

**Community Board 8
Co-Cathedral of St. Joseph
856 Pacific Street
Brooklyn, NY 11213**

October 9, 2025

Members Present

Akua Aidoo
Sharon Alexis-Pierre
Princess Benn-James
Gail Branch-Muhammad
Barbara Cofield
Drew Gabriel
Tamika Gibbs
Mohammad Hassan
Jamell Henderson
Tafari John-King
Jennifer Jordan
Frances Langley
Robert Lapointe
Dr. Sarah Lazur
Lisa Maldonado
Kwasi Mensah
Mimi Mitchell
Fior Ortiz-Joyner
Robert Puca
Yahya Raji
Conor Ross
Ezra Roth
Brian Saunders
Robin Smith
Meredith Staton
Lesley Steele
Dina Tate
Katie Taylor
Dana Thompson
Mark Thurton
Briana Uwa
Gib Veconi
Kimberly Watson
Irsa Weatherspoon
Sharon Wedderburn
Regina Wilson
Robert Witherwax
Deborah Young

Members Absent/Excused

Isaac Andino
Peter Anekwe
Dian Duke
Benny Faygen
William Meehan
Taraya Pettway
Anika Roach
Ryan Tucker
Esmond Turnbull

Elected Officials Present

Senator Jabari Brisport, 25th Senatorial District
Councilmember Darlene Mealy, 41st Council District

Elected Official Representatives

Sean Gurl – Office of Robert Carroll
Tamesha Thompson – Office of Councilwoman Mealy
Khalid Jemmott– Office of Senator Myrie
Karen Chambers– Office of District Attorney Eric Gonzalez
Adrienne Williams – Office of Assemblymember Latrice Walker
Karen Narefsky – Office of Assemblymember Phara Souffrant-Forrest
Ethan Nash – Brooklyn Borough Presidents Office
Tendai Watkins – Office of Assemblymember Stefani Zinerman
Daniel Hartley – Office of Governor Kathy Hochul

Agency Representatives

Tim Anderson – City Council Planning & Land Use
Gabrial Mizrachi – MTA /NYC Transit
Tamesha Thompson – NYC Council
Anthony Dremmond – MTA/NYC Transit
Emily Riquelne – Dept. Of Transportation
Alicia Pritchard – Brooklyn Public Library

CB8 Staff Present

Michelle George, District Manager
Julia Neale, Community Coordinator

The regular meeting of Community Board 8 was called to order at 6:10PM by Ms. Irsa Weatherspoon, Chairperson. She welcomed public comments from the elected officials and representatives.

Office of Senator Jabari Brisport

The office opened applications for both nonprofit discretionary grants and brick-and-mortar funding and distributed “This Home Is Not For Sale” deed-theft door hangers to help residents signal and report fraud. Staff previewed a deed-theft legislative package they’re preparing to introduce and encourage constituents to share case details for referrals. They also flagged headwinds in the coming state budget, noting potential federal cuts and an Albany push to raise revenue by taxing high earners. Upcoming outreach includes a housing empowerment legal clinic, a NYCHA voter-registration canvass, an Oct 21st Central Brooklyn job fair with NYS DOL, and a volunteer weekend on Oct 25th.

Office of Assemblyman Robert Carroll

The office promoted a neighborhood sustainability push with a free compost-bin giveaway and invited residents to a Nov 12th mobile mammogram bus for on-site screenings. Staff encouraged signups through their constituent services channel and reminded attendees that slots can fill quickly. They also asked community groups to share the notices with seniors and caregivers. Questions about additional health screenings were noted for follow-up.

Office of Councilwoman Darlene Mealy

The team highlighted a shredding event and Action Center legal advice clinics focused on housing and consumer issues. They encouraged residents with ongoing cases to bring documentation so attorneys can provide concrete next steps. Additional fall programming and dates are listed in the office newsletter. Staff invited block associations and faith partners to co-host pop-ups where demand is high.

Office of Brooklyn District Attorney

The office outlined near-term outreach for housing support, including a housing empowerment legal clinic, a voter-registration canvass in NYCHA developments on Saturday, October 8th, a Central Brooklyn job fair on Tuesday, October 21st in partnership with other elected officials and the NYS Department of Labor, and a volunteer weekend on Saturday, October 25th; constituents were invited to contact the office to participate.

Office of Assemblyman Zellnor Myrie

The office announced an Oct 21st library event and an Oct 25th fall health/dental festival that will include a student showcase and free resources. Staff reiterated their continued focus on deed-theft prevention and tenant support, and asked attendees to report suspected scams promptly. They also previewed fall constituent-service hours and urged residents to subscribe to email updates for time-sensitive items. Community groups were invited to table at upcoming events.

Office of Assemblywoman Latrice Walker

The office reviewed the early-voting timeline and announced an Oct 18th advisory board meeting. They will host an informational session covering the six ballot proposals aiming for neutral education and Q&A. They encouraged residents to submit questions in advance so the presentation can address common points of confusion. The office also reminded new voters and recent movers to verify their registration status.

Chairperson Weatherspoon thanked everyone for the updates and asked for an acceptance of the September minutes.

Acceptance of Minutes

Ms. Wedderburn made a motion to accept the September minutes with any necessary corrections. The motion was seconded by Dr. Lazur and passed with no objection.

Chairperson Weatherspoon opened the public hearing and asked the secretary to read the item from the Executive Committee.

Public Hearing Items

Executive Committee

Mr. Ross stated that the Executive Committee met on May 28, 2025 at the CB8 District Office and discussed the removal of Mr. Esmond Turnbull from Community Board 8 for non-attendance.

In terms of a member's removal, the Board's By-Laws state specifically:

§5.5: (c) An appointed member may be removed from the Board for cause by a majority vote of the Board, only after:

- (i) a two-thirds majority of the members of the Executive Committee present and entitled to vote recommends a removal hearing,
- (ii) service of written charges and specifications to the appointed member, at least 30 days prior to a scheduled hearing,
- (iii) a scheduled hearing before the Board, at a general or special meeting, at which the appointed member shall have the right to respond to the charges and specifications, the right to counsel, and the right to produce witnesses or evidence on his or her behalf. The notice of the meeting shall include the hearing on its agenda.

§5.5: (d) Circumstances which may constitute cause for removal shall include, but shall not be limited to:

- (i) Non-attendance at four of the previous six consecutive general or special Board meetings
- (ii) substantial non-attendance or non-participation in two (2) committees of the Board
- (iii) substantial record of missed roll call votes at the Board meeting

(iv) conduct detrimental to the Board

Charges against Mr. Turnbull are as follows:

- Non-attendance and participation in general meetings
- Mr. Turnbull has attended only 2 of the 8 general meetings held in calendar year 2025 (February and April).
- Non-participation in at least two standing or ad-hoc committees
- To date, Mr. Turnbull has recorded attendance at only 3 total committee meetings since being appointed to the Board in May 2024.
- Mr. Turnbull has not selected two committees to serve.

Additionally, Mr. Turnbull was sent a letter earlier this year asking him to recommit to his membership considering his declining attendance. District office staff also had several conversations with him about his poor attendance, membership expectations, and the requirements of committee participation.

As such, the Executive Committee recommends the removal of Mr. Turnbull on the aforementioned grounds, and hopes the full Board supports its recommendation.

Ms. Ortiz-Joyner made a motion to accept the committee's recommendation, the motion was seconded by Ms. Langley. The final vote was 27 in favor with no abstentions and none against.

Housing and Land Use Committee – Sharon Wedderburn, Chairperson

The Housing and Land Use (HLU) committee met on Thursday, October 2, 2025. The committee reviewed an application for a certificate of appropriateness for a dwelling at 302 Prospect Place in the Prospect Heights Historic District.

The proposed exterior alterations to the existing townhouse include:

- A new 2 story rear yard addition of 15 feet in depth from the existing rear wall
- A new 1 story addition 27.5 deep and an expansion to the width of the lot
- Mechanical plumbing, electrical work in the existing townhouse and new additions
- The addition is planned for use as a single-family private residence.

A representative of the Prospect Heights Neighborhood Development Council (PHNDC) indicated that after reviewing the applicant's revision. PHNDC did not see the changes sufficient to alter their previous letter dated September 4, 2025.

This was the applicant's second appearance before CB8's Housing and Land Use committee. After receiving feedback from both HLU committee members and from CB8's General Meeting in September Chairperson Weatherspoon tabled the item to allow the applicant an opportunity return to present changes/alterations to the project.

Key elements were presented to the committee members and community members include:

- Reducing the height of the roof extension down so that there would be no visibility and pushed back from the street with the exception of the FDNY required ladder to the roof and the mechanicals. This results in an 8 ft high ceiling in the addition.

Key comments expressed from committee members and the community at large included:

- The visibility of the rooftop addition from an inquiry of the new interior configuration of the dwelling;
- A concern that an additional rooftop would extend the erosion of the block's donut that existed at landmarking;
- When one purchases or lives in a landmarked community exterior changes would diminish the "quality" of that community. Buy what you want and don't change our community

A motion was made and seconded. The motion stated: The committee supports the application as presented.

The committee voted 12 in favor, 6 opposed, with 3 abstentions to support the application as presented including the rooftop addition and the 15-foot rear yard, two story extension. The committee hopes the full Board supports its recommendation.

A motion made by Mr. Ross to support the committee's recommendation. The motion was seconded by Mr. Veconi and carried with a vote of 19 in favor, 3 against and 8 abstentions.

Separately, the Board revisited two letters previously endorsed regarding Atlantic Yards and a homeowner tax-credit initiative. Members agreed to transmit both letters, including a request that the Governor sign the tax-credit bill already passed by both chambers, with discussion focusing on the importance of earmarking resources locally and clarifying HPD's role in implementation. Gib Veconi made a motion to send a letter to Governor regarding the tax credit initiative, the motion was seconded by Dr. Lazar and carried with a vote of 33 in favor, no abstentions and none against. Mr. Veconi also made a motion to send a letter to the Governor about Atlantic Yards. The motion was seconded by Robert Witherwax and carried after brief debate on timelines and reporting expectations. The final vote was 35 in favor with 1 against and no abstentions.

Cannabis Committee

The Cannabis Committee met on Wednesday, October 8, 2025 to discuss the adult use retail dispensary application for 994 Atlantic Avenue.

Details of the application are as follows:

- Take N Toke Herbal Healing Solutions Inc. with a focus on not only flowers, but a full health and wellness offering inclusive of shampoos and conditioners not only for humans but also animals, infused oils, candles, topicals, edibles, drinks, and other non-incendiary products.

- Hours of operation - 8AM to midnight daily with ability to be amended based on need and customer trends
- Initial staffing levels anticipated at 15, with a preference to hire locally specifically for single mothers and recently released felons. Employees must have product knowledge, so training is crucial.
- No proximity interference to other dispensaries, churches, or schools.
- Part of the community benefit will be the incorporation of education, AI and coding, etc. not just for youth, but also for seniors and older people. They would prefer to work with the board and members of the community to know what is needed and what is desired.
- Use of mood lighting in the space as well as features of local artists' work via a large photo of "Brooklyn" and living plants to focus on the wellness aspect. Will also have a waterfall to induce a true herbal healing effect similar to a spa.
- Will have security personnel and will employ stanchions for crowd control, QR codes to scan for product listing and delivery ordering to maximize ease of customer experience, and will also feature a self-service kiosk/vending machine strictly for flower products. (Stated that security most likely will not be armed as that introduces a new type of security concern, but will use armed security for larger events.)

The committee voted unanimously with 9 in favor to support the application as presented. It hopes the full Board supports its recommendation.

A motion to support the application was made by Mr. Gabriel and seconded by Ms. Mitchell to support the committee's recommendation. The motion passed with 32 in favor, 1 against and 4 abstentions.

Chairperson Weatherspoon thanked the committees and asked Ms. Neale, Community Coordinator to read the instructions regarding the FY2027 budget submission process.

Community District Needs Assessment – FY 2027 Capital and Expense Budget

Chair Weatherspoon asked for additional Community District Needs submissions from the membership and community.

New items mentioned for adding:

- Hire and train more workers for eviction assistance
- Increase funding for Right to Counsel Program
- Add croquet lawn to Prospect Park
- Fully reconstruct St. John's Place between New York and Bedford Avenues
- Add programs for senior vitality; more seniors are outside and being active.
- HRA: construct local HRA office in CB8.
- ACS: not enough attention for those aging out of foster care.

- Revamp supervised independent living program. Gave kids 17 to 21 an opportunity to get ahead.
- DYCD: no programs in what young people want today: gaming, social media, etc.
- DOT: B15 is a crucial line, needs more service.
- Make Atlantic more pedestrian and bike friendly.
- Improve bathrooms in firehouses for female fire houses. Closets have been converted into bathrooms so there is no ventilation. Need to add changing areas for privacy. Conditions are subpar.
- More financial programs for senior homeowners.
- Homeowners need assistance to change pipes. Increased funding for lead testing.
- More funding for books in library/expand library services
- Funding for AI education to increase job services, AI training for youth, coding, etc. seniors can benefit as well.
- Need educational campaigns for businesses regarding commercial waste zones.
- Bike lanes on Atlantic is not feasible. Extend pacific street bike lane.

Chairperson Weatherspoon stated that additional items can be submitted to the district office by October 15th. She invited the DOT representatives to make a presentation on the Flatbush Avenue Bus lanes.

NYC Department of Transportation – Flatbush Avenue Center Running Bus Lanes

Representatives from NYC DOT framed the center-running bus lanes as a safety and reliability intervention for Flatbush Avenue, citing a high crash rate and bus travel times that could be improved by 20 to 40 percent—roughly two minutes—while modeling suggested a five to ten percent reduction in general-traffic speeds.

DOT mentioned that 100 surveys were obtained during the community engagement period. Members questioned the methodology of shopper-mode surveys and asked about the scope and cadence of business outreach, the spacing and accessibility of proposed stops, possible spillover traffic and interactions with the BQE, and the phasing of work north and south of the corridor. DOT stated that preliminary work has begun and that bus-lane implementation is targeted for 2026, and it indicated a willingness to coordinate with BIDs and to explore geofencing for TNC pickups to protect curb operations.

After a lengthy discussion, Tamika Gibbs made a motion to reject the proposal as presented, and Kwasi Mensah seconded the motion for the Board’s consideration. The motion passed with 27 in favor, 1 against and 2 abstentions.

Chairperson Weatherspoon thanked DOT and invited Mr. Slaughter from the NYC Council to make a presentation.

NYC City Council – Presentation on 2025 General Election Ballot Measures

Staff from the NYC Council Land Use team presented a package of ballot proposals that would, in certain circumstances, reduce or bypass elements of ULURP when affordability or density thresholds are met, create a reduced process for districts with historically low production of affordable housing, and establish an Affordable Housing Appeals Board with authority to overturn Council rezoning decisions. Board members stressed the need for neutral voter

education and wider outreach so residents understand both the potential benefits and the governance trade-offs; CHNA announced that it had scheduled a neighborhood information session, which would be listed in the community newsletter.

Public Comments

Frederick Monderson — Proposed a plaque at the Park Place station honoring local history; noted a resolution with Borough President Antonio Reynoso about the Brooklyn Navy Yard’s segregated Black veterans’ cemetery; and proposed a 2026 memorial service for veterans buried there.

Denise Caldwell — As co-chair of the St. Theresa committee to keep the church open, asked that CB8 not meet at the Co-Cathedral of St. Joseph; reported funding challenges for St. Theresa’s food bank and language services.

Community Member — Asked which agency can help protect churches and similar spaces from zoning or development changes.

Barbara Cofield — Announced a Legacy Walk on Tuesday, Oct 28 (time TBD) starting at 750 Nostrand Ave and ending at the former Slave Theater site at 1250 Fulton St, honoring Brooklyn architecture and ancestors.

Tamesha Thompson from Councilmember Mealy’s office thanked attendees for supporting the annual boat ride.

Hayley Gorenberg — As president of Friends of Mount Prospect Park, urged support to protect the park and “de-conflate” concerns around the proposed skate park.

Kimberly Watson — Asked for a civil conversation with NYC Parks about the rationale for siting a skate park in Mount Prospect Park.

Deborah Young from Crown Heights North Association announced their free shredding event on Oct 18, 2025 at St. Gregory’s RC Church located at 999 St. Johns Place from 9am-12pm.

Fior Ortiz-Joyner from Crown Heights North Association announced the Dog Halloween Parade on Oct 25th from 8am-2pm at Brower Park.

With no further business, Chairperson Weatherspoon adjourned the meeting at 9:50 pm.

Guests Present

Matt Pavoni
Xeerxeema Jordan
Rylie Davis
Terrance Ratliff
Cheryl Walcott
Hayley G.
Nate Bliss
Erica Fiquaio
Crystal Cooper
Adrienne Grande
Elaine Weinstein
Diana Foster
Susan Szeliga
Wanda Williams
Denise Caldwell
Wilfred Zanders
Jonathan Marable
Alsená Suber
Mike Goldtab
Brandon Spiegel
Adia Johnson
Neema Wiggins
Steven Pei
Roger Myers
Julia Primus

Mauro Saput Yool
Chris Campo
Nadja Byrd
Jeremy Faust
Mercedes Armillas
Lisa G.
Marie Louis
Norma Felix
Amanda Blair
Daycia Mcclam
Han Chia
Danae Oratowski
Traci Nottingham
Dr. Fred Monderson
Paige Charles
Betty Davis
Andrea Ferris
Matt Parlor
Diane John Marie
Landon Auriche
Alicia Pritchard
Emma Monderson
Priscilla Mensah
Diana Baide
Tiara Robertson