

**Community Board 8
Crown Heights Nursing and Rehabilitation
810 St. Marks Avenue
Brooklyn, NY, 11216**

May 9, 2024

Members Present

Akua Aidoo
Sharon Alexis-Pierre
Peter Anekwe
Princess Benn-James
Dian Duke
Nizjoni Granville
Mohammed Hassan
Jamell Henderson
Malik Jabati
Tafari John-King
Frances Langley
Robert Lapointe
Dr. Sarah Lazur
Lisa Maldonado
William Meehan
Kwasi Mensah
Mimi Mitchell
Courtney Morgan
Gail Muhammad
Fior Ortiz-Joyner
Taraya Pettway
Dr. Cadesa Ramharrack
Yahya Raji
Anika Roach
Conor Ross
Brian Saunders
Robin Smith
Meredith Staton
Nicole Tetreault
Dana Thompson
Mark Thurton
Kimberly Watson
Irsa Weatherspoon
Sharon Wedderburn
Robert Witherwax
Deborah Young

Members Absent/Excused

Robert Callahan
Edward Delman
Ammar Elahi
Benny Faygen
Tamika Gibbs
David Mantell
Robert Puca
Ezra Roth
Katie Taylor
Esmond Turnbull
Ethel Tyus
Briana Uwa
Gib Veconi

Elected Officials Present

Councilmember Crystal Hudson, 36th District
Councilmember Darlene Mealy, 41st District
Jabari Brisport, New York Senator

Elected Official Representatives

Janay Piene, Councilmember Crystal Hudson
Tamesha Thompson, Councilmember Darlene Mealy
Ethan Nash, Bklyn Boro President's Office
Leanna Pearson, Assemblymember Stefani Zinerman
Anderson Fils-Aime, State Senator Zellnor Myrie

CB8 Staff Present

Michelle George, District Manager
Julia Neale, Community Coordinator

The regular meeting of Community Board 8 was called to order at 6:55 pm by Ms. Irsa Weatherspoon, Chairperson. The Chairperson introduced those on the dais, which were First Vice Chair Gail Muhammad, Second Vice Chair, Deborah Young, Third Vice Chair, Nizjoni Granville, District Manager, Michelle George, Community Coordinator, Julia Neale, and Robert Witherwax, who would serve as Secretary during the meeting.

Chairperson Weatherspoon acknowledged, welcomed, and congratulated newly appointed community board members. She asked each of those present to introduce themselves and say a few words about why they joined the Board.

Mr. Peter Anekwe stated that he has lived in the community since 1969, watching the neighborhood change. He stated that he joined the Board because he believed everyone that lives in the district should have a vested interest in what is happening in the community around them.

Mr. Mohammad Hassan stated that he operates a Mosque in Prospect Heights and does a lot of community organizing with mosque members.

Ms. Robin Smith stated that she has been in the Crown Heights community since 1968 and is a Veteran, interested in serving on the Veterans Committee.

Ms. Dana Thomspson stated that she has been in Prospect Heights for 49 years. Believe in investing in the community, part of school district 13.

Mr. William Meehan, lives in Prospect Heights by way of Long Island. Believe in democracy and that the work done in Community Boards is integral to improving quality of life.

Mr. Jamell Henderson, served on Community Board 8 twice before. Lives in Kingsboro Houses and he is a community activist. He is in his final year of doctorate of education program, he will be a 5 time graduate. He wants to protect community and ensure that our voices are heard and listened to.

Ms. Courtney morgan, Prospect Heights, new to Brooklyn, mother, teacher, professor, wife, small business owner. Ready to serve the community.

Tafari john0king: born and raised in crown heights duration of life except for college. Want to focus on youth force and work development programs. Noticed in community needs statement that one of the top three priorities is violence and the need to assist young men and young people to stay on the right path. See in some schools that ther is a lack of support and services, so want to promote opportunities to youth similar to what he had an opportunity to enjoy.

Malik jabati, been in crown heights about 5 years by way of DC. Found out about community boards and figured it would be an opportunity to help make crown heights a safer and better neighborhood for everyone.

Irsa: welcome everyone, we can use each and every one of you. Ready to get to work.

Acceptance of April mins, motion lazur, second staton.

HPD:

542 dean: the two sites are right on the edge of AAMUP. Tacking on the two HPD sites for the ULURP process. Will be included in the broader neighborhood plan.

3500sqft of amenity space on the ground floor. Communal dining room, conference room, laundry. 2000sft of community public space, looking for recommendations for that. 6500 sqft of open space.

ICL person: help those with housing insecurity or struggling with behavioral health issues. Serve about 13k a year. Have 140 programs across the boroughs but predominately in Brooklyn.

Deb: asked ICL about 839 st. marks. Yes, in disrepair, still fighting lawsuit that blocked their development plan. Haven't figured out what to do with it yet.

Fior: how can seniors afford these rents when the average monthly fixed income is about 1800. Will cb8 seniors have preference? Also, how many seniors need family sized units when they don't have kids.

Crystal: this is a first step and still has to go through public process. Wanted to clarify that 40% is the maximum that someone can make. If making less than 43k annually, can still be eligible. Her office will be assisting with the application process. Re the preference, there was recently a court ruling that ruled against community preference. Would like to continue seeing community preference, but there was an argument that majority race communities something or other. Mentioned majority white communities that would not allow mixing and bringing in other races.

Hpd lady: the workaround is to have community fairs to ensure that more residents in the district apply which would then increase the community preference.

Kim Watson: how often would seniors have access to services, especially case management? As needed. Like that the giveback is built in with the community public space.

Lazur: nyers all over the city have difficulty accessing HRA. Will they have a physical presence on site? No. will provide funding for services. Project based section 8 is the vision here? Yes. Dependent on the senior remaining in the building. Any senior that moves into the building after a senior vacates, they will still enjoy the 30% rate. When first pitched in 2020, is the rezoning now that it's connected to AAMUP, will it only include these two buildings or the surrounding ones as well?

Jonah: are including just a small number of lots outside of the building footprint boundaries. Because the sites are along the middle of the block and abut the park, (38) no idea what he said.

Robin smith: is there any priority or preference for senior vets? No additional set aside for them.

Peter anekwe: in regards for the preferences, when you say 5%, it's about 7 or 8 apartments. Is that a hard number or flexible? Fixed number at this time.

Jamell Henderson: why didn't any of the images include arts or cultural aspects of this community? Also, this is difficult for seniors to understand. Criticized the quality of the presentation. Beginning of a very long process.

Gail: extend invitation to attend seniors committee to get feedback from the seniors on the committee.

516 bergen street: with bridge street. Serving households 1 to 4 persons.

Apex building group (they have that mega development in east new York by gateway): multicultural programs still in development. Seeking feedback. Needed to create 23 parking spaces for the city vehicles that will be displaced. Will be designed to passive house standards.

Most units for families earning up to 60% of the AMI, about 80k.

Staton: asked about UAP and if it will be any taller. Not intending at this time to extend beyond what is presented. Crystal: not set in stone. Details can change, might change.

Pettway: question about working in best interest of all tenants.

Peter: design for the building is supposed to address the needs of the community. One of the things lacking is parking. Crystal: both projects are able to provide deeply affordable housing permanently and one of the requirements is to maximize housing over parking.

Anika roach: does the section 8 apply to this building as well?

Lazur: happy to see inclusion of family sized units at affordable levels. Also, can more units be made accessible? All units will be created in such a way that conversion to ADA accessibility can be accomplished within 24 hours.

Crystal: passed a law last year for universal ADA by design.

Courtney morgan: express disappointment that neither presentation talked about engagement with community and how the project site would be integrated into the fabric of the community. Didn't hear anything about fostering and belonging. No one mentioned improvements to the playground or park, planting street trees, etc.

Public hearing:

Economic Development Committee:

The next Economic Development Committee meeting will be held on May 14, 2024 at Brower Park Librar4y 155 Brooklyn Avenue at 6pm. All are welcome to attend.

Environment/Sanitation/Transportation (EST) Committee

The EST Committee met on Tuesday, April 30, 2024 at Crown Heights Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation located at 810 St. Marks Avenue. In addition to the Chair, Robert Witherwax, present were: Vice Chair, Mark Thurton, Uma Bhandaram, Edward Delman, Alan Gerber, Phyllis Grannum, Karen Gray, Saskia Haegens, Delores Hutchinson, Jennifer Jordan, Xeerxeema Jordan, Peter Krashes, Frances Langley, Bobby Lapointe, Lisa Maldonado, William Meehan, Alex Morano, For Ortiz-Joyner, Anika Roach, Conor Ross, Celeste Stern, Ethel Tyus and Deborah Young.

The committee discussed the street co-naming application in honor of Mrs. Miriam Carter at the northeast intersection of Kingston Avenue and Pacific Street.

The committee was impressed by the history of the community revived by the co-name request. Details of the co-naming application include the following:

- a. Miriam Carter founded a drum and bugle corps at her home at 1529 Pacific St in 1949.
- b. Until her death in 1963, and for a decade thereafter, the Carter Cadets played a critical role in the lives of many African-American youths in Brooklyn.
- c. The Carter Cadets participated in numerous competitions, and even traveled to Washington DC in 1961 to participate in Bayard Rustin's first "March on Washington"
- d. Numerous alumni of the Carter Cadets found each other through social media, and have applied to Brooklyn CB8 for a co-naming in honor of Miriam Carter and the Carter Cadets.

The committee voted unanimously with 19 in favor to support the street co-naming request and hopes the full Board supports its recommendation.

Don't think there has been a co-name application before the committee that was as exciting and well put together as this one was.

Lazur: do they still exist? Veronica birdsong: Got big and branched out and split up. Some graduates are instructors with other bugle corps.

Motion fior, second james 36, 0, 0

At the May meeting, the committee will discuss City of Yes, budget requests, and high profile corridors for calming.

Executive Committee

The Executive Committee met on Thursday, May 2, 2024 In addition to the Chairperson, Irsa Weatherspoon present were: 1st Vice Chair, Gail Muhammad, 2nd Vice Chair, Deborah Young, Mark Thurton, Brian Saunders, Secretary, Robert Callahan

The committee discussed several changes to the Board's committee structure. These changes are necessary to ensure that all essential service areas are covered. As per CB8's By Laws, Article 8.1C, the Board has authority to merge or separate committees so long as all of the areas of concern for residents are addressed by at least one committee. The following mergers allow us to be compliant with our By Laws.

1. Due to the fact that the Parks Committee and the Youth & Education Committee have been inactive for several months lacking a chairperson for each committee, the Executive Committee voted to merge the two committees into the Parks, Youth, and Education Committee or “PYE.” These two committees met on the same day and shared many of the same members, and often discussed similar issues/items. The merger at this time allows CB8 to consider upcoming Parks’ initiatives, especially as they relate to youth services and activities.
2. Due to the increasing need for the Land Use and Housing Advocacy committees to discuss the same topics thus leading to more joint meetings, the Executive Committee voted to merge the two committees back into one larger group. The two committees had been one in the past and consequently split into two to allow for non-Landmarks and non-zoning change issues a forum for discussion. Dwindling LPC applications, sweeping changes to the NYC Zoning Text Amendment, and a neighborhood wide rezoning proposal (Atlantic Avenue Mixed Use Plan) make it possible now to maximize efficiency by combining the two committees.

The Executive Committee voted unanimously and hopes the full Board supports these two committee mergers.

Lazur: so for attendance requirements for board members, do the merger count as one or two? One.

Meehan: give an example of an item that the two committees discussed together.

Morgan: is there a chair for the committee with the merger? Yes. Kim Watson will chair PYE.

Motion ross, second Mensah. 35, 1, 0

Land Use

The Land Use Committee met jointly with the Housing Advocacy Committee on Wednesday, May 8, 2024 at Stuy Park Houses located at 77 New York Avenue. In addition to the Chair, Sharon Wedderburn, present were: Xeerxeema Jordan, Jennifer Jordan, Ryan Christman, Katherine Nessel, Alex Sommer, Jordan Fraade, Anika Roach, Scott Weinstein, Sean Mccaughlin, Micheal Higgins Jr, Frances Langley, Daniel Kaplan, Pierre Albert, Deborah Young, Winnie Sha, Audrey Taitt-Hall, Traci Nottingham, Princess Benn James, Fior Ortiz-Joyner, Kurtis Weatherford, Briana Uwa, Dian Duke, Malcolm McDaniel, Cheryl Walcott, Robert Callahan, Barbara Cofield, Betty Davis, Mohamed Hassan, Robert Puca, Kwasi Mensah, Mary S., Maurice Cole, and Shuvajit Das.

The committee discussed the LPC application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for 173 Prospect Place.

The application includes the following details:

- Renovation of townhouse including conversion of 3-family home to one family
- Extending the half-rear two-story extension to full width of building
- The extension will contain steel and glass wall, and the second floor wall openings will also be steel and glass
- Bulkhead on roof inclusive of solar panels, but will not be visible from the street

The applicant's representative stated that few of the rear facades on the block have precious features. In addition, several homes on the block have rear extension and this one will actually reduce bulk despite becoming a full width extension as it is not adding height and will also remain the same depth. Many of the modifications in the plan are designed to work around and with, while minimizing difficulty of undoing some of the damage to the rear façade from previous renovation work.

The current extension is built with multiple materials and the project plan seeks to create a rear façade that is uniform and in line with turn of the 20th century elements such as salvaged bricks, steel, and glass mimicking and evoking the conservatory concept of the era. The ultimate goal of the design is to maximize light in the rear of the property as the windows are north facing, meaning that little light is available naturally during the day.

The committee had several comments related to the reduction in building class from a multi-family to a single family. The applicant's response was that it would be several families in a co-living concept sharing a kitchen. Additional comments expressed concerns for neighbors having their own light and air reduced by the extension, to which the applicant responded that going full-width on the extension and the type of materials would have less of an impact on light and air, and should also create a more visually appealing experience for neighbors that face the rear yard due to the creation of style uniformity.

A motion by Gib Veconi to support the application with the condition that the applicant revert the top floor stylings to three punched window openings failed. Mr. Veconi argued that retaining the three punched window openings would require less removal of the rear façade and fewer changes to the property structure. The applicant's architect countered stating that there has already been so much damage from other renovation projects that it would not be cost effective to accommodate the request as they would then have to add back a support beam that would interfere with other components of the home not under consideration in the LPC application.

Robert Callahan made a motion to support the application as presented without any conditions on the window openings type or style, with the requirement that the applicant contact the neighboring properties abutting the rear yard. The motion was seconded by Robert Puca and carried with a final vote of 12 in favor with 9 abstentions. The committee hopes the full Board supports its recommendation.

Mark: applicant present? No.

Peter anekwe: excuse ignorance. When you speak about 3 to 2 or what have you with the windows...please explain.

Hassan: mentioned that rear façade is less of a problem than the rear yard.

Ms. Davis: losing context of historical nature of district.

Deb: if you want a one story house, buy one. If you want a house with more light, but that.

Motion to support Langley, second staton. Fails. 16, 12, 8

Mitchell: make a motion to deny proposal as presented due to the fact that the applicant and architect are not here for clarity and further discussion.

Second ross. 25, 5, 5

Parks, Youth, & Education Committee:

The Parks, Youth and Education Committee met on May 7, 2024 at Brower Park Library located at 155 Brooklyn Avenue at 6:00 p.m.

In addition to the Chair Kimberly Watson, present were: Michelle George, District Manager, Julia Neale, Community Coordinator, Robert Witherwax, Davey Ives, Micheal J.Sclafani, Daniel Malater, Alison Kelley, Jeff Schneider, Isabelle Broyer, Darcie L., Ian Clarke, Rich McCullah, Mohamed Hasan, Patrick Canavan, Anne Hunter, Geneva Thompson, Ryan Monihan, Aaron Anitou, Justin Germek, Daniel Wolfe, Willow Bullen, Akua Aidoo, Tamanla Msosa, Andrew Kibler, Willow Smith, Samir Zahran, Mark Winther, Kevin Banahan Steve Rodriguez, Michael Heimbinder, Jason LaFarge, and Aaron Warner.

Seniors Committee:

The Seniors Committee met on Wednesday, May 1, 2024 at Crown Heights Apartments located 1055 St. John's Place at 6pm. In addition to the Chair, Gail Muhammad, present were: Iva Webster, Estelle Rogers, Willa Robinson, Linda Ragoo, Mary E. Williams, Jennie Armstrong, Mildred Smith, Loretta Fisher, Mary Bonham, Gloria Freeman, Ida Goldson, Carzfei O' Neill, Clara Odom, Priscilla K., Frances Langley, Bridget Duncan, Bryina Starks, Sharon Alexis-Pierre, Jennifer Jordan, Xeerxeema Jordan, June Laquerre, Barbara Cofield, Patsy Johnson, Hearnie Huggins, Jocelyn Baldwin, Sylvia Gaucia, Helen Selly, Gilberto Perry, Yuelda Williams, Julie Pierre, and Anika Roach.

SLA and Sidewalk Café Review Committee (SLAC)

The SLAC Committee met on Monday, May 6, 2024 at Crown Heights Center for Nursing and Rehabilitation located at 810 St. Marks Avenue. In addition to the Chair, Irsa Weatherspoon, Vice Chair Robert Witherwax, Akua Aidoo, Gail Muhammed, Tamika Gibbs, Jennifer Jordan, Xeerxeema Jordan, Fior Ortiz-Joyner, Robert Puca, Nicole Tetrault, Brian Saunders, Gib Veconi, Cheryl Walcott, and Deborah Young.

The committee discussed the following liquor license applications:

a. Possum, 593A Vanderbilt Ave (Dean and Bergen), FULL License

Details of the application include:

- i. Establishment will serve Peruvian / Asian food at 24 tables with 51 seats; additional service bar with 9 seats
- ii. Hours of operation Sunday through Thursday Noon to 10PM and Friday/Saturday Noon to 11 PM with a rear yard that will operate daily from Noon to 10PM
- iii. No 500-foot exception statement given at the time

The committee voted to support the application with 13 in favor, 1 opposed, and hopes the full Board supports the committee's recommendation.

500 foot except is nice latin restaurant.

Motion to support lazur, second anekwe.

Use witherwax roster

30, 1, 2

b. Pasta Night LLC, 575 Vanderbilt Ave (Dean and Pacific), Wine/Beer/Cider License

Details of the application include:

- i. Location is the former Smokey Vale (barbershop) / Funeral home
- ii. 9 tables with 22 seats, 3 seat bar
- iii. Hours of operation are daily from 11AM to 10PM
- iv. Backyard with 13 tables, 26 seats
 1. Rear Walls will be padded to dampen sound
 2. No amplified music

The committee voted 15 in favor with 1 recusal to support the application as presented. It hopes the full Board supports its recommendation.

Motion dian duke, second aidoo

Mark: did they consult with the neighbors for the backyard. They were notified.

32, 0, 1

c. Dining Out application for Lowerline, 794 Washington Avneue (Sterling and St. John's)

Details of the application include:

- Application includes Sidewalk Café to operate from 5:30PM to 10PM Monday thru Thursday, and 1 PM to 10PM Friday and Saturday
- Application includes Roadway Setup 8'x11' in roadway complete with 5 tables and 10 chairs to operate from 5:30PM to 10PM Monday thru Thursday, and 1 PM to 10PM Friday and Saturday
- Dimensions of roadbed and sidewalk seating match new DOT dimensions in front of its premises.

The committee voted 15 in favor to support the parameters and specs of the Dining Out application for Lowerline, and hopes the full Board supports its recommendation.

Peter: in this application, they want both a sidewalk and a street? Yes.

Motion Mitchell, second james

Use witherwax vote.

Senator Jabari brisport: (2:26) a few weeks ago, state budget passed. Smoke shops: nearly all are unlicensed and illegal. Added additional enforcement and fines, additional agencies that can padlock doors.

Nys extending 2.4 billion to the adams administration to address the migrant crisis.

Something staying open.

Sammy's law: lower nyc speed limit to 20 mph. will be additional discussion to make this possible. Deed theft protections. Good cause eviction bill if your landlord owns more than 10 units of housing. You have additional protections.

Councilwoman Darlene mealy: need cb8's help. Have a senior building of 400 units and their senior center is closed. City wants them to cross and 8 lane roadway to go to a recreation center. 1630 st. marks at mt. aryad senior center. Mayor reduced seniors budget 6.2 mil, will lose all security guards from senior housing and senior centers. Will cost 700 union jobs at 32bj.

Job fair this Monday

June 8th unity in the community event at betsy head park.

Council budget not completed yet.

Veterans:

Nizjoni Granville, Jennifer Jordan, Xeerxeema Jordan, Robin Smith, Audrey Taitt-Hall, Princess Benn James

Committee reports:

Seniors: no presenter in May but still met. Last meeting for the year will be June 5th. will have a sip and paint. Thanks to partnerships with friends of CB8, chna, and LDC, is fully paid for.

Leana pearson, assemblywoman zinerman: chief of staff. Now that legislation has passed, previously, the sherrifs office was the only entity that could shut down and padlock an illicit shop. But now, the new legislation allows the sherrif's office to deputize the nypd to do the same. Assemblywoman trying to push a bill for cannabis education. Also holding commercial use of e scooters and bikes accountable to ensure that riders are safe. Member has proposed housing legislation that would make the worst landlord list applicable to the entire state. This would increase fines, et al. saved suny downstate, will not be closing.

Peter: can we use the rico law to hold landlords accountable?

Economic: brian: happy mothers day. Welcome all new members. Economic development very important in the community. Please get involved. Next meeting this coming Tuesday at brower park library.

Health: Watson: meet 3rd Thursday of the month. Next meeting this Thursday, 1055 st. john's place. Looking to see how to plan the June meeting in an outdoor location and fine tune programs and initiative for the upcoming season. Committee is growing and seeking to build on it.

Parks: met Tuesday at BPL. Had lively discussion on mt propsect park and st., marks playground. Brower park skate park meeting was last night. Though the way they were introduced wasn't exactly what the community wanted, they are coming. It is our opportunity to tell parks what we want to see. Use our voices to make sure that the design is what we want to see in the community. They will return in the fall sometime for future discussions.

Youth: youth expo on June 21 at weeksville heritage center. Still looking for volunteers. Meet first Tuesday.

Mealy: on June 19th at 71st precinct, Juneteenth event. 12 to 4 pm.

Veterans: meet the 3rd Tuesday. Trying to find out who the veterans are in the community to honor them. Want to help and honor the veterans. Not getting too much assistance from the electeds on finding out who they are, but are working on creative ways to find them.

Housing: city of yes: go to city planning's youtube page for the presentations. A lot of information and we are the people that have to deal with the changes that are coming.

New members: do not ignore your email as you are the eyes and ears of the community. You have a duty to represent the people here.

Public safety: meet 4th Monday. At last meeting had Brooklyn special victims squad. No may meeting. Next meeting June 24th at 77th.

Public comments: michelle: cb8 having tie drive. 500 young men making a difference will teach the guys how to tie ties.

Princess benn-james: mental wellness fair on 21st. may is mental health month. Asking members to come out and talk about mental health. What does mental health look like to and for us? Let us remove the stigma. C and d building on kings county.

Resident: concern that affects us all, which is the explosion of dog fecal matter littering our streets and the proliferation of dogs in human places such as our stores, restaurants, etc. is a public health issue for us as it relates to zoonotic diseases.

Lorna boullino at ny presbyterian hospital in park slope. Youth needs assessment in collaboration with citizens committee for children. Listening sessions coming up for youth 14 to 24. (3:12)

Anderson fils-aime, senator myrie: appointment only. Happy mother's day. Immigration fair at suny downstate may 18th.

Old business: the wurd guy from slac: Kingston lounge almost finished and is under renovation.

Anika roach: free mammograms.

Irsa: happy mother's day to all mothers and mothering entities. Meeting adjourned 10:15pm.

Guest Present

Alicia Pritchard
Kim Robinson
Phyllis C. Mcfadden
Betty Davis
John Delvin
Jennifer Jordan
Julius Buseche
Arna Lipkin
Audrey Taitt-Hall
Barbara Cufeild
L. Boston
Scott Weinstein
Marilyn Downey
Lesley Steele
Joseph C.
Renan Poliafito
Constance Lesold
Carmen Martinez
Denise Deyonker
Loren Avellino
Rebecca Crimmins
Eric Bunke
Diana Foster
Aisha Balogun
Mubarak Ahmed