

Community Board 8
St. Teresa of Avila RC Church
555 Sterling Place
Brooklyn, NY 11238
March 12, 2026

Members Present

Akua Aidoo
Peter Anekwe
Gail Branch-Muhammad
Dian Duke
Drew Gabriel
Tamika Gibbs
Jamell Henderson
Tafari John-King
Frances Langley
Robert Lapointe
Lisa Maldonado
William Meehan
Mimi Mitchell
Robert Puca
Yahya Raji
Conor Ross
Brian Saunders
Robin Smith
Meredith Staton
Dina Tate
Mark Thurton
Briana Uwa
Gib Veconi
Kimberly Watson
Irsa Weatherspoon
Robert Witherwax

Members Absent/Excused

Sharon Alexis-Pierre
Isaac Andino
Princess Benn
Barbara Cofield
Benny Faygen
Nizjoni Granville
Mohammad Hassan
Jennifer Jordan
Dr. Sarah Lazur
Fior Ortiz-Joyner
Taraya Pettway
Anika Roach
Ezra Roth
Lesley Steele
Katie Taylor
Dana Thompson
Ryan Tucker
Sharon Wedderburn
Regina Wilson
Deborah Young

Elected Official Representatives

David Lopez – State Senator Jabari Brisport
Adrienne Williams – Assemblywoman Latrice Walker
Saira Amar – Assemblywoman Phara Souffrant-Forrest
Janay Pierre – Councilmember Crystal Hudson
Lisa Desir – Councilmember Darlene Mealy
Orlando Ross – Congresswoman Yvette Clarke

CB8 Staff Present

Michelle George, District Manager
Julia Neale, Community Coordinator

The regular meeting of Community Board 8 was called to order at 6:22PM by Ms. Irsa Weatherspoon, Chairperson. Thanks were given to Blackstone Pharmacy for providing refreshments for the meeting.

A few corrections were made to the February 2026 meeting notes:

- Yahya Raji was left off of the previous meeting notes as an attendee

A motion to accept the correct notes was made by Robert Witherwax, and seconded by Diane Duke.

Committee Updates –

Economic Development — Lisa Maldonado, Vice Chair. Lisa Maldonado reported that the Economic Development Committee meets on the second Tuesday of each month at Brower Park Library. At the most recent meeting, the Brooklyn Public Library Business Center presented resources available for small businesses and job seekers, and the committee will circulate those materials. The next meeting will be held on April 14th, and Chase Bank is expected to present on resources for small businesses.

Health and Human Services — Tamika Gibbs, Chair. Tamika Gibbs reported that Health & Human Services meets on an odd-month schedule. The next committee meeting is scheduled for March 19th, and members were encouraged to attend, particularly to confirm access to services and support services discussed by the committee.

Parks, Youth, and Education — Kimberly Watson, Chair. The Parks, Youth & Education Committee reported that it meets on the first Tuesday of each month at Brower Park Library. The upcoming meeting on April 7th will focus on the Mt. Prospect Park skate garden design, and the committee plans to address questions and vote on the design during that session. The committee saw the preliminary design at the March meeting and will continue to accept feedback on the design for the next week or so.

Public Safety — Mark Thurton, Chair. Mark Thurton reported that the Public Safety Committee meets on the fourth Monday of each month. The committee discussed upcoming community events, including a community-friendly day at Lincoln Terrace Park and a sports festival at Stroud Park, and requested volunteers to support event staffing and logistics. The next meeting is scheduled for March 23.

Seniors — Gail Branch-Muhammad, Chair. Gail Branch-Muhammad reported that the Seniors Committee met March 4th and experienced programming focused on Women's History Month, including a spotlight on women in medical history. Brooklyn Public Library also presented resources for seniors. The next meeting will be held on April 1, with the meeting time shifting from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. to accommodate a Brooklyn Botanic Garden gardening session in collaboration with the 77th Precinct.

Veterans — Robin Smith, Chair. Robin Smith reported that the Veterans Committee met virtually with Community Boards 3 and 6 and that members will attend a veterans resource event on Saturday.

Environment, Sanitation & Transportation — Robert Witherwax, Chair. The EST update emphasized that snow clearance takes precedence during active weather operations. Members were reminded to call 311 for uncollected garbage or compost and to report bus stops and bike lanes that have not been cleared.

Organization Updates – Vanderbilt Open Streets

Alex Morano presented on the 2026 Vanderbilt Open Streets calendar, noting the program will maintain the same schedule as last year with 22 open-street days, running 12:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. from May through September. Other key details include operations from Atlantic Avenue to Park Place, minimum 15 foot emergency/bike lane that will alternate weekly between the east and west sides of the avenue. Organizers realized that the shift last year from 3 days each weekend to one was less intrusive and better received by the community. Additionally, the new sponsoring organization remains committed to outreach and listening to the concerns of local businesses, agencies, houses of worship, and the local community.

Questions focused on operational capacity and emergency access. Mr. Morano stated that the Open Streets team coordinates with city agencies for emergency services and that barriers can be opened in approximately 30 seconds, adding that emergency vehicles could also proceed through if needed. Members asked how Access-A-Ride would handle access during closures; Mr. Morano said he did not have the policy details at the meeting and would return with an answer. Several attendees voiced strong support for Open Streets and emphasized that it brings more people into the neighborhood. Members also asked for clear detour signage for drivers, and Mr. Morano noted that official detour signs are posted by the city, although organizers can add unofficial signs. Members asked whether community sentiment had improved now that closures are shorter than prior multi-day formats, and Mr. Morano said the previous season was the first year without major complaints.

Community Board Business – Budget Request Items

The Board reviewed budget request items and recorded member feedback for transmission to agencies.

Jamell Henderson flagged items in the capital section (referenced as items 20–27) and raised concerns about discrepancies in park funding, including perceived imbalance between park investments and skate-park funding, and comparatively lower investment in Lincoln Terrace Park. He also noted that requests under Cultural Affairs lacked sufficient detail or support in the document.

Peter Anekwe asked whether there is statistical data showing what other community districts request in their budgets. The District Manager indicated the information is available online, and noted that many boards are facing similar systemic issues.

Mark Thurton referenced the delayed Lincoln Terrace Park bathroom project and clarified that different restroom facilities are often conflated; he noted that the request under discussion relates to the playground restroom, not the tennis court facilities.

A community member identified as Leo Descartes raised a “dog situation” proposal, including interest in DNA testing (referenced in your notes as page 196, request 4), and also referenced a Fire Department-related request (page 201, request 1).

Meredith Staton asked about the status and role of pet officers.

William Meehan flagged an error on page 186, request 2, noting it was a typo and “not actually a billion.” He also noted that the 77th Precinct improvements did not fully resolve accessibility, and raised concerns about discrepancies in Parks capital requests (including item #9 referenced in the notes).

Gail Branch-Muhammad referenced page 200, request 5, and separately asked how often Council Members attend committee meetings.

Traci Nottingham referenced page 176, request 9, and page 177, request 12, expressing disappointment that remodeling decisions reduce children’s use and questioning why the bathroom location is prioritized while other asks remain unaddressed.

Julia Neale stated that many agency responses appear unchanged year over year—even if phrased more positively—and argued that requests are not being meaningfully respected.

Gib Veconi clarified that some parks funding is connected to AAMUP points of agreement, and noted that those commitments did include some public input.

Tafari John-King referenced page 200 stating that it was completed for 20k seats, but the seats are primarily for elementary schools. Middle school is very important and should not be neglected as this is the age kids start developing their own interests.

Robert Witherwax reiterated the importance of communicating feedback formally. The Board then adopted a motion directing that the comments and feedback discussed be relayed to relevant agencies; Witherwax moved and Conor Ross seconded, and the motion passed.

Elected Officials and Representatives –

David Lopez from NYS Senator Jabari Brisport’s office reiterated the office’s discretionary funding announcements, noted that deed-theft prevention packages are being put in place, and highlighted priorities including “tax the rich” revenue proposals and universal healthcare. He also promoted an April 4th homeowner’s workshop.

Adrienne Williams from Assemblymember Latrice Walker’s office announced an advisory board meeting next week and noted a Women’s History Month session led by a principal from Mott Hall #4. He shared that a new executive director of the Pitkin Avenue BID will present plans to the office and that the office is supporting a spring cleanup for Pitkin Avenue. He also noted that Assemblymember Walker presented a \$2 million check to Weeksville Heritage Center, with the Mayor in attendance, and that tax preparation support is available through the office.

Saira Amar, communications manager for Assemblymember Phara Souffrant-Forrest’s office, emphasized priorities including “tax the rich” and universal childcare and referenced ongoing budget meetings. She also announced upcoming tenant-clinic programming and noted sanitation-related concerns.

Janay Pierre from Councilmember Crystal Hudson’s office reported that housing assistance is available on Wednesdays, tax preparation resources are available, and legal help is offered on Thursdays. The office also previewed an upcoming spring seniors series, including water aerobics at Chelsea Piers.

Lisa Desir from Councilmember Darlene Mealy's office noted that the office hosts a CAB meeting but attendance is often low. She announced a Women's History celebration at Kingsborough Houses honoring Betty Young and Maureen Court, and stated that Assemblymember Stefani Zinerman will attend. She also promoted a forthcoming line-dancing event and reiterated that veterans services are available through the office.

Orlando Ross from Congresswoman Yvette Clarke's office reported that congressional funding is open and has been extended to March 17, noting that funding is available to nonprofits and that the community board can apply if eligibility requirements are met. He also announced an art challenge for high school seniors (and/or teachers) and referenced a national award system for West Point prospective candidates.

Public Hearing Action Items and Votes

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee met on Tuesday, February 17, 2026, to discuss the upcoming expiration of the Community Board's 20-year lease for the district office, which will conclude later this year.

District Manager Michelle George has been working closely with the Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) Real Estate Services to identify and secure a suitable new location that can accommodate both administrative offices functions and meeting space for committees and the full Board. The Board's current office, located at 1291 St. Marks Avenue, occupies approximately 2,252 square feet. However, the Board is seeking significantly larger space that would allow meetings to be held in a central location and reduce the ongoing need to travel to multiple venues each month.

At present, it is our understanding that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) will only approve a leased space of up to 1,800 square feet. This represents a significant reduction from the board office's current square footage and would not adequately meet the Board's operational needs, particularly with respect to providing sufficient space for meetings.

Consequently, the Executive Committee voted unanimously to recommend submitting a resolution to DCAS and OMB requesting an increase in the approved maximum square footage for Brooklyn Community Board 8. This request is based on the following considerations:

- **Centralized meeting space:** Additional space would allow the Board to hold both general and committee meetings in a single, centralized location. Currently, the District Manager must identify and secure venues for 10 full Board meetings and meetings for 9 committees (approximately 90 meetings each year). This does not include additional special meetings that may arise outside of the regular full Board and committee schedule. This process begins in June following the final meeting of the season and requires site visits to confirm capacity, ADA compliance, and no-cost availability.
- **Improved accessibility and operational efficiency:** A dedicated space that accommodates all Board functions would significantly benefit members and the broader community by improving accessibility, efficiency, and continuity. It would also allow for more consistent use of technology, including the potential for hybrid meetings, as well as committee-led workshops and community gatherings. At present, committees meet in

spaces designed for other primary uses, which frequently results in logistical challenges such as last-minute cancellations, communication gaps with facility administrators, and difficulties accessing scheduled meeting spaces.

The Executive Committee hopes the full Board will support this resolution and approve its sending to the Dept. of Citywide Administrative Services Real Estate Services.

The motion was passed by voice vote with no major rejections or abstentions.

Environment, Sanitation, Transportation (EST) – Robert Witherwax, Chair

The EST Committee met on Tuesday, February 24, 2026 via Webex due to weather. The committee discussed an application before the NYC Office of Environmental Remediation (OER) for 918 Atlantic Avenue, a site with a history of automotive uses that is being developed into a 16-story as-of-right building in the Atlantic Avenue Mixed Use zone. The application was presented to OER pursuant to New York City's Voluntary Cleanup Program (VCP). The Remedial Investigation Report (RIR) details the results of an environmental investigation at the site including the nature and extent of contamination, and a draft Remedial Action Work Plan (RAWP) proposes remedial actions to address contamination delineated in the RIR.

The environmental investigation identified one Volatile Organic Compound (VOC), Semi-Volatile Organic Compounds (SVOCs), metals, and pesticides above soil cleanup guidelines. Soil vapor samples showed low to moderate levels of petroleum related and chlorinated VOCs, all below the Air Guideline Values established by the New York State Department of Health.

The specific elements of the proposed remedial action include:

- Preparation of a Community Protection Statement and performance of all required NYC VCP Citizen Participation activities according to an approved Citizen Participation Plan;
- Implementation of a Community Air Monitoring Plan for particulates and volatile organic carbon (VOCs) compounds;
- Establishment of Site-Specific (Track 4) Soil Cleanup Objectives (SCOs);
- Excavation and removal of soil/fill exceeding Track 4 Site-Specific SCOs. The footprint of the new cellar will be excavated 17.5 feet below grade and the remainder of the Site will be excavated to depth of 22 feet for the elevator pit. Approximately 5,000 tons of soil will be excavated and removed from Site;
- Transportation and off-Site disposal of all soil/fill material at permitted facilities in accordance with applicable laws and regulations for handling, transport, and disposal, and this plan. Sampling and analysis of excavated media as required by disposal facilities and appropriate segregation of excavated media onsite;
- Collection and analysis of six end-point samples to determine the performance of the remedy with respect to attainment of SCOs;
- Installation of a vapor barrier system below the concrete slab underneath the building, as well as behind foundation walls of the proposed building;
- Construction and maintenance of an engineered composite cover consisting of the 3-4-foot-thick concrete slab with a 6 to 10-inch-thick layer of ASTM #5 as sub-base beneath all building areas and a six-inch thick concrete building slab, underlain by 10 to 17 feet of clean fill in the non-building areas to prevent human exposure to residual soil/fill remaining under the Site;
- Installation and operation of an active sub-slab depressurization system;

- Submission of a Remedial Action Report (RAR) that describes the remedial activities and certifies that the remedial requirements have been achieved and lists any changes from this RAWP;
- Submission of an approved Site Management Plan (SMP) in the RAR for long-term management of residual contamination, including plans for maintenance, inspection and certification of Engineering and Institutional Controls and reporting at a specified frequency;
- Continued registration with E-designation for the property;
- Recording of a deed restriction to prevent future exposure to any residual contamination at the site.

Both the EST and HLU Committees discussed this item as they share about 40% of membership. For ease and convenience, two separate items are not being presented to the board.

The EST committee voted 26 in favor with 1 abstention to support a Track 2 remediation for the site, noting that Track 2 requires soil removal to 15 feet based on New York State's generic Soil Cleanup Objectives (SCOs) while Track 4 allows site-specific, often less stringent cleanup, relying on capping (covers) and institutional controls.

The HLU committee voted unanimously to accept the remediations as presented, appreciating the in-depth cleanup proposal. The committees leave it to the full Board to determine which option it wants to support.

In response to Meredith Staton's question, the remediation timeline was stated as approximately 90 days. Members clarified that the work is governed by state law, and it was noted that LHU had a third party present and was satisfied with Track 4 rather than the more burdensome Track 2, given the site is not comparable to heavier contamination sites.

A motion to support the recommendation as made by Gib Veconi, seconded by Meredith Staton

16 Y, 6 N, 2 A, the motion passes.

SLA and Sidewalk Café Review Committee (SLAC)

The SLAC committee met on Monday, March 2, 2026. The committee discussed the new full liquor license application for V.I.P. Zone LLC located at 1165 St. Marks Avenue (near Utica Avenue). The committee noted that the applicant had previously been approved for a beer/wine/cider license in summer 2025 and is seeking to upgrade to a full license.

Additional details of the application include:

- a. Hours of operation 10AM to 10PM Sunday through Thursday; 10AM to 11PM Friday and Saturday.
- b. 8 tables with 18 seats, one non-service counter with up to 3 seats
- c. No licensed outdoor space
- d. Will have occasional live music as well as background recorded music

The committee voted unanimously to support the application as presented in hopes that the full Board will support its recommendation.

A motion to support the committee's recommendation was made by Tamika Gibbs, seconded by Akua Aidoo

22 Y, 0 N, 0 A, the motion passes.

Housing and Land Use

The HLU Committee met on Thursday, March 5, 2026 at 77 New York Avenue. The committee discussed the following applications:

1. LPC Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for 220 Park Place in the Prospect Heights Historic District

The scope of work includes:

- A single door enlargement on the top floor of the rear facade, specifically seeking to replace a singled leaf 34 inch opening with an 84 inch dual leaf sliding door
- Seeking to repair water damage at the remaining opening in the existing facade that has resulted from poor workmanship on the part of the previous contractor

The applicant is seeking to repair water damage at the remaining opening in the existing facade that has resulted from poor workmanship on the part of the previous contractor. Additionally, the project will not result in any enlargement of the existing building and, because the building is part of a block with a continuous street wall, is not visible from the street.

Furthermore, modifying these openings does not result in any loss of continuity with the historic fabric. The applicant is working directly with the Landmarks Preservation Committee (LPC) regarding materials and thus did not present those details at the HLU meeting.

A motion to support the committee's recommendation was made by Gib Veconi, seconded by Peter Anekwe

24 Y, 0 N, 0 A, the motion passes

2. LPC Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for 254 Prospect Place in the Prospect Heights Historic District

Applicants Amira and Nate Bliss seek a Certificate of Appropriateness for the following proposed changes:

- A rooftop addition that is not visible from either side of Prospect Place
- An extension that is tucked between a considerably larger multifamily building at 252 Prospect Place and a rooftop addition and rear expansion at 256 Prospect Place that was made prior to the Prospect Heights Historic Designation.
- The proposed rear yard extension would be six feet deeper than that of 256 Prospect Place and shorter than that at 252 Prospect Place
- The extension would not be visible from any thoroughfare.
- The addition would be visible

Queries from both community members and board members included:

The presence of a safety rail at the front of proposed rooftop addition. The applicant's architect represented that the applicant prefers not to have a safety rail and prepared a mock up in case it was required by LPC. Their preference is to only include a access ladder as required by the FDNY.

Additionally, Prospect Heights Neighborhood Development Council (PHNDC) reviewed the application. PHNDC has no objection to the application without the rooftop guard rail and commends the applicant for their careful design of both the rooftop and rear yard additions to make them conform to the historical and architectural context of the Prospect Heights Historic District.

The committee voted as follows: 12 - Yay 2- Nays 2 – Abstentions

The Board considered an HLU item at 254 Prospect Place and clarified the committee's recommendation before taking a vote. In response to a question about what the committee supported, the notes indicate the committee voted to support the application without the rooftop rail.

A motion to support the committee's recommendation was made by William Meehan, seconded by Gib Veconi

22 Y, 2 N, 0 A, the motion passes.

3. FRESH Certification application for 1034 Atlantic Avenue

The applicant first appeared before the Board in June 2024 for a FRESH application and was approved then for an 18th floor (building was initially constructed with 17 stories, but recent zoning changes allows for a larger density and bulk). At that time and still now, the additional floor creates an additional nine units of housing, two of which will be affordable at the requisite AMI as designated by City of Yes (COY) housing options.

Presently, the applicant is returning to add a 19th story to the building under recent additional zoning changes. The applicant states that building envelope will not change and the bulkhead will now be enclosed, thus creating the 19th story. The bulkhead will then be moved atop the newly enclosed level.

The current application is seeking to build a larger FRESH store, with approximately 8,379 sq. ft. (prior application was for a 7,261 sqft store). Fine Fare has been contacted to be the supermarket operator.

The committee voted as follows: 10 Yays 2 - Nays 0- Abstentions and 1 Recusal

The committee requests that the full board accept its recommendation.

A motion to support the committee's recommendation was made by Chairperson Weatherspoon, seconded by Meredith Staton

21 Y, 2 N, 0 A, the motion passes.