



NEWS FROM COMMUNITY BOARD 8

NOVEMBER 2020

VOLUME 42, NO 7

A note from CB 8 Chairperson, Ms. Ethel Tyus, Esq.

Dear Neighbors,

If your building is three units or greater, I encourage you to please see the NYC Dept. of Building's notice of deadline for inspection of your gas service line, which is due every 4 years. The deadline for buildings within Community Board 8 is December 31, 2022. Visit https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/buildings/pdf/11152_gas_piping_cert_sn.pdf for instructions and more information.

Additionally, I encourage everyone to read information culled from an article on deed theft from CityLand (a law journal). **The NYC Council held a hearing to address the deed theft crisis in New York City. Proposed legislation would include requirements to provide information about how to respond to suspected deed fraud.** On October 13, 2020, the City Council Committee of Housing and Buildings and the Committee on Finance held an oversight hearing examining the City's deed theft and deed fraud crisis, and discussed two bills and a resolution aimed at combatting deed theft: Int 1913, Int 1919, and Res 1427.

Current Bills and Resolutions

[Int 1913](#), sponsored by Council Member Adrienne Adams, would amend the City's administration code by requiring the Sheriff's Office, the civil law enforcement agency [which](#) handles real property actions, to release annual reports on recorded document fraud investigations and complaints.

[Int 1919](#), sponsored by Council Member Daniel Dromm, would require the Department of Finance to provide New Yorkers who believe they have been victims of deed fraud with information about what to do in that situation. This information would include who to contact for assistance, where to file a complaint, and where to report an alleged criminal violation.

In addition to the two proposed bills, [Res 1427](#), sponsored by Council Member Robert E. Cornegy Jr., called on the State Legislature to reform New York State's notary laws by increasing notary

public liability for involvement in deed fraud. The resolution is non-binding but helped frame the discussion regarding how deed fraud occurs and how to increase accountability.

Councilman Robert Cornegy of the 36th CD stated that over the past few years, the deed fraud crisis in the City has dramatically worsened, with fraudsters especially targeting the elderly, immigrants, and New Yorkers facing economic crisis. He also noted that the deed fraud crisis has especially impacted Central and Eastern Brooklyn, Bed-Stuy and Crown Heights, and Southern Queens. Deed fraudsters use a variety of tactics to get property owners to sign away rights to their homes, such as posing as foreclosure “rescue” companies, offering fake home improvement services and grants for repairs, and even forging a homeowner’s signature.

The New York State Sheriff’s Office handles deed theft matters and has arrested 49 suspects in deed fraud cases in the last 6 years, with fraudulent transactions totaling over \$48 million. The City Register employees are trained to detect fraudulent activity and refer suspicious matters to the Sheriff. A transaction appears suspicious if it contains a “quitclaim deed,” a sale price far below market value, multiple transfers between LLCs in a short period, or transfers between repeat offenders of deed fraud.

Currently, according to the Sheriff, the City Register records all deeds as long as they are certified by a notary, signed by seller and buyer under certain conditions, and include other required legal documents. While the City Register informs property owners by mail when a deed has been filed against their property, City officials, legal aid attorneys, and community members believe that more efforts need to be taken to prevent deed fraud from occurring.

The Sheriff’s office offered the following guidance on preventing deed fraud, including:

- Reviewing your property records annually for activity on the City Register’s website.
- Registering for the online Recorded Document Notification Program, in which homeowners receive texts or emails when any activity occurs for their property.
- Check with the City Register if you stop getting any water or utility bills, or if these bills randomly increase.
- If you own an unoccupied property, check on it frequently to make sure it is not illegally occupied. If you are going away for a long period of time, ask someone you trust to check on the property and collect your mail.
- Be wary of organizations that offer you cash for renovations of your home.
- Never turn your deed over to a mortgage assistance company.
- Don’t sign property-related documents that you don’t understand. Consult with a trusted attorney first.
- Don’t use a lawyer recommended by someone with a vested interest in the deal, such as a real estate agent. Fraudsters often operate like a gang, with their own attorney, title company, real estate broker, and notary.

To read the full article, please visit:

https://www.citylandnyc.org/city-council-holds-hearing-to-address-deed-fraud-crisis/?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+Cityland+%28CityLand%29.

Finally, I would encourage CB8 property owners to look into Green Infrastructure Grant Program for Private Property Owners. Green roof retrofit funding is available for private property owners in New York City. The goal of the Green Infrastructure Grant Program is to incentivize private property owners to retrofit their roofs with green roofs to manage stormwater runoff. For general information, please visit <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/dep/water/green-infrastructure.page> as the online application is currently open.

Grant workshops will be hosted through the end of this year to explain program eligibility requirements and guide users through the online application. If you would like a copy of the workshop materials that will be presented, download the [Workshop Presentation](https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/dep/downloads/pdf/water/stormwater/green-infrastructure/gi-grant-program-workshop-presentation.pdf) by visiting <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/dep/downloads/pdf/water/stormwater/green-infrastructure/gi-grant-program-workshop-presentation.pdf>.

To join the email list, schedule a pre-application meeting for your specific proposal, or request a workshop for a group of 10 or more people, email gigrantprogram@dep.nyc.gov.

Ethel Tyus, Esq.

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### ***District Manager's Report***

Covid-19 continues to ravage the nation. We would like to thank Congresswoman Yvette Clarke and Councilwoman Alicka Ampry-Samuel, as both representatives provided the District office with much needed PPE—especially hand sanitizer at a time when there was a short supply.

Additionally, New York City is leading the charge in trying to address burgeoning mental health issues amongst city residents. Please note that 8 months into the Great Pause of 2020, it is ok to not be ok and to seek assistance in dealing with whatever is coming up for you at this time, such as anxiety, depression, loneliness, substance use, etc. Resources are available, and you are encouraged to sign up today for the new one-hour virtual presentation that addresses the impacts of COVID-19 on mental health at [https://brooklyn\\_covidconvo.timetap.com/](https://brooklyn_covidconvo.timetap.com/).

The COVID-19 pandemic is a shared traumatic experience that has disrupted life in our city and communities. The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and the Mayor's Equity Task Force are providing a 60 minute virtual presentation entitled *COVID-19 Community Conversations: Mental Health, Equity & Resilience*, focused on mental health during the pandemic to New Yorkers in the areas hardest hit by COVID-19. Topics include grief, trauma, coping and resilience and mental health tips. Participants enter a safe space to discuss the effects of this pandemic and learn relevant coping skills and available resources. Additionally, in connection with the presentation, we will offer a 3-hour certified virtual training in the fall. Participants will learn concrete steps to manage their mental health during the pandemic and ways to help fellow New Yorkers.

To sign up, visit [https://brooklyn\\_covidconvo.timetap.com/](https://brooklyn_covidconvo.timetap.com/). If you have further concerns or questions please email [COVIDconvo@Health.NYC.Gov](mailto:COVIDconvo@Health.NYC.Gov).

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Recent spikes in Covid-19 cases in New York City and State have caused certain restrictions to be implemented for gatherings. Governor Cuomo issued Executive Order 202.74 announcing new COVID-19 restrictions on bars, restaurants, gyms, fitness centers, and residential gatherings. The following restrictions are currently in effect:

- All bars, restaurants, gyms, or fitness centers, as well as any State Liquor Authority-licensed establishment will be required to close from 10 PM up to 5 AM daily statewide.
- Restaurants will still be allowed to provide curbside pick-up or delivery after 10 PM. *(Alcohol to go is prohibited after 10:00 p.m.).
- Indoor and outdoor gatherings at private residences are limited to no more than 10 people, provided that social distancing, face covering, and cleaning and disinfecting protocols required by the NYS Department of Health are adhered to.

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Additionally, there are newly released DOT Winterization guidelines for outdoor structures. Important reminder: If your establishment is operating an outdoor dining area, please note that at least 50 percent of the side wall surface area must remain open for a partial tent or other shelters enclosures.

Also, an outdoor dining space will be considered indoor dining if more than 50 percent of its total wall area is covered and will be subject to the 25 percent capacity limit and other indoor dining restrictions, including spacing tables six feet apart, per NYS Guidance for indoor dining.

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END GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

The **Commission on Gender Equity** and the **Mayor's Office to End Domestic and Gender Based Violence** invite you to participate in the annual global 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence Campaign from Wednesday, November 25th through Thursday, December 10th, 2020. The theme is **Take Action Against Gender-Based Violence**. The goal is to train 1000 persons per day during the 16-day period. If you or your organization are interested in training, please sign up at <https://www.ihollaback.org/16days/> to participate in the Campaign.

Orange is the color of the 16 Days of Activism Campaign, and everyone is encouraged to #WearOrange on November 25th to kick off the Campaign and post to social media. If you have any questions, please contact Helen Broad, CGE Special Projects Coordinator, at hbroad@genderequity.nyc.gov.

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### ***ENERGY SUMMIT***

On behalf of The American Association of Blacks in Energy - New York Metropolitan Area Chapter (AABE-NYMAC), you are formally invited to attend their first Energy Summit. **This landmark event will be held on December 9-10, 2020, 11am-1:30pm.**

This year, the Energy Summit's theme is "Sustainable Energy, Innovation and Our Community ". The collection of talks and panel discussions surrounding this theme will highlight the importance of developing sustainable energy practices in New York City and how all members of the community can be a part of the innovation to sustain the place they call home. Make sure you are a part of this momentous event by visiting the AABE-NYMAC website at [www.aabenymac.org](http://www.aabenymac.org).

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***TOGETHER WE THRIVE NETWORK:
HELP FOR BLACK-OWNED BUSINESSES***

Black-owned businesses have been disproportionately impacted by the COVID-19 crisis due to historic discriminatory practices that have left them less likely to have access to traditional credit, more likely to be left out of government relief funding, and at greater risk of closing due to the pandemic.

In response to these challenges, [United Way of New York City](#) has convened a coalition of nonprofit, corporate and government partners, including [Greater Jamaica Development Corporation](#), [Hester Street](#), [MoCafi](#), and the team at [Perch Advisors](#), to help meet the critical needs of Black-owned businesses in New York City. The resulting initiative, "[Together We Thrive: Black Business Network](#)" will build the financial health of Black-owned businesses, as well as align, activate and increase the capacity of existing systems to meet the needs of Black entrepreneurs.

The Together We Thrive network initiative is open to all Black owned businesses in NYC, and two neighborhoods per borough are being targeted for outreach. Right now, businesses can go to the website and sign up to be part of Together We Thrive. After filling out an intake form, depending on what needs they identify, businesses will be matched with a technical assistance provider, a project-specific volunteer, or both. Pace Small Business Development Center, the Columbia University Small Business Development Center, and Greater Jamaica Development Corporation will be providing the initial technical assistance to this initiative, and additional technical assistance partners are being added.

The coalition is preparing to roll out the loan and grant program, exclusively for Black-owned businesses. Businesses that indicate they are interested in financial support will be offered pre-loan and grant support when the programs become available online, and will be first to be notified when the loan and grant funds are available. Black-run Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) partnering with UWNYP as part of the coalition to support Black-owned businesses include the [Local Initiative Support Corporation \(LISC\)](#), [TruFund](#), and [Greater Jamaica Development Corporation](#).

The website is <https://www.togetherwethrivenyc.org/> and the business intake link is <https://customervoice.microsoft.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=NKyZkKfGHkeGcioffuK6Y8bZOdl7b0xPi3IyB0VJ6etUMEI2WTU5QjIUUVVZENUxVNINMQ0JMMTBXSi4u>.

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## ***NEW YORK TIMES VOCABULARY CONTEST***

The New York Times Vocabulary Video Contest is a beloved annual tradition. This year's 8th Annual 15-Second Vocabulary Video Contest is now open for entries. To participate, all that a middle or high school student needs to do is choose any word from a list of 2,000-plus Words of the Day and then create a 15-second (or shorter) video that defines or teaches the word. Examples of words that students can use across subjects are: aristocracy, beneficent, autopsy, puerile, gerrymander and macabre.

For more information, visit: <https://int.nyt.com/data/documenttools/learning-network-2020-vocab-pdf-qr/454ab050a9d24c96/full.pdf>.

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NEWS FROM THE PROSPECT HEIGHTS NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL (PHNDC)

[Bring your leaves to the Prospect Heights Community Farm for composting](#)

Don't want to throw your raked-up fall leaves into the trash? Compost them at the Prospect Heights Community Farm located on St. Mark's Avenue between Vanderbilt Avenue and Underhill Avenue. PHCF is accepting bagged leaves on the next two Sundays, November 22 and 29, between noon and 2PM. Please use clear plastic or brown paper bags, and do not bring twigs, branches or trash.

[Affordable housing lottery open for 834 Pacific Street](#)

The affordable housing lottery is now open for 834 Pacific Street, a six-story mixed-use development located between Vanderbilt Avenue and Underhill Avenue. Thirty-four apartments are being marketed to tenants with income eligibility ranging from \$65,143 to \$183,300. To apply, log in or sign up at <https://housingconnect.nyc.gov/PublicWeb>.

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## ***SNOW REMOVAL***

Pursuant to Local Law 28 of 2011, the Department of Sanitation's final Borough-Based Snow Plans have been posted on our website. The Final Snow Plans detail DSNY's preparedness and response for possible snow events in the coming 2020-2021 winter season. The snow plans can be found at: <https://www1.nyc.gov/assets/dsny/site/services/snow-response/snow-planning>.

### ***General snow information to keep in mind:***

It is important to know that all winter weather information and information about the City's response to the storm can be found by visiting the City's Severe Weather Website at [www.nyc.gov/severeweather](http://www.nyc.gov/severeweather) or by calling 311. Also updates can found on Sanitation's website at: [www.nyc.gov/sanitation](http://www.nyc.gov/sanitation), where information will be updated regularly. These websites will offer you and your constituents a simple and quick way to keep apprised of current conditions.

In order to ensure an effective plowing response the Department designates streets as follows:

**Critical Routes**, such as expressways, bus routes, main thoroughfares and other roadways that contain emergency services or first responder facilities.

**Sector Routes**, which encompass non-critical streets that can accommodate a full size DSNY collection truck with a plow affixed.

**Haulster Routes**, which service streets that have turning radius constraints, those that may be very narrow and dead ends.

It is important to keep in mind that it does take some time after the snow has stopped falling for streets to be cleared of snow to create a passable driving lane. Although a street has been plowed, it may not necessarily be black top (to avoid damaging roadways, plows do not “scrape” the roadway) -- it all depends on how many inches of snow have fallen, temperatures and traffic volume.

Lastly, the NYC Department of Transportation recently issued updated guidelines for participants of the Open Restaurants Program during snowfall, which are as follows:

**During an active snow alert:**

- Diners may not sit in roadway setups. Please remove or secure any tables and chairs.
- All electrical heaters in roadway set ups must be removed.
- If possible, remove any overhead coverings or regularly remove the snow until the snow alert ends.

If 12" or more of snow is forecast:

- Remove or consolidate your roadway setups to have as small a footprint as possible along the curb.
- If you're unable to remove or consolidate your roadway setup, you are encouraged to take steps to protect your asset from damage due to snow removal operations. The Department of Sanitation (DSNY) has conducted training exercises that included simulated snow removal operations on narrow streets with roadway setups on both sides. DSNY will conduct targeted outreach to restaurants to ensure setups meet DOT siting criteria and that roads can be efficiently plowed and remain passable.
- Use your snow sticks to increase visibility of your setup components if they are moved.

You can sign up to receive snow alerts and all snow-related updates through Notify NYC. To sign up for Notify NYC, call [311](tel:311), visit [www.nyc.gov](http://www.nyc.gov), or follow @NotifyNYC on Twitter.

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EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES WITH SENATOR JABARI BRISPORT

Newly elected Senator Jabari Brisport has three full-time Constituent Advocate positions available. The three employees in this role will provide efficient and effective Constituent Services. Constituent Services entail communication and advocacy on behalf of those in the Senator’s district. Advocates will refer their constituents to the appropriate state or local agencies and elected officials as needed.

The Constituent Advocates will also attend community meetings and events as representatives of the Senator. They will liaise between the Senator's office and agencies on all levels of government. They will monitor and update the Chief of Staff on district and local issues, as well facilitate community organizing among constituents within the district.

NOTE: work may be performed remotely, and other accommodations may be made, on an ongoing basis during the COVID-19 pandemic.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Act as representative for the Senator including answering casework correspondence, meeting or speaking with constituents, and serving as their liaison with state or local agencies
- Manage casework assignments: log all requests into database, maintain up to date files on all cases, screen active cases, ensure responsive work on constituent cases
- Assist with office and community events

QUALIFICATIONS:

- Deep community organizing background, particularly in the areas of racial, climate and housing justice.
- Interpersonal skill: ability to work cooperatively in a team environment; invested in relationship building within the district
- Organizational skill: adept at multitasking with attention to detail
- Interest in social policy and knowledge of issues facing the district
- Strong oral and written communication skills
- Can work a flexible schedule as required
- Proficient in Microsoft Office and G Suite

To apply, please email contact@jabariforstatesenate.com. Please include a resume and short cover letter with your application.

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### ***NEW YORK DRIVES RECRUITMENT***

New York Drives is currently recruiting applicants for our next cycle which will begin **January 11, 2021 with an application deadline of December 23<sup>rd</sup>**.

New York Drives is a free pre-requisite training for those interested in Made in NY TV & Film production assistant training but do not have a driver's license, which is a requirement for Made in NY. New York Drives is a 5 week full- time training program that includes 2 weeks of professional development and students receive up to 30 driving lessons over the remaining 3 weeks. The program includes job placement assistance.

**Applicants cannot apply to only receive their driver's licenses but must be interested in the Made in NY Production Assistant training.**



If you know of any eligible qualified candidates please have them attend an information session. Please have candidates visit our website at [www.NewYorkDrives.org](http://www.NewYorkDrives.org) for more information and to register before attending and information session.

**Eligibility requirements are as follows:**

Must be at least 18  
NYC resident  
Legally eligible to work in the US  
Low income, unemployed or underemployed  
Must have full time availability Monday- Friday 9am -5pm  
Must **NOT** have had a Driver's License previously  
Must have an interest in and qualify for Made in NY  
Must be ready to work in the field upon graduation

New York Drives Information Sessions are available on Mondays at 1 PM via online platforms. To Join the Info Session, go to [www.zoom.com](http://www.zoom.com) and enter meeting number 307 555 9355. You can also join by phone by calling 646-558-8656 and entering meeting ID 307 555 9355. If you experience any technical difficulties, please email [nydinfo@bwiny.org](mailto:nydinfo@bwiny.org).

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We wish the **happiest of birthdays** to **Ms. Glinda Andrews, Ms. Lisa Atkinson, Ms. Julia Boyd, Ms. Gail Branch-Muhammad, Ms. Hanjy Charles, Ms. Andrea Ferris, Ms. Julia Neale, Ms. Audrey Taitt-Hall, Mr. Mark Thurton, Mr. Gregory Todd**, who will all celebrate birthdays in the month of November.

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We send our heartfelt condolences to the Councilwoman Alicka Ampry-Samuel of the 41<sup>st</sup> Council District on the death of her mother, Ms. Ernestine Turner.

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ACROSS THE BOARD is a monthly publication:

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