

**COMMUNITY BOARD 9  
890 NOSTRAND AVENUE  
BROOKLYN, NY 11225**

**MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY BOARD MEETING  
HELD ON APRIL 23, 2013  
MIDDLE SCHOOL 61 AUDITORIUM  
400 EMPIRE BOULEVARD, BROOKLYN, 11225**

**Members Present**

Amy Albert  
Pastor Robert Ambrose  
Stuart Balberg  
Fred P. Baptiste  
Aldith Clarke  
Veta May Clarke  
Josette Coicou-Brioche  
Shirley Dor  
Edmund Fanning  
Shelia Foster-Golding  
Flavia Francis  
Charlene Gayle  
Rabbi Jacob Goldstein  
Theopia Green  
Rabbi Nochum Gross  
Tessa Hackett-Vieira  
Sylveta Hamilton-Gonzales

**Members Present**

Brenda Hutto-Lucas  
Daniel Igvoidstad  
Maurice Jean-Baptiste  
Demetrius Lawrence  
Samuel Marmulzsteyn  
Carl Morgan  
Frank Nicholas  
Dwayne Nicholson  
Hilary A. Papineau  
Rosemarie Perry  
Diana Richardson  
Brenda Scott  
Chanina Sperlin  
Rabbi Joseph Spielman  
Victoria St. Clair  
Timothy Thomas  
Jacqueline Welch

**Members Absent**

Rev. Phyllis Brown - sick  
Michael Cetera, AIA  
Aron Hershkop  
Ruby Hodge  
Jacqueline Love - maternity  
Jen Phillip  
Gerald President  
Karlene Robinson  
Mary Rollerson-Blackett  
Yvonne Straker - sick  
Evelyn Williams

**Elected Officials/Agency Representatives Present**

Ramona Cabieja – Hon. Mathieu Eugene  
Alfred Chiodo – Hon. Letitia James  
Arna Lipkind – Hon. Darlene Mealy  
Reuven Lipkind – Hon. Eric Adams  
Val Henry – Downstate Medical Center

Charles Jackson – Hon. Yvette Clarke  
Debra LeSane – Kings County Hospital  
William Boone – Medgar Ever College  
Hon. Jesse Hamilton

**PUBLIC SESSION:**

**Michele Kirschbaum, Director of Programs, New York Peace Institute will present information on free dispute resolution services provided by the organization – covering areas such as: disputes between neighbors – noise, pets etc. – landlord/tenant; parents/children; parents/school administrators, among others.**

**Michele Kirschbaum introduced her topic by asking if anyone knew the meaning of mediation. She then explained that mediation was a process to help people involved in any kind of dispute. It could be a dispute about noise; it could be a dispute between neighbors; parents who are separating and trying to work out an**

agreement about the children. It could be a dispute over a debt; money matters; or a fight that escalated into an arrest.

Some of these disputes can result in court cases which can take a lot of time. Mediation is another way of settling disputes. It is available to everyone who lives in the city, for free. New York City Peace Institute is funded by the Mayor's Office and the Court System. The funding stream has been around for a long time. This helps the overburdened court system to get some of its cases mediated. An example of a case: a gentleman or woman called about the neighbor upstairs having loud music, they have tried everything, they don't know what to do. They called 311, there was no help. They called the police, the police came, the noise still continued. Then she complained to the landlord and the landlord said it is not much that he can do; he however wrote a letter to ask these tenants to move. This is where we come in. My question to him was: "Do you think that they are angry with you?" He said "yes". So I said is it possible that some of the noise the upstairs tenant is making is a form of retaliation? He said "It is possible." That is a typical situation. What we would do is reach out to the tenant upstairs, we write her a letter that says who we are and what we do, then we set up a date and time, get a mediator and the parties together in a neutral place and we talk. We try to help them to get their anger out, to see each other eye to eye, etc.

The mediator then writes up a contract, the parties sign it along with the mediator. Seventy percent of the time it works out. Many times people are in the process of separating, we work with them to get it done in ways that are more dignified; rather than having a judge telling them what to do regarding their child or children. Mediation is very effective especially with custody agreements. Agreements can be taken to the judge after they have been drawn up.

Another way we help is for parents with children with special needs. When there are disputes between these children and the New York City school system; we mediate ways to rectify the problem. Those mediations are binding. Lastly, mediation works in disputes with families, for example: parents, children or siblings who are not getting along.

Mediation training is given at least four times per year. If interested in becoming a mediator, go to our website, you will find all the information. Also, there are brochures at the back, feel free to take one.

#### **Questions and answers:**

**Community resident:** What if the people don't like each other and they are throwing a lot of nasty things about each other? **Answer:** A mediator does not focus on what is true or what is not true because we are not making decisions. What we want is a dialog among the parties, rather than what is true or untrue.

**Chairman Goldstein** thanked Ms. Kirschbaum for her presentation.

**Mr. Rudy Delson and Ms. In Cho** will present the proposed new design for the Parkside Plaza – the proposal is based upon design elements potentially available through the Department of Transportation's plaza Program.

**Mr. Tim Thomas**, Chair of Community Board 9's Environmental Protection Committee, introduced Rudy Delson. Tim explained that there were two spaces, one was the plaza by the Parkside Avenue station and the other was the Flatbush trees at Flatbush and Ocean Avenue. The Board has been looking at these two spaces for a long time, to see how they could possibly be used as green spaces. Tonight is exciting; we have people

who will give us ideas on how to utilize these spaces. About three years ago, Rudy came up with the idea which he will present to us tonight.

**Mr. Rudy Delson** said that he had come before the Board one year ago and that tonight Ms. Cho and he were there to talk about the plaza at Parkside Avenue. There are certain streets which are a problem; Parkside Avenue is one of them; the traffic has been terrible for many years. The second problem is the subway station. The roof is collapsing, trees are growing on the roof and the walls are covered with graffiti. The Transit Authority has set aside money to restore certain parts of the station. Restoration will commence June 2013 and last for about 16 months. It is important to note that this reconstruction will take place in June, so that we are aware of the impact on transportation. Tonight, we are here to talk about the plaza. Right now it is wasted space; we would like to turn it into a space the public can enjoy.

When I came here a year ago, I spoke about the design contest (he showed winning art work). Last summer, we applied to the Department of Transportation through the Plaza Program. The way it works is that the applicant community group will have the responsibility for maintaining the plaza once it is completed. DOT has a number of tool kits that you can use - concrete blocks, planters, benches, tree pits, tables and chairs – are all elements that can be incorporated into the design. How this works, DOT will put in these elements but you will have to maintain them once they are in place. The cost could be between \$10,000 and \$20,000 a year to maintain.

Over the next twelve months they will improve the skating rink at Prospect Park. There will be tens of thousands of people coming through this area to Prospect Park. Parkside would stand out as a place where they could spend their money; have a drink; have a meal, etc., then get on the subway back home. In January, we went back to DOT with new ideas for a redesigned plaza that would utilize DOT's elements of planters, rectangular benches, tree pits; extending the greenery of Prospect Park onto Parkside Avenue. The design is flexible; it allows people to move freely. Where we are now with DOT is negotiating with them as to what makes sense, figuring out a budget and how we will be able to raise funds. Mr. Delson expects to be back within the next twelve to fifteen months before the project starts to give the final design of the plaza. He asks for the Board's support as he continues to work on the project.

**Chairman Goldstein** – We are so grateful for what I have seen here tonight how we can enhance our community. Our gratitude goes out to you Rudy and Ms. Cho. As I look around, I can see talent in our community, thanks again. We look forward for the finished project.

### Questions and Answers

**Community Resident:** What group will be responsible for the maintenance and cost of the Plaza? **Answer:** We are trying to work that out. The elements to be used, we are trying to keep the maintenance cost as low as possible. DOT will not commit unless we have the maintenance in place; we are thinking about groups like Prospect Park, PLGNA, etc.

**Charles Jackson:** Are you planning on fundraising; allowing rental space for vendors? **Ms. Cho:** In terms of space for vendors there is someone who uses the space on weekends. We are not planning on that kind of fundraising.

**Tim Thomas:** The answer is yes, if we go into contract with DOT we could rent out space. We have the right to use the Plaza as we see fit. Organizations can be in partnership with us; we can choose the organizations that

have the community's best interest in mind. Yes, we could rent out space to vendors, we could have performances there; we could have regular readings; anything we want. That is the good side; the bad side is how to raise the money. We now have an organization, Friends of Community Board 9, which is authorized to raise money on behalf of the community. We are also working with PLGNA and Council Member Mathieu Eugene has been very supportive. Maybe, Congresswoman Yvette Clarke might give us some funding."

**Mr. Jackson:** You have the same right as anyone to use the plaza as you see fit? **Tim Thomas** – You are exactly right. What we need is to be able to get the money to maintain it. It is something we need to address. How are we going to maintain it? We need to get a certain amount of money every year. I have spoken to Senator Eric Adams who is running for Borough President this year. Should he be elected he would be a nice person to have on our side. Then there is Councilmember Mathieu Eugene, as well as Congress member Yvette Clarke.

**Javaka Steptoe:** This is interesting, you said you have the right to use the Plaza as you see fit. Does it mean only you can use the Plaza? **Tim Thomas:** First of all, Atim is on our committee. She has been involved every step of the way. She is also someone we use as an example; we would say look at what Atim has done. We are not getting rid of what is there; we just want to make it a more beautiful space."

**Ms. Cho:** What we want to do is to enhance our community. We are not saying everyone using the Plaza has to pay. Our goal is to minimize the maintenance. It is not to say anyone wanting to use the Plaza for a performance must pay, it is for the community."

**Chairman Goldstein:** This project is for the community by the community, there are no outsiders here. This is our plan, our hope for the future.

**Community Resident:** Early in the presentation you said a lot of people will be coming through the Parkside station with the opening of the Skating Rink in Prospect Park, will this be the same path that will be used, while the subway is being constructed? **Answer:** No, after the construction they will use the same path to the skating rink.

**Community Resident:** This might become a high maintenance cost. **Answer:** That's a good point. We are taking into consideration the garbage. We need to keep Parkside clean and green.

**Community Resident:** Suggestion is to get big garbage cans and bike racks to make it more convenient.

Inaudible question; **Ms. Cho:** This is a work in progress; we want it to be environmentally friendly.

**Tim Thomas:** This has been an open process. Maybe, twenty to twenty-five people are involved, we encourage people to be involved.

**Community Resident:** Is this one person's idea or what? **Tim Thomas:** I would say Rudy is the dreamer.

**Laurie Combo:** There are different dynamics in this community; you should try to get the local people involved.

**Chairman Goldstein:** This will enhance the community, anything that is placed there. That is the bottom line; I think we should put first things first. It is an idea let us work on that.

**Ms. Cho:** I am tickled pink. In response to your first question concerning artists, the competition that I had done that triangle piece was removed and placed on the opposite side of the MTA to generate and enrich the culture in our community. Community artwork will be part of the project. This could be funded by the MTA Art Project. We would like to have artwork in every subway station.

**Community Resident:** Inaudible. We have a program that could help to bridge that gap.

**Chairman Goldstein:** That is excellent. We want to thank Rudy and Ms. Cho, this is fabulous work. Thank you for your hard work.

**Presentation of proposal for the refurbishing of the "Flatbush Trees" by Artist David Eppley with the help of students from district schools, in collaboration with the Department of Transportation and a local community based organization**

**Tim Thomas** introduced **David Eppley** and the "Flatbush Trees". He informed that Mr. Eppley had contacted the district manager with his idea to refurbish the tree sculpture at Flatbush and Ocean Avenues. The District Manager set up a meeting at the site of the "trees" and David explained the work that he did and the medium that he used and this started the conversation about this proposed project.

**Artist David Eppley** thanked all for listening to his ideas. He has done a lot of public art over the last ten years, involving museums as well as corporations. He just completed some work with third, fourth and fifth graders from PS 65 in Cyprus Hills, Brooklyn.

**Mr. Eppley's PowerPoint** presentation showed the project that the students at PS 65 worked on, it depicted the hexagon flowers that they created. Inside each flower was a drawing of their neighborhood. Mr. Eppley said that the work had his signature on it but it was really the children's art. They made the material for me and together we embodied the true neighborhood, teachers, train stations, backyards, all kinds of things which when you get up closer you can see the soul and spirit of the community of Cyprus Hills. Viewing this idea is how I came up with the idea for the trees. Looking at it, it looks generic but it is really sculpture. The trees are in bad shape, it is sad, I think it has not been renovated since it was made.

What I would like to do, I would like to invigorate it with color; I would like to work with the students from the schools in the community. I would work with them for about one year in an after school program. This is something that I am familiar with, I know that it works. It is an engaging process that would really need a year. I would like to work with them one day a week after school; possibly at the Botanic Garden or in a classroom at their school. It would be about ten to fifteen students with a passion for art, developing the experience of working with each other. I would not just like to help the neighborhood, but also to help aspiring artists who don't have a clear path to make that happen. I have access to resources to help children develop their art at a higher level. This is a project that I feel like I am the co-pilot and the children are the pilots in the driver's seat. I feel that this particular project is one that would be embraced by children and the community. Children project innocence, they project the future. That is my desire and this is what I am trying to pitch here tonight. As I said before it will take about a year, the budget is very low. This is a thing that I love and have been doing for over thirty years.

**Mr. Eppley** showed the material that would be used in the project. It is made of vinyl. It can be washed. It is rated for about six to seven years in the elements; it will not fade or chip. One good thing about this vinyl, it will pop out as you come into the neighborhood; it will be a prominent fixture in this neighborhood. I like also

the fact that nothing is being torn down. I like to be resourceful, to use what is there, no matter how ugly it is. What I would like to do is to nurture what is there now with color. I know I have the help of PLGArts and Tim. As I said before, I have been doing public art for over ten years it would be an honor to do one in my neighborhood. I live one block from the "Flatbush Trees"; I would consider this an honor to work on this project.

**Chairman Goldstein:** Here we have another artist who has the passion and the talent to take something that is derelict and take it, enhance it, to make it a work of art.

### Questions and answers

**Community Resident:** What age group will be involved? **Answer:** I would work with middle school kids; they would have to commit to the project. I think it would be more efficient and effective if they were in middle school.

**Shawn Thomas:** You said fifteen kids, how do you break this down? **David Eppley:** I look at students by going into the classrooms, work with the art teacher for a day or two, see how much they can give. After about three or four classes doing that and talking with the art teacher, we can pretty much see who has the desire, attention span, behavioral elements, all the things that need to go into this to make it work.

**Chairman Goldstein:** What is the cost of the project? **David Eppley:** The vinyl would cost \$3,500 - \$4,000, which is pretty cheap in terms of material. I would need students who are talented. I have been working with foundations who would help these students further their education.

**Community Resident:** It is visually entertaining, have you consulted DOT? **Tim Thomas:** This project will be in concert with DOT. What happened was that this sculpture was developed but no maintenance was put in place to take care of it. Part of the process here is working with DOT. The trees belong to DOT. This was put up in 1979 as part of a DOT project, but no money was set aside for maintenance. This location is part of a long term project that the Board is advocating for to utilize the parking lot currently being used by a few employees of the Transit Authority. The question is how do we reclaim the parking lot which actually belongs to everybody rather than a few employees of the Transit Authority.

**Community Resident:** What about the visual lighting? **Tim Thomas:** It will be something like the Barclays Center on Flatbush; you will have to adjust to it. **Resident:** It might have a blinding effect on the eye. **Answer:** We will have to look into it."

**Rosemarie Perry:** I am wondering if the drawings could be seen; the PS 65 project seems to be lower. **David Eppley:** We will use the larger hexagons and we will figure out what will go into the hexagon. What I am imagining is that the ones that will have interior drawings, logos, whatever will be big enough. The drawings are also for closer inspections, meant to be seen from afar and as you approach it things sort of reveal themselves to you. The answer is the bigger hexagon will have the drawings.

**Community Resident:** What schools are you planning to work with? Where will you get the money from? In your drawing I noticed "Flatbush Avenue" was kind of covered up, do you want to do that? **David Eppley:** That was my intention is to leave a little bit of that behind not to erase it. I do not want to erase the past I want to embrace the past. What I do know I have been pitching it out with Community Board 9, sent them pictures,

much to my amazement they wanted me to pitch it to DOT. The Art group called Tim who has discussed it with Councilmember Mathieu Eugene; I don't know if other artists have been approached.

**Chairman Goldstein:** Let me make this clear, this artist is doing something about this. It has been laying in the community for so many years, deteriorating. So many people including myself never saw it fit to do anything about it.

**Tim Thomas:** We would like David to work with the Education Committee to identify the schools and I suspect the Education Committee would be looking to the art teachers to present ideas. As to the ideas of other artists involved, David is the only one who saw the need and wanted to do something.

**Theopia Green:** It sounds like a wonderful project. Have you worked with students in other areas over a year?

**David Eppley:** Yes, P.S. 65 project was a three-year project. The work itself was like a year and a half and then I worked with the students for another two years to make it a permanent work.

Inaudible question. **David Eppley:** they were third to fifth graders. I didn't have any control over where they were going, they were pretty set going to their next school. Also, I was involved with the School Construction Authority so I had to follow certain guidelines.

**Laurie Combo:** One of the things that makes a public art project successful is when you are new to a community you see things that we the residents wouldn't see. How can you incorporate local artists?

**David Eppley:** One of the things I would like to do is to work on site with these children, one of my favorite sites is the Drum Circle in Prospect Park. I think that would be great to have the drum circle going as we work. Not only is that space visible but the audience that is there will set the stage as a gateway for the project.

**Henry Perez:** I noticed the other artwork was for indoors, this is outdoors, how is this going to conform with the material you are using, how are you going to attach them? **David Eppley:** That is a great question. This material is really designed for this type of project. You see this material in use on things like FedEx trucks, awnings, etc., it is really calibrated for all kinds of weather. I have done almost a dozen projects using this material, some even people walk on.

Inaudible question: **David Eppley:** The children will first construct the hexagons outside the classroom; then together, in the classroom, we will construct the modular units, a dozen of these clusters together, then it would be installed by me, or, depending on DOT guidelines, by someone else. It's a very aggressive adhesive that is used, it will not come off; three or four years is the guaranteed rating.

**Pearl Miles:** The concrete is deteriorated, is DOT going to fix it? **David Eppley:** I imagine so; we can work with DOT on that.

**Chairman Goldstein** thanked David for his presentation.

## **BUSINESS SESSION**

The business session began at 8:30 pm with 33 members present.

## Minutes of the March 2013 Meeting

The minutes of the March 2013 meeting were adopted with necessary corrections.

### District Manager's Report

**District Manager Pearl Miles** extended thanks to Councilmember Mathieu Eugene who was in the audience for being a friend to the community. Ms. Miles said that the councilmember did something that was very dear to the community and which had been languishing for many, many years. Ms. Miles asked the Council member to make the announcement. **Council member Eugene** said, I am only a servant Pearl, this all happened because of you. Our District Manager has worked so hard, she would call, what is going on guys? I would say I am working on it. Pearl you read the invitation.

Reading of the invitation: "Council Member Mathieu Eugene and Community Board 9 invite you to join them at the Mary Pinkett Street Co-naming Ceremony, Tuesday, April 30<sup>th</sup> 2013 at 11:00 am, at the northeast corner of Washington Avenue and Lincoln Road. All are invited."

Ms. Miles said that Council member Pinkett served this community with distinction and did a lot for the community. She left when term limits came into effect. She was a mentor to me and I appreciate all that she has taught me and the work she has done. Ms. Miles asked the community to attend the ceremony.

Council Member Eugene: This is an example of what can happen when we all work together. When we work together there is nothing that we cannot achieve; I say this all the time. Thank you Pearl, thank you so much. Council Member Eugene also thanked the members of the board for their hard work.

The Councilmember said that health was very important, without health we cannot do all this work. He announced the following:

- Everyone is invited to a health fair on Saturday, April 27, 2013, from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm, at MS 2, 655 Parkside Avenue between Nostrand and Rogers Avenues. There will be doctors and other medical professionals, health screenings, etc. There will also be information on job training for people in need of that information.
- Lowes Theatre is still looking for people who need jobs. Contact his office for further information.
- Help for small businesses who received summonses for not displaying a license. The City Council has asked the City to review all the summonses issued to small businesses because some of them may be wrong.

### District Manager's Report

- Summer youth employment program deadline is May 10, 2013; children ages 14 to 24 can apply, application is online at [www.nyc.gov/dycd](http://www.nyc.gov/dycd); or call 1-800-246-4646 for further information.
- The NY Knicks Alumni and the Knicks City Dancers applied for a permit to be on the corner of Nostrand Avenue and Empire Blvd outside the Chase Bank, Thursday, April 25<sup>th</sup>, from 4:00 to 6:00 pm. Will have give-a-ways for children; this is proposed, call the office to confirm.
- Updated information on the SBS Project on Nostrand Avenue and Rogers Avenue is in the back of the room.

- Update on Camba Gardens project – this is the project on Albany Avenue – the project is 69% complete at 690 Albany and 65% complete at 738 Albany. Project is on track to begin occupancy in October 2013.
- Installation of city benches at 416 and 418 Kingston Avenue; and 1183 and 1196 President Street.
- Borough President Markowitz Federation of Block Associations conference on May 14<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 to 8:00 pm, at Borough Hall, 718-802-4480 for more information.
- Borough President Markowitz has reached an agreement with city hall to develop a seasonal amphitheater on Coney Island, located at the Boardwalk and West 24<sup>th</sup> Street, for performances, especially when it rains.
- The Borough President, Empire State Development, the City of New York, will issue an RFP for the use of the Bedford-Union armory.
- Greenest Block in Brooklyn contest, deadline is June 1, 2013, call 718-623-7189 for more information.
- May 11<sup>th</sup> is Bike the Branches day, to raise funds for the Brooklyn Public Library – website for more information is [www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org](http://www.brooklynpubliclibrary.org)

### **Committees' Reports**

**Health and Social Services Committee – Rev. Robert Ambrose (see written report)**

**Joint Education and Youth Services Committees – Amy Albert and Hilary Papineau (see written report)**

**Joint Transportation and Parks, Recreation and Culture Committee – Ed Fanning and Michael Cetera, AIA (see written report)**

### **Chairman's Report**

- Last week was a trying time for the country with the bombing at the Boston Marathon; he was out of the country at the time. He hopes we never see this again.
- The late Council member Mary Pinkett was a hard worker, she brought people together. She was a supporter of Medgar Evers College construction; she helped to bring the Franklin Avenue Shuttle back; she did tremendous work as our Council member. The Chairman asked all to come out to honor this lady who did so much for this community.

Chairman Goldstein announced the appointment of the Nominating Committee that will conduct the Community Board elections. Chair of the Committee is Maurice Jean-Baptiste; Frank Nicholas, Yvonne Straker, Sam Marmulzsteyn. Chairman Goldstein will ask one additional member to be on the committee. The committee will return with candidates at the May meeting.

**Rabbi Goldstein** acknowledged the following individuals representing elected officials and agencies:

Ramona Cabieja representing the Hon. Mathieu Eugene; Charles Jackson representing the Hon. Yvette Clarke; Alfred Chiodo representing the Hon. Letitia James; Debra LeSane representing Kings County Hospital; Arna Lipkind representing the Hon. Darlene Mealy; William Boone representing Medgar Evers College; Reuven Lipkind representing the Hon. Eric Adams; Hon. Jesse Hamilton; Val Henry representing Downstate Medical Center.

**Voting Items**

**Support for Parkside Plaza** – motion by Tim Thomas, seconded by Amy Albert; no discussion. Votes: 30 yes; 0 nos; 0 abstentions. Motion carried.

**Support for the restoration of the “Flatbush Trees”** – motion by Tim Thomas, seconded by Ed Fanning. Discussion: Aldith Clarke – why was the word Flatbush covered up in the drawing? Chairman Goldstein said that the artist explained that before, saying that he wanted to incorporate part of the old with the new. Votes: 30 yes; 1 no. Motion carried.

**Adjournment**

Motion to adjourn was made by Frank Nicholas and seconded by Carl Morgan. The meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm.

**Respectfully submitted**  
**Shelia Foster-Golding, Secretary**  
**May 23, 2013**