

**Community Board 8
Co-Cathedral of St. Joseph's
856 Pacific Street
Brooklyn, NY 11238**

May 11, 2023

Members Present

Akua Aidoo
Sharon Alexis-Pierre
Glinda Andrews
Lisa Atkinson
Princess Benn-James
Marva Brown-Henry
Jacques Brunvil
Robert Callahan
Edward Delman
Dian Duke
Andrea Ferris
Drew Gabriel
Tamika Gibbs
Nizjoni Granville
Xeerxeema Jordan
Frances Langley
Robert LaPointe
Dr. Sarah Lazur
Lisa Maldonado
David Mantell
Mimi Mitchell
Kwasi Mensah
Fior Ortiz-Joyner
Briana Peppers
Taraya Pettway
Robert Puca
Yahya Raji
Dr. Cadesa Ramharrack
Conor Ross
Brian Saunders
Meredith Staton
Mark Thurton
Samori Toure
Ethel Tyus
Gib Veconi
Kimberly Watson
Irsa Weatherspoon
Sharon Wedderburn
Robert Witherwax
Deborah Young

Members Absent/Excused

Julia Boyd
Michael Francoeur
Colin Jakubczyk
Christopher Johnson
Gail Muhammad
Anika Roach
Nicole Tetreault
Samori Toure

Elected Officials Present

Assemblyman Robert Carroll, 44th Assembly Dist.
Councilman Chi Ossé, 36th Council Dist.

Elected Official Representatives

Deanna Foote, Boro President Antonio Reynoso
Camille Barbin, Senator Zellnor Myrie
Kristen Rouse, Congressman Dan Goldman
Ana Garcia, Councilmember Crystal Hudson
Raul Rothblatt, Assemblyman Brian Cunningham
Tendai Watkins, Assemblywoman Stephani Zinerman

City Agency Representatives

Karen Chambers, Bklyn District Attorney's Office

CB8 Staff

Michelle George, District Manager
Julia Neale, Community Coordinator

The regular meeting of Community Board 8 was called to order at 6:25 p.m. by Ms. Irsa Weatherspoon, Chairperson. She welcomed everyone to the May meeting and wished all the mothers and mothering entities a Happy Mother's Day. Chairperson Weatherspoon then asked for Assemblyman Robert Carroll to say a few words.

Assemblyman Robert Carroll – 44th Assembly District

Assemblyman Carroll thanked the Board for the opportunity to speak and address the membership. He announced that he represents the western portion of Prospect Heights as a result of redistricting.

The state recently passed its budget about a month late, but there are a few things that were added that will help the residents of Brooklyn. Some of these things include a record amount of funding for NYC public schools, an increase in the amount of foundation aid, and an allowance for monies to be used per pupil. New York City will pass and release their budget soon. Luckily, state legislators were able to increase taxes on the largest employers in the city that will help to fund and maintain the MTA. Albeit a small increase, the money generated will be able to go a long way.

Assemblyman Carroll stated that a few things passed in the budget were not necessarily great for downstate and Brooklyn including not being able to pass any legislation in terms of housing or assistance for tenants. This is truly unfortunate because NYC is in an unsustainable place in terms of affordability as well as housing security. We need to figure out how to resolve a myriad of issues that have detrimental impacts on the quality of life in the city, and he stated that it is a pity that Governor Hochul refused to budge on density increases in NYC and that his legislative colleagues to the north refused to budge on increased density in suburban areas. He specifically mentioned the burden this is causing as changes to the LIRR has made Nassau and Suffolk Counties more transit rich than they were prior to the pandemic which will allow them to be able to sustain more development. He cited suburban areas refusal to build more housing as one of the reasons the housing crisis is so bad in NYC.

Sadly, Assemblyman Carroll cited that Governor Hochul refused to engage in discussions about bail while the legislature refused to budge on exploratory laws and the need for prosecutors to divulge the full slate of evidence. This led to a breakdown in discussions and the inability of the legislature to pass true bail reform that would benefit the least well off. However, this year, bail reform will be radically redefined, removing both the "least restrictive means" standard (to get a defendant to return to court) and the language specifying that judges may only set cash bail when they believe it is necessary to ensure a defendant's return to court.

The Assemblyman announced that his staff was present at the recent Underhill Avenue on-street DOT workshop and his office is open and available to discuss the issues with residents. Additionally, several constituents have inquired about a reduction in alternate side parking, and his office has spoken to Ms. George on several issues so far to gather additional information on the issues that CB8 residents face.

Mr. Veconi asked if residential parking permits survived and was told that it did not. Additionally, Assemblyman Carroll stated that he will only be in favor of residential parking permits if it's for the entire borough of Brooklyn and not select areas.

A community resident asked if any additional funding was allocated for pest control. They were informed that his office has been in communication with residents and discussing the issues and possible solutions. So far, they have heard construction impacts, street seating, restaurant seating

and several other issues as some of the driving causes of rodents and vermin. His office is coordinating with Councilmember Crystal Hudson on a Town Hall in the fall.

Finally, Assemblyman Carroll informed the board that his office is located on 7th Avenue between 13th and 14th Streets in Park Slope, and the number is 718-788-7221.

Chairperson Weatherspoon thanked the Assemblyman for the update and invited Councilmember Chi Ossé to say a few words.

Councilmember Chi Ossé – 36th Council District

Councilmember Ossé listed several upcoming events and services available in his office and published in the CB8 newsletter. He thanked the Board for allowing residents access to the information in an easy to reference document. He also mentioned housing information and housing related services offered every Tuesday from noon to 6 PM and offered by Churches United for Fair Housing.

The Councilmember apologized for scheduling an event on the same evening as the CB8 general meeting, but announced that occurring concurrently to the meeting is a rat academy with the city's newly appointed Rat Czar. He stated that he is a member of the Council's "Rat Pack" that is working hard to strategize ways to eliminate the rodent problem in the city. Granted, the city has always had rats, but apparently never at the rate we have them now.

Councilmember Ossé announced his 36th District Bike Tour this coming Saturday, May 13th. He asked anyone with a specific location in Crown Heights that should be added to the tour to please call his office. Furthermore, he announced that he is advocating for a protected bike lane on Bedford Avenue from Flushing Avenue to Bergen Street.

Regarding the City's budget discussions, Councilmember Ossé announced that NYC has a budget in excess of \$106 billion, which is larger than several states overall budgets. Unfortunately, Mayor Adams is suggesting cuts in all agencies with the exception of the NYPD, citing the need to cut costs a result of the migrant crisis. However, despite the information that Mayor Adams is providing the constituency, the city's budget watchdog, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB,) has stated that the Mayor is overestimating the costs of the migrant crisis.

In the Council, there is legislation under consideration to hold large management companies accountable for the way they dispose of their trash. The current \$100 summons for improper trash disposal does not provide enough incentive to hold large property owners accountable. Fines need to be dramatically increased. Additionally, the Council is working on legislation to prevent apartment seekers from having to pay a broker fee if they have not hired a broker and are looking for a unit on a website. You should only pay a broker fee if the broker is doing the searching for you; not paying because a landlord has partnered with a person that decides to list a unit on a site that you can search for free.

Ms. Tyus asked Councilmember Ossé what the council is doing to make NYCHA fill vacant units. She was informed that a lot of the vacant NYCHA units are uninhabitable. Additionally, the Councilmember added that the starting salary for recent college grads stands at a dismal \$42k, which doesn't allow for good housing options. The Council is working to increase starting salaries.

A resident asked if the Mayor's budget has any support or funding for small business, and was informed that budget cuts are proposed for all agencies with the exception of the NYPD. Sadly, the Covid-19 Pandemic saw a massive drop in services and funding, and there currently not many grant options coming from the city for small businesses.

Finally, Councilmember Ossé reminded everyone of the upcoming Rent Guidelines Board's public hearings. He instructed constituents in rental units to come out and discuss how rent burdened they are and make comments on the proposed rent increases. His office will be sending out literature in the coming days and weeks.

Chairperson Weatherspoon thanked Councilmember Ossé for the update and welcomed CB8's 13 newly appointed members: Ms. Akua Aidoo, Ms. Sharon Alexis-Pierre, Mr. Edward Delman, Mr. Christopher Johnson, Mr. Robert LaPointe, Ms. Lisa Maldonado, Mr. David Mantell, Ms. Briana Peppers, Ms. Taraya Pettway, Mr. Robert Puca, Ms. Anika Roach, Mr. Conor Ross, and Mr. Samori Toure. She asked each member to make a brief statement.

Ms. Aidoo stated that she is excited to be a new member and ready to get to work on issues facing the eastern portion of Crown Heights.

Ms. Alexis-Pierre stated that she is a longtime Prospect Heights resident, and is excited to be part of the process. She felt that with all the changes taking place in the community, she needed a voice in the discussions to help guide the change.

Mr. Delman stated that he is an attorney in Prospect Heights with a small child at home, and that he is very excited to be a member after having attended several general and committee meetings in the last few months.

Ms. Peppers stated that she lives in Central Crown Heights and is looking forward to working on issues in the community.

Mr. Lapointe stated that he is a longtime Crown Heights resident and member of the EST committee, and that he is excited to listen, learn, and contribute to the improvement of the District that he has called home for so long.

Ms. Maldonado stated that she is a longtime Prospect Heights resident and CB8 is where she raised her family. She is interested in providing her services to the Board in whatever capacity they are needed.

Mr. Mantell stated that he, too, is a Prospect Heights resident with a small child at home and very excited about working on issues impacting the community.

Ms. Pettway stated that she represents Crown Heights just outside of the historic district, and she is excited to work with the Board after attending several important meetings and informational hearings.

Mr. Ross stated that he is a Prospect Heights resident and is excited to start a new undertaking.

Mr. Puca stated that it is great to be back as a member of CB8 after being off for a short time.

Chairperson Weatherspoon thanked all the members for their comments and stated that she looks forward to working with everyone.

Acceptance of Minutes – Mr. Gabriel made a motion to accept the minutes of the April meeting with any necessary corrections. The motion was seconded by Mr. Staton and passed unanimously.

Chairperson Weatherspoon invited Ms. Erika White, General Manager of Chelsea Piers Prospect Heights to introduce the team and the programs that will be coming to the community.

Chelsea Piers: Prospect Heights –Ms. Erika White, General Manager

Ms. White thanked the Board for allowing her and the staff of Chelsea Piers Prospect Heights to introduce the facility. She asked the staff to introduce themselves and their division within the organization, and stated that they would be the individuals that the community would work with in the Field House that would be opening in June.

Ms. White provided baseline background on Chelsea Piers, stating that most residents know the organization to offer unrivaled spaces, activities, and communities with a passion for inspired fitness, sports, wellness and events. Chelsea Piers has facilities in Connecticut, Manhattan, and soon to open in Prospect Heights at 601 Dean Street. The Prospect Heights facility will be most known for afterschool classes and organized sports. Community events will be available both inside and outside of the clubhouse, and local businesses will provide food and entertainment. Over 200 free fitness classes are offered across the city, and several scholarships will be awarded for CP programming.

There will be a launch party on June 17th that is free and open to the community. Additionally, they are currently hiring full-time, part-time, and seasonal staff for key roles to start upon opening. These positions include trainers, team managers, reception, etc.

Responding to a question as to whether or not the facility will have a pool, Ms. White stated that there is a specifically designed “learn to swim pool” with 1300 square foot pool that is 4 feet deep. The pool and swim experience is more suited for education rather than recreation and all swim instructors are highly trained. There will be small group lessons for kids as well as family swim time options.

Ms. White informed the Board that enrollment is now open for summer day camp and also afterschool programs. Please visit their website at <https://sports.chelseapiers.com/> to sign up and enroll, or to get more information.

Chairperson Weatherspoon thanked Ms. White and her team for their information and welcomed them to the community.

Chairperson Weatherspoon informed the members of the Board that there is a minor typographical error on their ballots, and instructed members that Dr. Lazur is indeed a candidate for office. She asked members to take a few moments to complete their election ballots for collection by Ms. George, Mr. Saunders, and Mr. Thurton.

Chairperson Weatherspoon opened the public hearing portion of the meeting.

Public Hearing

The following committees presented actionable items for review by the full Board:

SLA and Sidewalk Café Review Committee (SLAC)

The SLAC Committee met on Monday, May 1, 2023 via Webex at 6:15 p.m. In the absence of the Chair Irsa Weatherspoon, vice chair Robert Witherwax chaired the meeting. Also present were: Mimi Mitchell, Claudel Paul, Nancy Bernard, Dian Duke, Brian Saunders, Celene Rosado, Carlos Roque, Deborah Young, Elaine Bowen, Fior Ortiz-Joyner, Gib Veconi, Tamika Gibbs, Xeerxeema Jordan, Jennifer Jordan, Kim Watson, Dane Risch, Martin Felix, Mike Shah, Michael James, Mark Dean, Gail Muhammad, Vanessa Price, Oliver Hardt, Palmer Moss, Patrick Agard, Robert Puca, Roger Myers, Mary Woods, Sharon Wedderburn.

The committee discussed the following new liquor license applications:

1. **Autumn Bar & Grill, 629 Vanderbilt Avenue (St. Marks Avenue/Prospect Place)** – Bar/tavern/lounge seeking full license with included method of operations of: recorded music, juke box, DJ, karaoke, live music, small scale patron dancing, televisions for sports and political debate parties, backyard space, open streets seating.

Details of the application include:

- Hours of operation 1 PM to 2 AM daily with outdoor seating area to close by 10 PM daily
- One service bar with 10 seats; 7 tables with 22 total seats; total indoor capacity 74
- Up to six tables with 24 seats in the outdoor space
- 6 to 8 service employees inclusive of security personnel to check identification at door, at least four waitstaff, and bartenders

The committee voted unanimously with 14 in favor to support the application in hopes the full Board supports its recommendation.

Mr. Witherwax informed the Board that the district office received a few comments from neighbors that could not attend the committee meeting, but that had watched the video recording. They had some concerns about noise, especially as the previous bar had no soundproofing. Additionally, in the correspondence by the neighbors, they asked that it could be on record that they request that the yard space close at 9 p.m. daily.

Mr. Witherwax asked for questions and comments from the community. Hearing none, Mr. Veconi made a motion to support the committee's recommendation as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Staton and carried with a final tally of 35 in favor, 0 opposed, with 1 abstention.

2. **Jack and Dollys, 84 Rogers Avenue (Prospect/Park Places)** – Restaurant seeking a full license with included methods of operation of: recorded music, garden/grounds.

Details of the application include:

- Proprietors currently own and operate King Tai restaurant located at 1095 Bergen Street (between Nostrand and New York Avenues)
- Location is a former church being converted into an eating and drinking establishment
- Hours of operation will be 9 a.m. to 11 p.m. Sunday; 4 p.m. to 11 p.m. Monday thru Thursday; 4 p.m. to midnight Friday; 9 a.m. to Midnight Saturday

- Per request and proprietor agreement with Rogers Avenue Block Association, establishment will close rear yard by 9 p.m. daily and not open until 11 a.m. Friday and Saturday
- One service bar with 12 seats; 13 tables with an additional 28 seats and a maximum patron capacity of 60
- 10 service employees inclusive of bartender, barback, waitstaff, cooks, and manager/maître d

The committee voted unanimously with 14 in favor to support the application in hopes that the full Board supports its recommendation.

Mr. Witherwax asked for questions and comments from the community. Ms. Benn-James stated that there is a church around the corner and inquired if the 200-foot rule would apply. She was informed that because the church entrance is around the corner and not in a straight line from the front door, the establishment is exempt from the 200 foot rule. To help clarify matters, Mr. Witherwax explained the 200 and 500 foot rules and stated that the SLA does indeed rely on the concept of a radius with the 500 foot rule, but for the 200 foot rule to apply to churches, they instead use a straight line from the front door.

Dr. Lazur made a motion to support the committee’s recommendation as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Gibbs and carried with a final tally of 35 in favor, 0 opposed, with 1 abstention.

3. Island Rib House, 611 Nostrand Avenue (Dean/Bergen Streets) – Restaurant seeking a full License with method of operations inclusive of: live music, recorded music

Details of the application include:

- Hours of operation 11 AM to 11 PM daily, closed on Monday
- 8 tables with 14 seats one standing bar
- 5 to 7 employees

The committee voted unanimously with 14 in favor to support the application and hopes the full Board supports its recommendation.

Mr. Witherwax asked for questions and comments from the community. Hearing none, Ms. Tyus made a motion to support the committees recommendation as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Callahan and carried with a final tally of 34 in favor, 0 opposed, with 2 abstentions.

Housing Advocacy and Land Use Joint Committee Meeting

The Housing Advocacy and Land Use Committees held a joint meeting on Wednesday, May 10, 2023 via Webex at 6:15 p.m. In addition to the Chairs, Sharon Wedderburn and Nizjoni Granville, present were: Lisa Atkinson, Vice Chair Housing Committee, Pierre Albert, Princess Benn-James, Robert Callahan, Jennifer Jordan, Xeerxeema Jordan, Peter Krashes, Dr. Sarah Lazur, Deborah Young, Ethel Tyus, Mimi Mitchell, Fior Ortiz-Joyner, Nicole Laemme, Kim Robinson, Mark Thurton, Adam Kushner, Albert Appleton, Audrey Taitt-Hall, Traci N., Burt Byrd, Dylan, Eliran, Elaine Weinstein, Geo Iris, James G., Hormuz Batiboi, Kelly Carroll, Kinal, Lucy, Manosha Oya, Mary Shufford, Prashanth Mekala, Karen Gray, Randy Armas, Michael Higgins, Valeriia and 1 callers.

The committees discussed the following Landmark Preservation Commission applications:

1. LPC Application for Certificate of Appropriateness for 155 Underhill Avenue.

The application is presented to LPC for modifications to a window in the rear and the installation of mechanicals on roof, partially visible from the street. Specifically, the project entails replacing the existing shed and bay window in the rear with a deck with retractable doors on the parlor level and sliding doors on the basement level. The railing enclosing the mechanicals on the roof are the only visible portion of the installation from the street.

The applicant's hearing with LPC is scheduled for June 6th. As such, the joint committee voted 20 in favor to support the project plan as presented and hopes that the full Board supports its recommendation.

Ms. Wedderburn asked for questions and comments from the community. Hearing none, Dr. Lazur made motion to support the committee's recommendation. The motion was seconded by Ms. Mitchell and carried with a final tally of 36 in favor, 0 opposed, with 2 abstentions.

2. LPC Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for 120 Kingston Avenue

The applicant returned to the committee to present amended and updated project plans as amended following discussion with Community Board 8, Crown Heights North Association, and LPC for the project which is inclusive of a full exterior renovation inclusive of a new roof and new windows; side yard work with a proposal to create a new access stairs from the cellar to the side yard; and interior work inclusive of converting existing commercial space into a residential unit, thus converting the building to its original full residential use.

The applicant first appeared before the Board in February 2023 and the application was not supported by members for several reasons. This time, the applicants sought to address some of the requirements of the Board by aligning the unique "playful" brickwork to the adjacent buildings as requested; incorporating a sign stating "Kingston Lounge" on the inside of a window of the first floor residential unit; and installing an aluminum cornice on the Bergen Street side of the property to bring the building back to alignment with the 1940's tax photo. Additionally, the applicant's architect, Manosha Oya, stated that several unique features to the building that were hidden by the original Kingston Lounge tube sign will be kept and refurbished, thus bringing the property as close as possible to the original design.

The applicant's LPC hearing is on May 23rd. The committee voted 15 in favor with 1 abstention to not support the project plan as presented in hopes that the full Board supports its recommendation.

Ms. Wedderburn asked for questions and comments from the community.

Ms. Tyus stated that she would like to challenge the assertion that the building was fully residential when it was constructed and that the commercial space was a nonconforming use. She additionally explained that the worst part of the plan is the obliteration of the historic signage, and that with the sign on the inside, LPC no longer has governance over it. The sign is not an interior landmark and is rather an exterior landmark. Ms. Wedderburn added that the commercial space is an allowed usage of the property based on use group.

The applicant was not present to answer questions from the community regarding why they have elected not to restore the sign and keep the commercial space. Those in the audience were directed

to watch the replay of the meeting on the Board's YouTube page at (Brooklyn Community Board 8).

Ms. Tyus made a motion that the Board's original motion from February be upheld. The specific language of that motion was that the Board withhold support for the application unless and until the following criteria are met:

- 1) Restore the streamline-style storefront with a brick bulkhead, a corner entrance with its historic aluminum door, aluminum ribbon windows, color-glass banding, and historic neon signs with cutout lettering. Located at the center of the Bergen Street facade was a historic ribbed aluminum surround, and although some of the storefront's features have been damaged or removed, it was the building's stand out feature.
- 2) Restore the main 120 Kingston Avenue entrance, (a/k/a 1300-1308 Bergen Street) Central main entrance on the Bergen Street facade with an aluminum surround and stone stoop: recessed western entrance on the Bergen Street facade with an aluminum soffit panel, containing an aluminum door with a round pane; black and red colored glass banding; aluminum-framed ribbon windows high brick bulkhead, which extends upward near the main entrance to meet the color glass banding; recessed corner store front entrance with metal post and aluminum door with round pane cutout aluminum letters filled with neon tubing reading "KINGSTON LOUNGE" attached to a projecting sign band.
- 3) Create a viable waste management plan that respects the landmark designation requirements and meets LPC approval.
- 4) Retains the non-conforming ground floor commercial use, as has been 'grandfathered' in and by prior LPC documentation from at least 1944 to 2012, for an establishment along the lines of the Kingston Lounge, and does not permit ground floor residential use.

The motion was seconded by Ms. Brown and carried unanimously with 38 in favor, none against and no abstentions.

3. Rent Guidelines Board:

The committees reviewed the proposed Rent Guidelines Board rent increases for one and two-year leases. 2023 will mark the third consecutive year that the Rent Guidelines Board will seek to implement a rent increase on already cash-strapped renters in the City. The current proposal is an increase of between 2 and 5% on one-year leases and between 4 and 7% on two year leases. This comes on top of last year's 3.5% increase on one-year leases and 5% on two-year leases, and the 1.5% increase on the last six months of one year leases and 2.5% on the full term of two year leases in 2021.

The committee voted 16 in favor to petition the RGB not to increase rents at this time, and hopes the full Board will support its recommendation.

Mr. Staton stated that it is ridiculous that the RGB can continue to think that people can afford these increases on top of everything else going up, citing greed as the driving factor.

Dr. Lazur informed the Board that the RGB is comprised of 9 people appointed by the Mayor and that are not accountable to anyone. The original founding of the RGB was to maintain affordability

of housing in NYC, not to raise profit. She elaborated that the average rent stabilized building has a 40% profit margin. She stated that it is great that the Board is opting to send this message to the RGB and Mayor Adams to remind the appointed members that the majority of renters in this city are already rent burdened with most renters paying 30% to 50% or more of their income toward rent.

Ms. Granville informed the Board that the District office will accept comments via email as well so that the thoughts of the community can go into the record. She reminded all the newly appointed members that their votes do not just represent themselves, but their neighbors as well.

Chairperson Weatherspoon asked for questions and comments from the community. Hearing none, Mr. Witherwax made a motion to support the committee's recommendation. The motion was seconded by Ms. Wedderburn and carried unanimously with 38 in favor, no abstentions and none against.

Ms. Tyus informed the public that the next two RGB public meetings will be on May 25th and June 5th in the same building the LPC holds their hearings on the 9th floor.

Ms. Wedderburn also stated that the committee heard a brief presentation from the Borough President's office on the Comprehensive Plan. The next Land Use Committee meeting will be held on Thursday, June 1, 2023 and the next Housing Advocacy Committee meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 14, 2023. Both will start at 6:15 PM and will occur via Webex. All are invited to attend.

Environment, Sanitation, Transportation (EST) – Mr. Robert Witherwax, Chair; Mr. Mark Thurton, Vice Chair

The Environment, Sanitation and Transportation Committee met on Tuesday, April 27, 2023 via Webex. In addition to the Chair Robert Witherwax, present were: Mark Thurton, Vice Chair, Scott Cunningham, Celeste Stern, Deborah Young, Delores Hutchinson, Fior Ortiz-Joyner, Frances Langley, Xeerxeema Jordan, Jennifer Jordan, Phyllis Grannum, Karen Gray, Saskia Haegens, William Meehan, Rosy Doud, Adrienne Roberson, Alex Karman, Alicia Underhill, Brian Howald, Berton Ridley, Henry Butler, Craig Baerwald, Colin Jakubczyk, Collin Waldoch, David Colon, Ethel Tyus, Sandra Armstrong, Glenda Jordan, Harris Krizmanich, Jermaine H. Katarina Yee, Katya Willard, Leroy Branch, Lee Eastmond, Liam Duffy, Lauren Rennee, William Marley, Melissa Johnson, Joann Ripley, May Vutrapongvatana, Princess Benn-James, Nicole Tetreault, Ryan Becker, Sproule Love, Sharon Wedderburn, Yolunda Frett, Dash Henley, Darius Charney, Beverly E., Emily R., Miari Roberts and 1 callers.

Mr. Witherwax stated that the elected officials have already spoken quite a bit about the issues the committee is handling, especially Councilmember Osse. He stated that the committee heard a presentation by DOT on the Bedford Avenue protected bike lane. Unfortunately, there have already been five traffic fatalities in Brooklyn North so far this year, including the death of a CB8 resident when hit on his bike by a turning truck.

At the next EST meeting, Department of Transportation will present on the Underhill Avenue Bike Boulevard and unveil interesting design changes for the community. He asked for volunteers from the committee to review and prepare to report on the City of Yes Carbon Neutrality plan, containerized waste management plan, and traffic management plan.

Dr. Ramharrack asked if there were any updates on the Brooklyn Bus Network Redesign and was given a summary of the process. She was informed that MTA NYC Transit is still collecting data and the agency has recently begun holding in-person discussions on the redesign.

The next meeting of the EST committee will be held on Tuesday, May 23, 2023 via WebEx. All are welcomed to attend.

Chairperson Weatherspoon closed the public hearing and asked for a report from the following committees:

Economic Development – Ms. Brian Saunders, Chair; Mr. Drew Gabriel, Vice Chair

The Economic Development Committee met on Tuesday, May 9, 2023 via WebEx. In addition to the chair, Brian Saunders, present were: Drew Gabriel, Vice Chair, Kim Robinson, Karen Gray, Traci N., Frances Langley, Kat Rina, Patrick Brady, Mary Woods and 1 caller.

Mr. Gabriel, Vice Chair reported that the committee is working on two events in the coming weeks: the Job Fair on May 19th on Franklin Avenue with over 40 employers confirmed. Volunteers are needed for the event. The second event is the Mammogram Bus Community Resource Event on June 3rd at Calvary Community Church. Additionally, the committee will be discussing the Nostrand Avenue Open Streets application. If approved, the Nostrand Avenue Merchants Association's Open Streets application would bring open streets every other Saturday coming this summer.

The next meeting of the Economic Development Committee will be held on Tuesday, June 13, 2023 via WebEx at 6:15 p.m. All are welcomed to attend.

Health and Human Services – Ms. Tamika Gibbs, Chair; Ms. Kim Watson, Vice Chair

The Health Committee did not meet in the month of April. However, Ms. Gibbs stated that May is Mental Health Awareness Month. Ms. Granville also stated that May is Older Adults Month, and encouraged everyone 50 or older to join AARP to get benefits and discounts.

The next meeting of the Health and Human Services Committee will be held on May 18, 2023. All are welcomed to attend.

Parks – Ms. Glinda Andrews, Chair

The Parks Committee met on Tuesday, May 2, 2023 via WebEx at 6:15 p.m. In addition to the chair, Glinda Andrews, present were: Marva Brown-Henry, Ena McPherson, Andrea Ferris, Nizjoni Granville, Karen Gray and 2 callers.

Ms. Andrews announced that the Lincoln Terrace Park Tennis Association summer programs start on May 13th and lessons are held every Saturday at 10 AM. The cost is \$50 for kids and \$60 for adults for the season and rackets are provided to junior members. She stated that participants must also apply for the parks tennis permit to allow them to practice on the courts. Ms. Andrews also mentioned several upcoming events including:

- Juneteenth Monday, June 19, 11am-3pm. "Juneteenth in Brower Park 2023: Celebrating the Black Women's Movement. There will be music, dance, giveaways, and more!

- The Lincoln Terrace Tennis Association cordially invites you to attend the following events at Lincoln Terrace Park: USTA / LTTA Essential Worker's Event on June 11, 2023 @ 10am at Lincoln Terrace Tennis Courts, Cost: Free (Sponsored by NY Presbyterian Hospital)

The next meeting of the Parks Committee will be held on Tuesday, June 6, 2023. All are welcomed to attend.

Public Safety – Mr. Mark Thurton, Chair

The Public Safety Committee met on Tuesday, April 24, 2022 at 6:15 p.m. via WebEx. In addition to the chair, Mark Thurton, present were: Desmond Atkins, Vice Chair, Xeerxeema Jordan, Jennifer Jordan, Kim Robinson, Lisa Atkinson, Janet Collins, PO Vidal, Katrina Thomas-Markland, Nizjoni Granville, Frances Langley, Tamika Gibbs, Jacques Brunvil, Nicole Tetreault and 1 caller.

No committee report was submitted, however, Mr. Thurton welcomed all new CB8 members, and informed all that there is a lot going on in the District. The 77th is doing a towing program to remove abandoned cars from the streets. Additionally, there has been an increase in auto thefts of convenience where thieves take vehicles that have been left running and unattended. Officers are also preparing a youth program as they recognize that it is important to do more than just arrest kids. The precinct is trying to reach the kids that perhaps lack direction and mentoring because of home life.

Responding to Ms. Ortiz-Joyner's question about the rise in catalytic converter thefts, Mr. Thurton stated that it is a citywide issue, and the NYPD is encouraging etching VIN numbers on catalytic converters to prevent aftermarket resale, as well as getting security cases for them.

A resident mentioned the rise in push to start Kia and Hyundai auto thefts. She suggested anyone that owns a push to start Kia or Hyundai to purchase the Apple tracker until you get your car repaired. There is currently a nationwide recall to update the software to minimize the thefts.

Mr. Thurton stated that the next meeting will be held on May 22, 2023 and will start at 6:30 PM, a later start than regularly scheduled. All are welcomed to attend.

Seniors - Ms. Gail Branch-Muhammad, Chair

The Seniors Committee met on Wednesday, May 3, 2023 at 6:00 pm. at Crown Heights Apartments located at 1055 St. John's Place. The committee hosted Congresswoman Clarke Listening Tour, where the community heard from the Congresswoman on important issues facing residents in the 9th Congressional District as well as the country as a whole.

The meeting season will close in June with a musical tribute and live band. All are welcomed to attend.

Veterans – Ms. Nizjoni Granville, Chair

The Veteran's Committee met on Tuesday, April 18, 2023 via WebEx at 6:15 p.m. In addition to the chair Nizjoni Granville, present were: Audrey Taitt-Hall, Xeerxeema Jordan, Jennifer Jordan, and Princess James.

Ms. Granville announced that a few years ago, then Mayor DeBlasio requested that every community board have a veterans committee. Since then, the CB8 Veterans Committee has been working with a few other Central Brooklyn Boards and have been putting on a community Veterans Day Parade. They are working together to increase the size of the Brooklyn Veterans Parade and include more boards this year and future years. At the last meeting, a representative from Congresswoman Yvette Clarke's office was in attendance along with a Veteran's Agency representative to answer questions about veterans services and needs.

The next meeting of the Veterans Committee will be held on Tuesday, June 7, 2023. All are welcomed to attend.

Youth and Education – Nora Daniel, Chair

The Youth and Education Committee met on May 2, 2023 virtually via WebEx. In addition to the chair Nora Daniel, present were: Audrey Taitt-Hall, Xeerxeema Jordan, Andrea Cox and Brittany Hale.

The committee did not submit minutes, but Ms. Daniel stated that the committee heard two presentations, the first from Smoke-Free NYC, which is seeking to reduce the harm done to youth being shown images of smoking and vaping that can in turn encourage them to smoke. The second was from Clara Barton High School.

The next meeting of the Youth and Education Committee will be held on Tuesday, June 6, 2023 via WebEx. All are welcomed to attend.

Chairperson Weatherspoon thanked the committee chairs for their reports and opened the floor to elected official representatives.

Ms. Deanna Foote, Constituent Liaison for Borough President Antonio Reynoso, welcomed all the new members and announced that the new Deputy Borough President is Rev. Kimberly Council. She stated that BP Reynoso and staff are excited to be moving on to the next phase of the Comprehensive Plan. To improve Brooklynite's health, BP Reynoso is partners with the Brooklyn Air Quality Monitoring Initiative to help the Dept. of Environmental conservation target and create strategies to help reduce pollution in the borough. Ms. Foote also mentioned several upcoming events with the BPs office, all of which can be found on the BP's calendar of events.

Ms. Camille Barbin from Senator Zellnor Myrie's office, announced that emergency rental assistance or ERAP, has funding for Section 8 recipients and New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA) residents. She stated that once ERAP applications open, they close quickly, so please do not delay applying if you need rental assistance. She encouraged everyone that lives in a building that is not a new construction or a house with fewer than 4 units to request your rental history. If there is any possibility that you might be rent stabilized, please check and get any overpaid rental money refunded to you. Finally, Ms. Barbin announced that Senator Myrie was able to fight for and obtain essential funding for several important initiatives and community programs in the district including increased funding for gun violence prevention.

Mr. Raul Rothblatt from Assemblyman Brian Cunningham's office announced that he was recently promoted to the District Office Director. He stated that quite a lot has happened since the last meeting, including the new increases to the NYS minimum wage. It will increase to \$16 in 2024 and again in 2026 to \$17 per hour. The legislative is pushing for a bill to prohibit banks from investing in bad faith landlords to make sure they cannot get funding for additional housing

projects. Assemblyman Cunningham was able to secure \$100k for Neighbors in Action for anti-violence projects, managed to secure funding for rental arrears assistance, and first time homebuyers. The second annual Women of Distinction event will be held in June and the office is accepting suggestions for honorees. Finally, there are free after-school services available in the Assemblyman's office.

Ms. Ana Garcia, Constituent Services Director with Councilmember Crystal Hudson announced the Councilmember's upcoming events, all of which are found in the CB8 newsletter.

Ms. Tendai Watkins, Director of Constituent Services for Assemblywoman Stefani Zinerman, introduced herself as the newest member of the Assemblywoman's staff as she just started 3 weeks ago. Ms. Watkins announced that The Bridge Project seeks to solve child poverty in New York. Launched in June 2021 by The Monarch Foundation, it is New York's first consistent, unconditional cash allowance program, and providing \$1000/month for women that are pregnant or with children under 3. For information and to apply, visit <https://bridgeproject.org/our-work/>. The NYS Budget passed at \$229 billion and sadly does not provide all the crucial funding necessary for the city. The Assemblywoman's State of the District will be held on May 17th at Uncommon High School, and the Assemblywoman will discuss the budget and the additional needs of the community that she is fighting for in Albany. Doors open at 5 pm.

Ms. Kristen Rouse, Deputy District Director for Congressman Dan Goldman thanked the Board for inputting information from the Congressman in the CB8 newsletter. She mentioned a funding request made by Congresswoman Ayanna Pressly of Massachusetts for rental assistance and funding for affordable housing, which is subject to the congressional appropriations process. She also mentioned that Congressman Goldman is working to address the backlog in passport processing and encouraged everyone to get ahead of the deadlines when renewing their passport as the renewal is now taking double to triple the amount of time it is supposed to take. Congressional offices can assist with expedited requests, but are making appointments as far away as Buffalo for people with mandatory travel. Finally, Ms. Rouse volunteered to serve on the CB8 Veterans Committee being a veteran with the Army and an current active reservist (schedule and time permitting).

Ms. Karen Chambers from the Kings County District Attorney's office wished everyone a Happy Mother's Day and encouraged anyone with issues to please contact the office.

Chairperson Weatherspoon thanked the elected official representative for their reports and opened the floor for public comments.

Ms. Lisa Atkinson informed the public that several city offices have opportunities for college aide positions, including the Dept. of Buildings and Community Board 8. Anyone with a family member or friend attending college is encouraged to instruct them to apply.

Dr. Sarah Lazur stated that she was representing the Crown Heights Tenants Union, which is turning 10 this year and working to prevent displacement, tenant overcharge, and protecting tenants' rights in the neighborhood. She announced that CHTU is hosting an event on May 20th from 2-5p.m. at Lincoln Terrace Park complete with resources and information as well as training in organizing your building, reading your rental history, etc. She also provided funeral service information for a longtime community activist and resident that lived on Washington Avenue.

Ms. Fior Ortiz-Joyner announced that the Crown Heights North Association and Friends of Brower Park will be holding a silent disco in Brower Park on Saturday, June 10th. Flyers are available.

Mr. Gib Veconi announced that Open Streets are back on Vanderbilt Avenue. This weekend, there will be live music on Vanderbilt at Park Place at 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, and on Sunday, at Vanderbilt Ave and Prospect Place, there will be more live music at 3p.m. Additionally, starting this Tuesday, there will be free yoga classes at the Underhill Plaza.

Chairperson Weatherspoon thanked everyone for their announcements and asked for the final report of the Nominating Committee.

Nominating Committee – Ms. Kimberly Watson, Chair, Mr. Brian Saunders and Mr. Mark Thurton

Ms. Watson along with committee members Brian Saunders and Mark Thurton thanked everyone for casting their vote. After tabulating the ballots, members elected the new officers as follows:

Chairperson: Irsa Weatherspoon
1st Vice Chairperson: Gail Muhammad
2nd Vice Chairperson: Deborah Young
3rd Vice Chair: Nizjoni Granville
Treasurer: Drew Gabriel
Secretary: Robert Callahan
Sergeant at Arms: Tamika Gibbs

The newly elected officers will take office on July 1, 2023 and serve for 2 years.

Chairperson Weatherspoon thanked everyone that ran for office and thanked members for trusting her leadership. She stated that she and Mr. Witherwax were not running against each other and instead are co-laborers for the improvement of the District.

With no additional business to be conducted, the meeting was adjourned at 8:50 PM.

Guests Present

Lula Staton
Jennifer Jordan
Patrick Agard
Neha Mekala
Katharina Mennrich
Stephanie Thompson
Hormuz Batlibol
Dylan Denton
Nathan Turner
Eric Holder
Martin Felix
Palmer Moss

Dane Risch
Geo Solando
Mary Woods
Arnold Carter
Ada Thomas
Thomas Rice
Shovonte Hope
Brittney Frey
Rodney Seymoor
Donna Panton
Audrey Taitt-Hall
Nora Daniel

