

**Community Board 8
Webex Virtual Meeting
April 8, 2021
6:15 PM**

Members Present

Kiermoni Allison
Glinda Andrews
Lisa Atkinson
Princess Benn-James
Gail Branch-Muhammad
Robert Callahan
Nora Daniel
James Ellis
Kevin Farley
Andrea Ferris
Drew Gabriel
Tamika Gibbs
Nizjoni Granville
Igenie Harris-Blenman
Marva Henry
Xeerxeema Jordan
Sarah Lazur
Mireille Lemaine
Kalvis Mikelsteins
Robert Puca
Yahya Raji
Adam Sachs
Brian Saunders
Mark Thurton
Greg Todd
Ethel Tyus
Gib Veconi_
Kimberly Watson
Irsa Weatherspoon
Sharon Wedderburn
Robert Witherwax_
Deborah Young
Vilma Zuniga

Members Absent/Excused

Desmond Atkins
Wayne Bailey
Julia Boyd
John Buckholz
Hanjy Charles
Helen Coley
Fred Frazier
Regina Kinsey
Elaine Mahoney
Meredith Staton
Karmisha Superville
Audrey Taitt-Hall
Yves Vilus

Elected Officials Present

Assemblywoman Stefani Zinerman, 56th AD

Elected Official Representatives

Raul Rothblatt, Councilman Robert Cornegy
Orlando Ross, Congresswoman Yvette Clarke
Kim Robinson, Councilwoman Alicka Ampry-Samuel
Inna Guzenfeld, Boro President Eric Adams
Petula Hanley, Assemblywoman Stefani Zinerman

Agency Liaisons

Damaris Falero, Dept. of Buildings

CB8 Staff

Michelle George, District Manager
Julia Neale, Community Coordinator

The regular meeting of Community Board 8 was called to order at 6:20 PM by Ms. Ethel Tyus, Chairperson. She asked for roll call.

Acceptance of Minutes – The minutes of the last meeting were accepted with any necessary corrections.

Correspondence – CB 8 newsletter and other information was digitally shared with the community.

Elected Official Representatives

Ms. Kim Robinson from Councilwoman Alicka Ampry-Samuel’s office announced that on April 7th, the Councilwoman Chaired a join meeting on public housing with the Chair of the Committee on the Aging. The Councilwoman continues to field a number of complaints on school closures, and as such, the Mayor’s office is currently reviewing data to amend the school closure policy. So far, there have only been 14 capital project requests received for schools, but the state of schools indicate that many more are needed. The Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) application period is currently open.

Ms. Robinson also provided information on the decriminalization of cannabis in the state. Individuals 21 years or older can legally hold up to 3oz on their person at any time legally. Anyone under the age of 21, it is still illegal to possess or consume cannabis.

The NYPD exam is currently open. The Councilwoman’s district office remains closed to walk-ins, but staff is available via telephone at 718-953-3097.

Mr. Raul Rothblatt from Councilman Robert Cornegy’s office offered congratulations to Rob Fields, who was recently replaced as CEO of the Weeksville Heritage Center. He stated that it is imperative to acknowledge Mr. Fields’ contributions while also welcoming the new head of Weeksville, Dr. Raymond Codrington.

The City Council has passed some criminal justice reforms. There were many discussions on potential police reforms, including possibly a new phone number to call instead of 911 as a catch-all. For instance, someone reporting a mental health issue should not be calling 911 to dispatch the police. If an alternative number is available, social workers could be dispatched instead.

Additionally, Mr. Rothblatt announced that Ranked Choice Voting is coming in June for the primary election. Councilman Cornegy continues to sponsor Wellness Wednesdays, distributing food in the community. As an update on Local law 152, Mr. Rothblatt stated that the Local Law puts some burdens for gas line inspections and other things on homeowners. It will be a big change for many people. Due to the number of properties affected, community boards rotate, and CB 8 will not have to file inspections until 2022. He stated that despite the burden, gas explosions still do happen periodically, and it is important that people are informed.

Mr. Orland Ross from Congresswoman Yvette Clarke’s office wished everyone a happy spring season and provided an update on the American Rescue Plan (ARP). The ARP is designed to provide funds to get the country out of the darkness of the Covid-19 pandemic. An event was recently held by the Congresswoman to detail the many specifics of the ARP, and can be viewed at any time online via https://www.facebook.com/watch/live/?v=734640717226967&ref=watch_permalink.

Additionally, President Joe Biden has unveiled an ambitious plan to get all Americans and those within our borders vaccinated against Covid-19. Vaccinations are key to the country re-opening without restrictions.

Mr. Ross provided the following links to all information regarding what the federal government is doing to assist with Covid recovery. For instance, New York State will receive almost \$9 billion of the \$122 billion available for school re-opening. The Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) has been bolstered to include more businesses not previously eligible for funds. Links to all materials are below.

THE AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN DECODED:

<https://www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/department-education-announces-american-rescue-plan-funds-all-50-states-puerto-rico-and-district-columbia-help-schools-reopen>.

Paycheck Protection Program:

<https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/loans/covid-19-relief-options/paycheck-protection-program>.

Get help with your PPP Loan:

<https://www.sba.gov/funding-programs/loans/covid-19-relief-options/paycheck-protection-program/get-help-your-ppp-loan>.

Vaccination Fact Sheet:

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/03/11/fact-sheet-president-biden-to-announce-all-americans-to-be-eligible-for-vaccinations-by-may-1-puts-the-nation-on-a-path-to-get-closer-to-normal-by-july-4th/>.

Press Release from Congresswoman Yvette Clarke's Office:

<https://clarke.house.gov/category/press-releases/>.

Ms. Tyus thanked the elected official representatives for their announcements and invited Assemblywoman Stefani Zinerman to say a few words.

Assemblywoman Stefani Zinerman, 56th Assembly District

Assemblywoman Zinerman announced that the state passed a \$212 billion budget recently to address Covid recovery. Due to the amount of information, an eblast will be sent from her office in the coming weeks with detailed information.

The Assemblywoman provided brief yet specific data on some portions of the budget that was passed and what they will mean for Brooklyn and the Downstate community (New York City) overall. In brief, she mentioned that education aid was increased with the help of federal officials, and New York City schools will get an additional allotment of funds independent of the state. Legislators tried to ensure with the passage of the budget that the basics were included and necessities left out in years past was funded.

Ms. Tyus thanked Ms. Zinerman for the extensive report and asked for a report from the following committees:

Land Use – Ms. Ethel Tyus, Chairperson

The Land Use Committee met on Thursday, April 1, 2021 via Webex. The committee discussed the following applications:

1. LPC Application for Certificate of Appropriateness (LPC-21-06488): 165A St. Marks Avenue (Prospect Heights Historic District)

Graydon Yearick R.A. presented his client's plan for their 2-story, 1-family neo-Grec style row-house (built c. 1877) at 165A St Marks Ave. The application is to construct a 500 SF 2-story rear yard addition. The existing extension will be demolished. Questions were voiced by PHNDC members on the pea green color, finishes, and purpose of the under-stair storage. On motion made by Mr. Ellis to support the proposal as presented with a second by Ms. Iselin, the Committee voted 13 in favor with two against and three abstentions. We hope the full Board will support the Committee's recommendation. The LPC hearing is scheduled for 4/20/21.

Mr. Farley made a motion to support the committee's recommendation. The motion was seconded by Dr. Lazur and carried with a final tally of 27 in favor, 0 opposed, with 1 abstention.

2. LPC Application for Certificate of Appropriateness, 120 Underhill Avenue (Prospect Heights Historic District)

Terence Hairston, R.A. presented his client's plan for their 4-story, 2-family Romanesque/Renaissance Revival style row house (built c. 1896) at 120 Underhill Ave. The application is to construct a 17'10" x 13' horizontal rear enlargement of the parlor floor (1st floor) supported by columns with a 10' foot deck. The existing deck would be demolished and the rear stained-glass transom windows may be removed. The deck will be partially visible from Prospect Pl. The proposed deck would also be supported by columns and would have a railing extending the width of the enlargement and a stair from the deck to the rear yard. The 2d floor would have a deck over the proposed 1st floor addition. A PHNDC member asked about shading over the ground floor rental indicating that per the building code, the maximum permitted extension is 8' to allow for air circulation.

On motion made by Mr. Veconi and a second by Ms. Collins, the Committee voted 13 in favor of withholding support for the proposal in favor of a reorganization of the bulk resulting in a two-story rear yard extension of lesser depth, with zero against, and four abstentions. The Applicant initially indicated that the proposal did not have an LPC hearing date; and stated an interest in returning to the Community Board with an updated design. Subsequently, Mr. Hairston wrote the Board Office to indicate that he has an LPC hearing scheduled for 4/13/21. We hope the full Board will support the Committee's recommendation.

There were a few questions about the overhang, and Mr. Veconi informed the Board that addressing the issues might be an issue for the Dept. for Buildings to handle rather than the LPC. The reason for this is that the overhang would prevent light from entering the lower unit, and the DOB has specific guidelines for light availability for rental units. Additionally, Mr. Veconi posited that the owner and architect engaged in "interesting finagling" of the use of the FAR for the extension. By putting the extension on columns, it does not affect or count against their FAR. So far, the owner and developer has expressed no interest in changing their plans.

Mr. Veconi made a motion to support the committee's recommendation to withhold support for the project. The motion was seconded by Ms. Gibbs and carried unanimously with 28 in favor.

The committee also had the following **discussion items**:

1. Preliminary Review of Private Rezoning Proposal for 1034-1042 Atlantic Ave.

Messrs. Elie Pariente and Nick Liberis (Archimaera) presented a second review of the pending ULURP application for a new building on Atlantic Ave between Classon and Washington Aves. in the M-CROWN Neighborhood Rezoning area. The project seeks the following zoning changes from the current M1-1: 1034-1042 Atlantic Avenue to a mix of C6-3A and R7A, bringing the overall density to 7.5 FAR; and 1035 Pacific Street to R7A with a 4.6 FAR.

In Mr. Pariente's absence due to internet connection interruptions, Mr. Liberis stated that the project is supported by Council Maj. Leader Cumbo, an assertion that remains to be confirmed. A multi-story 'Praying Hands' mural is planned for the west façade. The project will include a youth center using the cellar and 1st floors on the Pacific St side with a second small lobby on the Atlantic Ave side. The application has not yet been filed.

2. Preliminary Discussion of Private Rezoning Application for 870-888 Atlantic Avenue

Richard Lobel, and Nick Liberis (Archimaera) presented a private rezoning application for their client Yoel Teitelbaum. The proposal seeks to convert 10 adjoining lots (approx. 20K SF) from M1-1 to C6-3A with 69 MIH option to be determined for total of 250 units with a total FAR of 8.5. Project would have 20' wide sidewalks and reduced parking from 86 (required) to 40 (proposed); and is seeking a complete parking waiver. The applicant is seeking to maximize the number of affordable dwelling units. The plans were provided on 3/26/21, less than a week before the meeting; and were not widely shared with the Committee.

3. Committee Hearing on ULURP Application for a Private Rezoning of 840 Atlantic Ave (C210249ZMK and N210250ZRK)

Mr. Gib Veconi presented recommendations for conforming the proposed project to the CB 8 vision for the M-CROWN Neighborhood Rezoning. Those recommendations included reducing the zoning for the portion of the area fronting Atlantic Ave. from C6-3X (9.7 FAR) to C4-5D (maximum 5.6 FAR with 4.2 commercial), i.e. 11 stories. This would align the project more closely with the Community Board's M-CROWN proposal for mixed-use commercial/residential density along Atlantic Avenue. The full set of recommendations are available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_8A1ROuzLpg&ab_channel=BrooklynCommunityBoard8 (starting at 2:41:57).

Stephanie Marazzi and Benjamin Stark repeated part of their presentation to the Committee in March 2021. Mr. Stark indicated that the project was certified with MIH Option 2 but is considering MIH Options 1 and 3. Committee members asked questions on: whether the project would use tax abatements, how the parking garage would be managed, trash collection, and what traffic mitigation measures will be deployed. The owner, Tom Li said he will use the 421A tax abatement (which has a time limit to affordability). The CB 8 Committee Hearing will be continued at the May Land Use Committee Meeting on May 6, 2021 with a full Board Hearing in May 13, 2021.

The next Land Use Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, May 6, 2021 at 6:15 PM via Webex virtual platform, details of which can be found on the CB 8 website.

SLA and Sidewalk Café Review Committee (SLAC) – Mr. James Ellis, Chairperson; Mr. Robert Witherwax, Vice Chair

The SLAC Committee met on Monday, April 5, 2021 via Webex. The committee discussed the following liquor license applications:

Renewals

- Drink, 786 Franklin Avenue –Full (patio/deck, DJ)
- Basil, 268 Kingston Avenue –Full (sidewalk café)
- Cent’anni, 724 Franklin Avenue –Full (backyard)
- Washington Tavern, 434 Park Place –Full (backyard)
- Sweet Chick, 636 Carlton Avenue –Full (sidewalk café)
- Piquant, 259 Flatbush Avenue – Beer/Wine/Cider

The committee had the following recommendations for support of all applications:

Basil: remove outdoor speakers. Applicant complied and submitted photos documenting the removal of the speakers.

Washington Tavern: Maintain reduction of outdoor space capacity, set at 60 in 2013 and reaffirmed in 2019 when the business ownership changed. Install signage reminding patrons to be mindful of their neighbors and keep noise levels down.

Sweet Chick: Amend the hours of the sidewalk café to close at 11 PM weekdays and midnight weekends.

The committee voted to support all six liquor license renewal applications in hopes that the full Board supports its recommendation.

One of the neighbors near Washington Tavern asked the Board if it could suggest to the owners to place large signs in and around the establishment requesting patrons be mindful of their neighbors. This would go a long way in preventing future problems while ensuring the establishment takes the concerns seriously.

Ms. Tyus stated that Basil’s sidewalk café has been an issue for long time in terms of blocking the sidewalk and not leaving sufficient space for pedestrians. She asked if this was brought up for consideration at the meeting and was told that it was not.

Mr. Veconi made a motion to support the committee’s recommendation. The motion was seconded by Ms. Weatherspoon and carried with a final tally of 29 in favor, 0 opposed, with 0 abstentions.

New Applications

The committee also heard the following new applications:

1. Wi Café and Wine Bar, 1524 Bergen Street – Wine/Beer/Cider

Details:

- Hours: 8 AM to 10 PM daily
- Garden/grounds with 3 tables and 12 seats with the same operating hours
- Indoor seating 10 tables with 40 seats; one bar with 4 seats. Max capacity 74
- Interested in hiring locally

The committee voted 10 in favor of support for the application as presented and hopes the full Board supports its recommendation.

Dr. Lazur made a motion to support the committee's recommendation. The motion was seconded by Mr. Witherwax and carried unanimously with 27 in favor.

2. No. 7 Restaurant, 591 Vanderbilt Avenue – Full

Details:

- Patron capacity 42, one bar with 12 seats; 5 tables with 2 to 6 seats each.
- Hours of Operation Sunday Noon to 11 PM; Tuesday thru Thursday 5 PM to 1 AM; Friday 5 PM to 2 AM; Saturday Noon to 2 AM.
- Backyard with capacity of 25 patrons to operate Sunday Noon to 10 PM; Tuesday thru Thursday 5 PM to 11 PM; Friday 5 PM to midnight; Saturday noon to midnight
- Three speakers interior, up to 7 employees per shift
- "Removal" application, meaning the applicant is relocating to a different address with the same principals and same method of operations.
- Of note: applicant appeared before CB 8 in March for a different location but elected to choose a different one due to possible complication of the 200-foot rule.

The committee voted 10 in favor of supporting the application in hopes that the full Board support its recommendation.

Ms. Gibbs made a motion to support the committee's recommendation. The motion as seconded by Mr. Mikelsteins and carried unanimously with 31 in favor.

3. Little Zelda, 728 Franklin Avenue – Beer/Wine/Cider

Details:

- Hour of operation Noon to 2 AM daily
- 5 tables with 10 seats; 1 bar with 2 seats

The committee voted 8 in favor, 1 opposed, with 1 abstention to support the beer/wine/cider application and hopes the full Board supports its recommendation.

There were a few questions regarding the previous operation of the establishment. The Board was informed that it is a new owner from the one previously and although this applicant has no experience with a bar or restaurant, there is less trepidation over the license because it is a beer and wine license.

Pertaining to questions about the late closing hour, Mr. Ellis stated that the State Liquor Authority allows service until 4 AM, so 2 AM is reasonable. Mr. Veconi stated that due to the fact that it is a beer and wine license rather than a full, it does not prompt the 500-foot exception, which gives the Board extra leverage for stipulations.

Mr. Veconi made a motion to support the committee's recommendation. The motion was seconded by Mr. Todd and carried with a final tally of 30 in favor, 0 opposed, with 1 abstention.

Defacto Denials

--Lincoln Station, 409 Lincoln Place --Full

--Boeuf & Bun, 271 Kingston Avenue --Wine/beer/cider

The committee voted 10 in favor to send a letter to the NYS Liquor Authority stating that we do not support the renewal application on the basis that the applicant did not appear before the committee or submit paperwork on their renewal. The committee hopes the full Board supports its recommendation.

Ms. Tyus questioned whether or not the applicants are generally bad stewards, thus leading to the denial. She was informed that there is no correlation, but just the fact that they have defied protocol to submit updated paperwork leads to the denial.

Ms. Gibbs made a motion to support the committee's recommendation. The motion was seconded by Ms. Wedderburn and carried with a final tally of 26 in favor, 1 opposed, and 3 abstentions.

The next meeting of the SLAC Committee will be held on Monday, May 3, 2021 at 6:15 PM via Webex, details of which can be found on the CB 8 website.

Nominating Committee – Mr. Adam Sachs, Chairperson

Mr. Sachs, Chair of the Nominating Committee, thanked all members that responded to the survey for feedback on recommendations for offices. Based on the survey results and review of eligibility requirements, the slate presented is as follows:

Slate for Board officers for the 2021 to 2023 term:

Chairperson - Irsa Weatherspoon and Robert Witherwax

1st Vice Chairperson - Gail Branch-Muhammad

2nd Vice Chairperson - Deborah Young

3rd Vice Chairperson - Nizjoni Granville

Secretary - Princess Benn-James

Treasurer - Yahya Raji

Sergeant-At-Arms - Drew Gabriel and Sarah Lazur

Mr. Sachs asked for nominations from the floor and none were given. Ms. Wedderburn made a motion to accept the slate of candidates. The motion was seconded by Ms. Granville and carried unanimously.

Mr. Sachs stated that elections will be held in May, and voting will be done via mailed paper ballot to members and a digital ballot paying special attention to anyone that does not submit their paper ballot. Ballots will be mailed to members with a stamped return envelope that will be opened and reviewed by the Nominating Committee on the day of the Board meeting.

Seniors – Ms. Gail Branch-Muhammad, Chairperson

Ms. Branch-Muhammad announced that the Seniors Committee met the previous evening and had a Presentation on Ranked Choice Voting to impress the need to have a voting plan, know the candidates, and understand the implications if you do not utilize your full voting voice.

The next Seniors meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 5, 2021 via Free Conference Call.

Housing (Advocacy) – Ms. Nizjoni Granville, Chairperson; Mr. Adam Sachs, Vice Chairperson

The Housing (Advocacy) Committee will meet next Wednesday, where the committee will re-visit Council Speaker Corey Johnson's proposed zoning restructuring vision. Dr. Lazur announced that Councilman Robert Cornegy signed onto the tenant right to counsel bill making the letter that the committee had agreed to send unnecessary.

The next meeting of the Housing (Advocacy) Committee will be on May 12, 2021 at 6:15 PM via Webex, details of which can be found on the CB8 website.

Economic Development – Mr. Brian Saunders, Chairperson

Mr. Saunders announced that the Economic Development Committee had been on hiatus for a few months as he contended with personal issues, but the committee will resume in May. He made a public call for members and participants to help brainstorm ideas for CB 8's Covid recovery.

Health – Ms. Tamika Gibbs and Ms. Elaine Mahoney, Co-Chairs

The Health Committee will meet on Thursday, April 16th at 5:15 via Webex, details of which can be found on the CB8 website. Ms. Gibbs also made a public call for members and participants as the committee has been blessed to have numerous informational presentations in the last few months but not enough participation.

Environment, Sanitation, Transportation (EST) – Mr. Robert Witherwax, Chairperson; Ms. Irsa Weatherspoon, Vice Chairperson

The EST Committee will meet on Tuesday, April 27th at 6:15 PM via Webex. Mr. Witherwax announced that an important transportation zoning application will be discussed at the EST meeting. He stated that as many zoning issues are brought to the Land Use Committee, the EST committee will start discussing applications as well as we have seen over the last year just how vital street usage is.

Parks – Ms. Glinda Andrews, Chairperson; Mr. Greg Todd, Vice Chairperson

Ms. Andrews announced the Brower Park Earth Day event will be held on Sunday, April 18th, 2021 3pm to 5pm. Additionally, Friends of Brower Park will be holding Part 2 of its 3 Part Series Discussion on Urban Gardening on April 24, 2021 from 10:30am-11:30am via Zoom. You can participate by going to zoom.com and entering meeting number 590 562 6361 with passcode Brower1891. For more information on any of the events, email contactus@friendsofbrowerpark.org.

Public Safety – Mr. Mark Thurton, Chairperson; Mr. Desmond Atkins, Vice Chairperson

Mr. Thurton announced that at the last Public Safety committee meeting, the committee discussed human trafficking and domestic violence. The next meeting will be April 26th and the committee will discuss some ways to best handle the new marijuana law.

Youth and Education – Ms. Nora Daniel, Interim Chairperson

Ms. Henry announced that the Youth and Education Committee has been meeting weekly to plan the Y&E series to meet the needs of the young people in the community. The first event in the series will be held on April 29th and will feature information on the music industry. The event is open to high schoolers and will be a virtual session from 4-6 pm, with five professionals from the industry scheduled for the panel.

Ms. Tyus thanked the committee chairpersons for their reports and opened the floor for Old Business.

Under Old Business, Ms. Tyus issued an apology to Sharon Wedderburn for abruptly cutting her off during her announcement that she is running for the 35th Council District. She stated that she assumed Ms. Wedderburn was attempting to provide a website, which would have been considered electioneering. Additionally, Ms. Tyus stated that while she is not offering excuses, she wants to make it plainly clear that in allowing people to come before us as a city agency to say, “vote for me, or what I can do as an elected official,” it is electioneering and a potential conflict of interest for the Board and consequently not something that we want to do.

Mr. Witherwax clarified that apology for the Board members and residents alike, informing the difference between electioneering and announcements of candidacy. He stated that Ms. Wedderburn was not electioneering and was merely announcing her candidacy for office, which is perfectly fine under public comments and only public comments. He further clarified that the previous month, another member was given much more leeway to announce her candidacy for office and provided much more information while the meeting was continuously interrupted for the announcement to occur outside of public comments. After a brief exchange between a few

members and Ms. Tyus, it was understood that during public comments, candidates can announce their candidacy and the main tenants of their candidacy without saying the words vote for me. This allows the community an opportunity to meet the candidates and learn a little about them, which is one of the touted benefits of ranked choice voting.

Additionally, under Old Business, Ms. Nix Laemmle stated that she is a neighbor of 1035 Pacific Street and was under the impression that the property's zoning change would be voted on at the meeting. She stated that she desires to be better informed on the agendas moving forward so that she does not share erroneous information with her neighbors as the item was actually not being voted on despite her telling her neighbors that it would be. She asked to be added to the CB 8 mailing list, which she was by District office staff. Ms. George instructed her to complete an application for membership with the Boro President after Ms. Laemmle expressed interest in membership.

Ms. Tyus thanked Ms. Laemmle for her comments and opened the floor for Public Comments.

Mr. Jonathan Marable announced the services provided by Brooklyn Chamber of Commerce with the NYC Dept. of Small Business Services.

With no additional information to be discussed, Ms. Tyus adjourned the meeting at 8:35 PM. The next meeting will be held on Thursday, May 13, 2021 at 6:15 PM via Webex, details of which can be found on the CB 8 website.