

**Community Board 8  
Chelsea Piers Field House  
601 Dean Street  
Brooklyn, NY, 11238**

**September 12, 2024**

**Members Present**

Akua Aidoo  
Sharon Alexis-Pierre  
Peter Anekwe  
Princess Benn-James  
Gail Branch-Muhammad  
Robert Callahan  
Benny Faygen  
Tamika Gibbs  
Nizjoni Granville  
Mohammad Hassan  
Tafari John-King  
Frances Langley  
Robert Lapointe  
Dr. Sarah Lazur  
Lisa Maldonado  
William Meehan  
Kwasi Mensah  
Mimi Mitchell  
Fior Ortiz-Joyner  
Taraya Pettway  
Dr. Cadesa Ramharrack  
Anika Roach  
Conor Ross  
Ezra Roth  
Yahya Raji  
Robin Smith  
Meredith Staton  
Katie Taylor  
Dana Thompson  
Mark Thurton  
Briana Uwa  
Gib Veconi  
Irsa Weatherspoon  
Sharon Wedderburn  
Robert Witherwax

**Members Absent/Excused**

Edward Delman  
Dian Duke  
Ammar Elahi  
Jamell Henderson  
Malik Jabati  
David Mantell  
Courtney Morgan  
Robert Puca  
Brian Saunders  
Nicole Tetreault  
Esmond Turnbull  
Kimberly Watson  
Deborah Young

**Elected Officials Present**

Councilmember Crystal Hudson, 35<sup>th</sup> District  
Councilmember Chi Osse, 36<sup>th</sup> District  
Assemblymember Stefani Zinnerman, 56<sup>th</sup> Assembly District

**Elected Official Representatives**

Anthony Gaye, Office of Senator Zellnor Myrie  
Arlene Gillan, Office of Councilmember Chi Osse  
Tamisha Thompson, Office of Councilmember Diane Mealy  
Tendai Watkins, Office of Assemblymember Stefani Zinnerman

**CB8 Staff Present**

Michelle George, District Manager  
Julia Neale, Community Coordinator

Chair Weatherspoon called the meeting to order at 6:40 and welcomed the community to the September meeting of the Community Board.

To open the meeting, the Chair asked new members of the board to stand and be sworn in by Councilmember Crystal Hudson.

Subsequently, Councilmember Hudson was invited to give updates in coordination with Councilmember Chi Osse.

### **Elected Official Announcements**

*Crystal Hudson, Councilmember:* The Councilmember listed a number of upcoming events sponsored by her office. First, roller skating at Jackie Robinson Playground on Friday, September 13<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 PM, followed by a 7:00 PM screening of the documentary Roll Bounce. Next, on Saturday September 21<sup>st</sup> at Fort Green Park from 11:30-2:00 PM the office will host a helmet fitting plus bike swap. The office's housing workshop is scheduled for Tuesday, September 24<sup>th</sup>; it is virtual and in conjunction with IMPACCT Brooklyn. Details on the member's website.

At the most recent City Council stated meeting, the body passed a package of bills pertaining to Juneteenth & Reparations, and a bill to create a truth, healing and restoration process devoted to examining laws and their impact on the black community. Due to strong opposition, the mayor's nominee for Corporation Council Randy Mastro was withdrawn from consideration; the member noted that the Council passed an Advice & Consent bill for agency nominations, common for municipalities, which she believes would have avoided the public fight that occurred over this nomination. She also noted that Thomas Donlon was the likely replacement for Police Commissioner Edward Caban, who has resigned.

*Chi Osse, Councilmember:* The office continues to host Wellness Wednesdays from 11:00-1:00PM in Restoration Plaza, as well as its regular Housing Workshop. Councilmember Osse distributed a flyer with a list of contacts to the public that may be important for 36<sup>th</sup> District. Coming up, the office is hosting the final Brower Park Roll In Movie on Saturday, September 21<sup>st</sup>.

CM Osse apologizes for not able to give a rundown on the city budget at the June meeting because the budget was very late this year. However, he was proud to announce \$2 billion in capital funds won for affordable housing, \$700 million for pre- and 3k expansion, as well as restored cuts to libraries, and a full restoration of \$60m for cultural institutions. In the 36<sup>th</sup> district, CM Osse brought in \$500,000 for youth programming, \$280,000 for senior services, \$90,000 for domestic violence, and \$500,000 for cultural programming (including the Brooklyn Museum).

Finally, the Councilmembers released a co-announcement pertaining to the proposed skate parks in Mount Prospect Park and Brower, expressing full support for both parks. The city will have a total of four new skate parks, with two more in the Bronx funded by a Public Private Partnership funded by skater Tony Hawk, which will expedite the development of these projects.

The Councilmembers then took questions from the members and public.

Mr. Veconi asked for an update on the Atlantic Avenue Mixed Use Plan. The Councilmembers continue to meet with Deputy Mayors on this matter. The most recent development is that the city is looking to identify 100% affordable housing on city owned land. More public meetings should be expected as the ULURP process begins.

Dr. Lazur asked about the members' positions on City of Yes. CM Osse responded that COY is a large package of bills, and there is no date in the foreseeable future because of the complexity of the proposal which the body is reviewing. CM Hudson remarks that typically the Council staff reads & reviews feedback from all communities, which is synthesized for briefing of the councilmembers.

Ms. Langley asks the councilmembers to clarify on senior programming – lots of programming was lost in pandemic. Senior Swim, for example. CM Osse responds, inviting seniors to Senior Pampering Day on Friday September 13<sup>th</sup>. CM Hudson interjects to say that as chair of Aging committee, she has observed that CM Osse is one of the fiercest advocates for seniors especially fighting for restoration of funding for senior centers and programming.

Mr. Witherwax expresses appreciation for the councilmembers' support for the safe streets initiatives, including Underhill Avenue. He asks when the public will see schematics for the skate parks. CM Hudson says that the parks dept has held visioning sessions which must be complete for all parks first, at which point specific plans will be released.

A Community Member is concerned about who is building the skate parks, and wants to make sure that the best builders are used. The Councilmembers respond that the Partnership will create the designs, and the city will build them. What is currently understood is that the park at Mt Prospect Park will be a skate garden, likely in the Southwest corner of the park.

Mr. Mensah asks why are there Citi Bikes being built in the streets. The councilmembers respond that it is out of the hands of the council, but that it is helpful to point out specific locations that are objectionable.

Community Member Isabelle comments that garbage has been accumulating in the parks even with considerable effort from the community to pick it up. She makes note of the considerable interest in the issue of the skate parks, and asks if there can there be coordination with the Community Board to book a room sufficiently large to allow for a large meeting for the community to turn out. The response is that it is too early in the process for scheduling another meeting or communicating a likely date. Additionally, CM Hudson called in trash accumulation to DSNY when she visited recently. CM Osse states that both he and CM Hudson are consistently communicating with the Parks department on this matter. It is important to understand that there are under 30 Parks Enforcement Agents in Brooklyn, which means few available resources. However, Councilmembers are always on call to respond and advocating for more resources & help and they advocate in favor of the 1% for Parks campaign.

Mr. Thurton questioned the logic in having two skate parks so close in geography. In response, CM Hudson says that the sites are selected by Parks for a number of aspects to assess viability, but she doesn't have deep expertise. As one example: you cannot put a dog park on top of a train station because of waste runoff.

As a final announcement, the Councilmembers announce a protected Bike Lane on Bedford Avenue. Currently a major north-south trunk line and unprotected, it is one of the most dangerous bike lanes.

Next, Chair Weatherspoon welcomes Etana, the representative from Chelsea Piers. She expressed Chelsea Piers' appreciation for the opportunity to host and hear from the community, and looks forward to future meetings.

Seeing a quorum of members had been reached, the chair calls for consideration of the voting items of the board.

### **Public Hearing Items**

#### **Housing & Land Use**

The Housing and Land Use Committee met on Thursday, September 5, 2024 at Crown Heights Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation located at 810 St. Marks Avenue, Brooklyn. The committee discussed an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness before the NYC Landmarks Preservation Commission for the property located at 851 Park Place in the Crown Heights North Historic District.

Werner Morath, the lead architect for the project, presented on behalf of the owner of 851 Park Place. Acting as the owner's representative, Mr. Morath was unable to identify the particular elements of the proposed renovation that LPC had flagged for the community board's review.

Mr. Morath proposed changes including the removal of the existing roof to create a penthouse/painting studio, review the visibility of the proposed penthouse addition from the rear (Prospect Place) and at street level, the addition of a fire escape to a grandfathered rear addition for second floor access, and the addition of an elevator within the building if the budget allows for the existing edifice. The owner previously made a presentation before the board in 2018 that was also not supported mainly due to the proposed fire escape. It was noted that because of the COVID pandemic the previously presented plans were not executed. Therefore, the owner began the alteration process with a different architect who is today's presenter.

A motion was made and seconded that the committee withhold support for the application as presented. The committee voted: 23 - Yay 1 - Nay 2 - Abstentions

Unfortunately, there is no time for the committee to revisit the application as their date for a hearing before LPC is October 8<sup>th</sup>, thus negating opportunity for the Board to vote on the item. The applicant was given an opportunity to voluntarily delay their hearing date with LPC for further vetting and information. Specific issues raised by the committee as well as the Crown Heights North Association include the following:

- Clarity from LPC on the issues which triggered the need for community board review;
- Increase the visibility of sight lines using orange netting as opposed to orange tape
- Given that the parapet would be raised in the roof addition, provide details with front window indicating light or lack thereof, at different times of the day.
- Review of elevations from Prospect Place with connection to the surrounding buildings.

It is unknown at this time if the applicant will postpone their LPC hearing. As such, the committee hopes the full Board will support its motion not to support the application as presented.

Ms. Ortiz-Joiner asks if the applicant attempted to move their date with LPC? The applicant responds that they did not.

The applicant stands to ask for clarification from the community board on specific feedback. The owner has lived on the block for 20 years, and was not able to determine what specific defects that LPC objected to and couldn't handle at staff level.

Ms. Mitchell reminds the applicant that someone at the end of Land Use committee meeting said "This is Brooklyn, you knew what you were getting when you moved in." She states that the buildings represent a history beyond the aesthetic, and specifically a penthouse is out of the character of the neighborhood.

Ms. Ortiz-Joyner adds that this building falls within the Crown Heights North Historic District, and CHNA gave several specific reasons including the foliage during the fall and winter, as well as the lack of effort to build mockups out of wood.

Dr. Lazur made a motion to support the committee's recommendation, Ms. Mitchell seconds. The motion passed with 35 in favor, 0 opposed, and 0 abstentions.

The Land Use Committee meets on the first Thursday of the month, next on October 3, 2024 at Crown Height Nursing and Rehabilitation at 6:30 PM.

#### *Submissions and Survey for Capital and Expense Budget Fiscal Year 2026*

Every year, community boards submit recommendations to the Mayor and NYC Office of Management and Budget for the City's Capital and Expense Budget. These recommendations inform the Mayor, City Council, and city agencies on programs and services that need to be funded.

The board invited those in attendance to fill out forms expressing their priorities for capital and budget expense items.

Ms. Taylor is concerned about helicopter noise, asks if their proliferation can be addressed.

Ms. Mitchell laments the closure of the Brooklyn Law Library – Pro-se representatives no longer have access to Lexis Nexus & other research tools at the Supreme Court Law Library at 360 Adams.

Ms. Branch-Muhammad made a motion to empower the Community Board 8 staff to synthesize - feedback sent to the board, seconded by Mr. Veconi. The motion passed with 34 in favor, 0 opposed and 0 abstentions.

#### **Committee Reports**

##### **Veterans Committee** – Nizjoni Granville, Chair

The Veterans Committee plans to recognize Veterans who live in Community Board 8. They are asking elected officials to issue citations to let veterans know that their service is not forgotten. There will be a recognition event on November 13<sup>th</sup>, details to come. The committee plans to honor 10 people at this meeting, and are open to more. The chair asks that if you have family members who are veterans, to please have them come out to the meeting and share their story. Ms. Benn

James notes that many veterans are hesitant to speak about their service, but extends this meeting as an opportunity to be connected to any services they may require.

The Veterans Committee meets on the third Tuesday of the month, next on September 17<sup>th</sup> at Stuypark House 77 New York Avenue at 6:30 PM.

**Seniors Committee** – Gail Branch-Muhammad, Chair

The last meeting was the famed June Paint ‘n Sip, where the committee made plans for seniors to come for a resource day with Hakeem Jeffries. This group also went to Bergen Beach on buses provided by NYPD in August. At the next meeting, Seniors will be collaborating with the Health committee, because Oct is Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The Chair reminds the public that 542 Dean Street is opening soon with affordable housing for seniors, and there will be an information session at the meeting. “If you’ve received your AARP card, you are eligible to join the Seniors Committee.”

The Seniors Committee meets on the first Wednesday of the month, next on October 2<sup>nd</sup> at 1055 St. Johns Place in the Activity Room at 6:00 PM.

**Public Safety Committee** – Mark Thurton, Chair

At the next meeting, Save Our Streets will give a readout about their efforts over the summer. The Chair wants to join forces with Youth & Education, Economics, and the 77<sup>th</sup> Precinct Clergy at the upcoming meeting to have a brainstorming effort for youth and young adult outreach at this upcoming meeting. All are welcome.

The Public Safety Committee meets on the fourth Monday of the month, next on September 23<sup>rd</sup> at the 77<sup>th</sup> Precinct, 127 Utica Avenue at 6:30 PM.

**Health & Human Services** - Tamika Gibbs, Chair

The committee has not met since the summer.

The Health & Human Services Committee meets on the third Thursday of the month, next on September 19<sup>th</sup> at Stuypark House, 77 New York Avenue at 6:30 PM.

**Parks, Youth & Education Committee** – Kim Watson, Chair

The Parks, Youth & Education Committee met on Tuesday, September 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6:00 PM at Brower Park Library, 155 Brooklyn Avenue. Although the committee had no action items this month, the members had a brainstorm on encouraging more youth and stakeholders involvement. Ms. Aidoo and Ms. Roach gave a brief report and added that the committee is looking for after school programs that need funding, or have low enrollment where the committee may be able to uplift or provide resources. Ms. Muhammad – OCFS has cut funding in after school program in Southern Brooklyn, and offers that the committee may be able to invite someone from DYCD or OCFS to come speak to the committee.

The Parks, Youth & Education Committee meets on the first Tuesday of the month, next on October 1<sup>st</sup> at the Brower Park Library, 155 Brooklyn Avenue at 6:00 PM.

**Economic Development Committee** – Lisa Maldonado, Member

The committee last met on September 10<sup>th</sup>. The committee is planning walks around the district to economic hubs, and is also interested in involving young adults in the economic development planning process.

The Economic Development Committee meets on the second Tuesday of each month, next on October 8<sup>th</sup> at the Brower Park Library, 155 Brooklyn Avenue at 6:00 PM.

**Environment, Sanitation & Transportation Committee** – Robert Witherwax, Chair

Mr. Witherwax reported that at this month's meeting, the committee will consider capital budget items. The members are monitoring ongoing projects including the Bedford Avenue Bike Lane, potential crosswalk across Buffalo Avenue at Lincoln Terrace Park, the stalled Brooklyn Bus Redesign, and Congestion Pricing.

The chair reminds that November 12<sup>th</sup> is the date for mandatory containerization for all residents. No more bags on the sidewalk will be allowed after this date. Home and property owners may purchase \$50 for bins from the city.

Tamisha Tompson from Councilmember Darlene Mealy's office rises to note that their staff is looking into a crosswalk at this location. Mr. Anekwe notes that Atlantic Ave at 4<sup>th</sup> Street had a similar mid-block crosswalk installed.

The EST Committee meets on the fourth Tuesday of the month, next on September 24<sup>th</sup> at 810 St. Marks Ave at 6:30 PM.

**SLA & Sidewalk Café Committee** – Irsa Weatherspoon, Chair

Chair Weatherspoon reported that the SLAC has rescheduled its regular meeting for September 19<sup>th</sup>.

The SLA Committee meets on the First Monday of the month, next on October 7<sup>th</sup> at 810 St. Marks Avenue.

Having concluded the committee reports, Chair Weatherspoon returned to announcements from Elected Officials and their representatives

**Elected Officials**

*Tendai Watkins, Office of Assemblymember Stefani Zinerman:* The office's 3<sup>rd</sup> annual handball classic is taking place on Saturday, September 21<sup>st</sup> at St. Johns Park. Additionally, Family Handball Day takes place on Wednesday, September 18<sup>th</sup> at 100 Macon Street. For Seniors – active aging week is September 31<sup>st</sup> – October 6<sup>th</sup>. The member has a number of bills that she is working on, including

- A1808 expanding homeowner tax credits to more census districts.
- A1907 requiring a regular Physical Needs Assessment for NYCHA etc. to submit documentation every 5 years

- A9932 creating a Cease & Desist Zone for aggressive predatory real estate solicitation.
- The House New Yorkers First Act, prevent foreign investment in real estate in Brooklyn.
- A10471, the Worst Landlord Act.

The member is also hosting Our Agenda 2025 on Wednesday September 25<sup>th</sup> at 1368 Fulton Street to discuss Project 2025 and the importance of voting in this election.

*Arlene Gillan, Office of Councilmember Chi Osse:* Ms. Gillan reintroduce herself as the new Chief of Staff for the member, and remarks on an upcoming screening of the Luther Vandross documentary, where the director will be present for a Q&A.

*Anthony Gaye, Office of Senator Zellnor Myrie:* Mr. Gaye introduces himself as the new Director for Community Affairs; the office has left flyers on the table for those present, and the office is hosting a Job Fair on October 12<sup>th</sup> at Major Owens.

*Tamisha Thompson, Office of Councilmember Darlene Mealy:* The Councilmember’s monthly Advisory Board meeting will take place on Saturday, September 28<sup>th</sup> at PS 286. She also notes that Saturday the 14<sup>th</sup> is Constitution Day; the League of Women Voters will be at the library at 61 Glenmore Avenue.

Community member rises to note that they told CM Mealy about a broken hydrant & sidewalk on Pacific Street between Buffalo & Ralph. It is a perennial issue, especially a problem in the winter. Ms. Thompson replies that the office will look into the issue.

Mr. Thurton thanks CM Mealy for the recent movie night in Lincoln Terrace Park. St Johns.

Mr. Mensah reminds people to get in touch with the Board *after* calling 311 first with regard to broken hydrants.

Finally, a representative from Councilmember Hudson’s office reminds that Housing Help is from 11:30 – 4:30 at 55 Hanson Place in the Shirley Chisolm Building by appointment.

Finally, Chair Weatherspoon opened the floor for public comment

**Public Comment**

Ms. Muhammad registers a complaint that gas lines that are being erected and replaced, destroying sidewalks in the process and inadequately repairing the damage. It has been a serious inconvenience in the neighborhood.

Lauren Michelle – Prospect Heights resident introduces herself as the Director of the Brooklyn Skate Garden’s Pablo Ramirez Foundation. She named the foundation after her son, who passed away, which provides scholarships in art & music. She states that Pablo wanted a different kind of skatepark – while most skateparks are built under highways, in unhealthy locations, this is meant to be a garden environment that brings together sports, education & recreation. She says that this community deserves the same sort of facilities as exist for baseball, soccer and other recreational facilities, and that this is a rare opportunity to create a unique & special location that will enhance quality of life in the neighborhood.



Ms. Benn James asks Ms. Michelle what role she plays in the development? Her organization is the advocate that presented idea to the Public Private Partnership.

Next, Miranda Levinson, a reporter for Patch introduces herself. She is looking for stories in the district.

A resident of Eastern Parkway right across the street from Prospect Park says that he supports a skate park, but not in Mt. Prospect Park, a quiet park. That this park will be 40,000 square feet of concrete and a mecca for skaters. He feels there has been inadequate outreach about the selection of Mt. Prospect Park, and elected officials who have avoided opponents of the park. This resident is urging Community Board 8 to oppose the siting of a skate park at Mt. Prospect Park as Community Board 9 already has.

Ms. Levinson objects to the characterization of the park as 40,000 sq ft of concrete. The chair interjects to request that the meeting continue without direct dialogue between community members.

Mark, who has lived in the community for 40 years, speaks next. He emphasized that green space is important and is concerned by talk about paving over Mt. Prospect Park, which is a heavily used park in the midst of many heavily used cultural institutions. Children play soccer, PS 9 uses it for their graduation parties. He says that the Community Board should take this into account and have an opinion.

Rich McCullough says that this park is within usable distance of 7 neighborhoods, and over 700,000 people in CB 8 and 9. In comparison, Brower Park is half the size of Mt. Prospect Park also with multiple uses. Mr. McCullough once took kids who live in Ft. Greene in to Manhattan because they had never been, an important experience for himself and the children. This is an opportunity to provide something totally unique for Brooklyn that doesn't exist elsewhere.

Community Member Ms. Davis states that lot of people came to Brooklyn because they liked it, and that it would be a shame to destroy the physical history of Brooklyn. Those residents of Brooklyn care about the traditional use of parks. She offers that there are industrial areas that will not disturb the uses. That there are cities in Europe that have hundreds of years of history. She is also disturbed by the continual construction which displaces rates, causing them to relocate to homes. She urges compromise which allows for history to be preserved.

Mr. Witherwax reminded people that he has been asking "When are we going to see a design?" for many months. He says that this should be the pressure point so that the city has something to focus on.

Ben Kennedy states that he lived in Brooklyn for 10 years in Brooklyn before moving to Astoria. He supports the skate park and believes it is a misclassification to characterize this as paving over green space.

Ms. Gillan says that until we see a design, it's all rhetoric. One of the older residents in a meeting about Brower Park remarked that they like watching the kids skate. It would be a mistake to block the skate park and give kids a place to gather and skate. She asks for people to wait until you see the design so that there can be real reactions and discussion.

Ms. Mitchell says that as the godmother of a 14 year old skater, what you are asking the board to do is have an opinion on a plan that does not exist. As a community board member, it's impossible to give an informed answer without specific plans.

Mr. Mensah objects to the notion that legitimate opposition to this project is unfounded fear, thinks the opposition to any park at all is legitimate. He urges the board to not be so visceral.

A Community Resident for 40 years states that he feels completely railroaded, that there was no discussion with the community. He says that the reveal of Mount Prospect Park as a location was always presented as a fait accompli. "Why are we being asked? What else could you do but remove trees to create the facility imagined?"

Community Resident is dismayed that a large amount of money put into an area that doesn't need money.

Eric, a native New Yorker has fond memories of playing in Mt. Prospect as a kid, and is voicing support for Mt. Prospect Park skate park as a skater & cyclist. He is especially appreciative that is conveniently located next to public transit.

Mr. Hassan, a new board member, has lived in the community for 35 years. He says that he is concerned that developers take constantly and give little back. He sees little public benefit for the money and benefits given. He states that low income people must get more involved and advocate for themselves.

Mr. Anekwe asks the primary proponents and opponents of the Mt. Prospect Skate Park if they have put in writing what they specifically support and oppose for the Board to consider. Ms. Michelle states that she has.

Ms. Mitchell asks what the process is for the Board to decide. Chair Weatherspoon responds that the next step is for Parks to schedule a community meeting. Currently, there is nothing for the Board to review and look at, but once the Parks Department sends the plans for review, the board will send out notification of the meeting once a date and time has been finalized. It will be reviewed by the Parks, Youth & Education Committee once it is received.

The business concluded, Ms. Weatherspoon thanked the board members and community for attending and adjourned the meeting at 8:59 PM.

**Guests Present:**

Jeremy Berger  
Jessy Adwar  
Nicolette Roach  
Lula Staton  
Danny Arensberg  
Traci Nottingham  
Jeffery Smith  
Shirley Mondesir  
Xeexxeema Jordan

Jennifer Jordan  
Phyllis Grannum  
Aaron Schoenfeld  
Jamie Yarmoff  
Lisa Greenridge  
Carolyn Tyler  
Rosalynn Nicholsun  
Betty Davis  
WD Schiele  
Roger Myers  
Cheryl Walcott  
Ian Clarke  
Max Heirsteiner  
David Wolfe  
Greg McMany  
Rich Mccullah  
Mark Winther  
Christopher Varjas  
Daryl  
Ben Kennedy  
Darlene Lee  
Janiah Lindsey  
John Omalley  
Omar Khan  
Nelly Heredia  
Camoy Briscoe  
Patrick Cranston  
Kris Sunderie  
Isabelle Broyer  
Max Monihan  
Ade Souse  
Werner Morath  
Serhiy R.  
Nathan Turner  
Aaron Kaufman  
Deni Deyonke  
Fatima O.  
Audrey Tait-Hall  
Ryan Christman  
Miranda Levingston  
Randall Danson  
Scott Weinsten  
Kevin Banahan  
Edwin Gur  
Aisha Balogun  
Emry Berkowel