. Garnes (DPR), Laura MacDonald (North Star Neighborhood), Nadirah El Amin, Naomi Jones (NAN PAC), Nadirah Ahmed (Better Family Life).

Meeting was opened with a moment of silence for the victims of the tragic explosion and collapse of two buildings located at 1644 and 1646 Park Avenue between 116th and 117th Streets at approximately 9:30 am.

- I. **NYC DOT Updates (The agency did not provide representation at the meeting, however Josh Orzeck, Community Liaison provided an e-mailed update.)**
 - a) **Morningside Avenue** – The Committee is continuing to work with NYCDOT along with CB9 and community organizations to develop the best safety plan for the area from 116th through 126th Streets. NYCDOT’s current plan is to create pedestrian islands and left turn lanes, shorten pedestrian crosswalks, reduce speeding and crashes and improve connections to Morningside Park. CB10 is an advocate for street safety improvements in the Central Harlem community and throughout Manhattan, and very supportive of NYCDOT’s initiatives to make safety improvements. We have shared these sentiments with the NYCDOT, and the community. NYCDOT is working on a final improvement plan for the Morningside

area. In the interim, we have asked NYCDOT to put in any necessary temporary safety measures along the Morningside Avenue corridor, to alleviate any accidents, while NYCDOT's new plan or an alternate plan is ready for distribution. Temporary measures: flashing "caution" lights, Stop-signs, additional police patrol, alter the stop lights to decrease speeders, or the placement of speed bumps, etc. Community Board has taken precaution to vote on NYCDOT's recent safety improvements that were put in place on Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Blvd. and the Mt. Morris (Marcus Garvey) Park area, specifically, the removal of vehicle traffic lanes and the reduction of traffic lanes on these two corridors have created other problems. NYCDOT is working with the Mt. Morris Park community to correct the problems.

In view of the current safety concerns NYCDOT will be moving forward with the installation of a pedestrian signal and crosswalk at the island where 125th Street forks and Hancock Place begins. The agency advised that this safety measure is being implemented independent of the proposed street redesign. They have also advised that the necessary signal studies will not be completed until May or June which pushes the development of the revised presentation further off.

Outcome: CB10 is still awaiting NYCDOT's revised presentation. It was not ready this month, but as advised by the agency, will neither be ready by April and study results would extend into May or June. A new projected date for the revisions is pending at this time.

- b) **SBS M60 Impact on the Disabled and Seniors** – The elimination of bus stops on this route remains an on-going concern in the community. The issue is not that the SBS M60 is ADA compliant but rather that access to the bus stops is equally accessible to all residents without undue hardship. The M60 is the only bus that continues into Queens and on to LaGuardia Airport. NYCDOT maintains that it is their position that they will not reconsider the stopping pattern for the bus line.

Outcome: CB10 will continue its outreach to elected officials and advocacy groups to address this community concern.

- c) **Mount Morris Park West (MMPW)** – NYC DOT advised that a traffic signal was installed at 5th Avenue and 124th Street the week of February 9th. They are continuing to monitor traffic patterns in the area. Intersection studies are pending for MMPW at 123rd and 121st Streets. The agency is waiting for warmer weather when more people are using the park.

Community residents expressed that they are dissatisfied with the slow response to their safety concerns by NYCDOT and the minimal amount of revisions to the redesign. They have a petition signed by 1,000 residents in the area and have been in constant dialogue with the agency. The Committee has asked the area organizations to provide a synopsis of their correspondence and the issues that remain outstanding with respect to traffic safety in the area.

There were also members of the community who felt that there were no outstanding traffic issues with the area and that they found traffic to be flowing smoothly. A letter was submitted signed by 20 residents of the area indicating that they were pleased with NYCDOT's response to requested revisions and that conditions were vastly improved.

Outcome: Committee has asked MMPW community organizations to provide a list of changes made by NYCDOT in response to community concerns and what they deem as still hazardous with respect to the street redesign.

Presentations

- a) **Community Garden, 109 West 126th Street** - The proposed garden is located at 109 West 126th Street (between Malcolm X and Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Boulevards) - Block 1911, Lot 26- and is 0.041 acres. The group is requesting a letter of support to transform the city-owned lot, which is proximal to the Corner Social Restaurant, into an apiary garden. The project vision is to create a garden segmented into (1) composting, (2) an education/art garden for youth ages 6-9, (3) a community garden with 4'x4'x1' raised beds and (4) urban bee-keeping with the support of the NYC Beekeepers Association – Beekeepers Apprenticeship Program. The bee hives will be kept at the back of the lot to ensure safety.

The Committee and community raised excellent questions in response to this new concept for the area. There was particular concern about the safety of residents and patrons of the area and how the bees would be managed. The group has been invited to the April meeting to address the safety concerns and details on how they would manage the bees.

- b) **Outcome:** The Committee advised that community support should be evidenced by submission of letters of support from local tenant organizations, block associations, resident petition, schools, religious institutions, businesses, etc. The Committee also requested a letter from the group explaining their understanding of any restrictions or conditions governing the use of the property by the responsible city agency.
- c) **Community Garden, 227** – The proposed garden is located at 227 W. 115th Street NY, NY 10026 (between Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. and Malcolm X Boulevards) – Block 1831, Lot 16 – and is 0.043 acres. The group proposes to transform the derelict lot into a community garden with Green Thumb designation. Jonathan Riedel presented to the PRT Committee's February 2014 meeting. The group is requesting a letter of support to submit with their Green Thumbs application

The Committee advised that community support should be evidenced by submission of letters of support from local tenant organizations, block associations, resident petition, schools and religious institutions, businesses, etc. The Committee also

requested a letter from the group explaining their understanding of any restrictions or conditions governing the use of the property by the responsible city agency. The group submitted a petition signed by 24 individuals – (residences were not listed) in addition to documentation of an extensive history to secure the city-owned property.

Outcome: The Committee finds the project to be favorable, however, requested documentation in support of the proposed project (prior to recommending the letter of support) remains pending.

d) Vision Zero – Transportation Alternatives presenter Diego Quinones explained a power point on Mayor DeBlasio’s administration’s stance on public safety as a highest priority. The Vision Zero Action Plan is a comprehensive interagency development that is comprised by a plethora of specific initiatives designed to eliminate deadly crashes, particularly involving pedestrians.

The Committee and Community raised concerns regarding the alarming statistics used to substantiate the occurrence and frequency of crash rates, injuries and fatalities in the CB10 area. The community expressed that the street redesigns are more a matter of urban planning and infrastructural change than traffic safety.

Outcome: The Committee requested the study that generated the data used in the presentation so as to inform the Committee with respect to traffic safety in the CB10 area in going forward, which Temporary Alternatives has agreed to provide.

Announcements

As a result of continued dialogue between CB10 and NYCDOT with respect to hazardous conditions resulting from street redesign on Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. Blvd., the agency has agreed to commit \$2 million in federal funds from a Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) to convert the existing painted medians between 153rd and 118th Streets into concrete. NYCDOT will look for additional funding to convert the remaining painted medians located from 118th Street to 110th Street.

The Committee is continuing its work on developing a District Needs Statement.

There were no voting items.

Adjournment – meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.