

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

**MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY BOARD MEETING  
HELD ON APRIL 26, 2011  
MIDDLE SCHOOL 61 AUDITORIUM  
400 EMPIRE BOULEVARD, BROOKLYN NY 11225**

**Board Members Present**

Robert Agyemang  
Pastor Robert Ambrose  
Stuart Balberg  
Gwen Carter  
Aldith Clarke  
Leslie Davis  
Geraldine Dease  
Edmund Fanning  
Shelia Foster-Golding  
Sylveta Hamilton-Gonzales  
Brenda Hutto-Lucas  
Maurice Jean Baptiste  
Demetrius Lawrence  
Carl Morgan  
Frank Nicholas  
Myrtle Roberson  
Karlene Robinson  
Roosevelt Rose  
Brenda Scott  
Victoria St. Clair  
Yvonne Straker  
Denise Thomas  
Jacqueline Welch

**Board Members Absent**

Jenay Alejandro  
Dion Ashman  
Rev. Phyllis Brown - Sick  
Michael Cetera, AIA - emergency  
Julian Daniels  
Brian Dean  
Shawn Francis  
Rabbi Jacob Z. Goldstein - Passover  
Theopia Green  
Rabbi Nochum Gross – Passover  
Tessa Hackett-Vieira  
Edu Hermelyn

**Board Members Absent**

Aron Hershkop - Passover  
Ruby Hodge  
Jannie Johnson - Sick  
Yaakov Katz - Passover  
Samuel Marmulzsteyn - Passover  
Dwayne Nicholson  
Rosemarie Perry  
Mary Rollerson-Blackett  
Eleanor Rollins  
Chanina Sperlin - Passover  
Rabbi Joseph Spielman - Passover  
Evelyn Williams

**Elected Officials/Agency Representatives**

Hon. Karim Camara  
Hon. Olanike Alabi  
Hon. Mathieu Eugene – Carline Keil  
Hon. Letitia James – Alfred A. Chiodo  
Medgar Evers College – Dr. William A. Boone III  
NYC Comptroller's Office – John Berman  
NYC Fire Department – Chief Richard Bienenstein

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The meeting was chaired by Demetrius Lawrence, Second Vice Chair, in the absence of Community Board 9 Chairman, Rabbi Jacob Goldstein.

**PUBLIC SESSION:**

**Public Hearing on the Variance Application presented by Attorney Richard Lobel, Sheldon Lobel, P.C., Attorneys at Law, on behalf of SUNY Downstate Medical Center, BSA Calendar No. 25-11 BZ, for 760 Parkside Avenue, Brooklyn, Block 4248 Lot 22. The applicant is seeking variances of floor area ratio, setback and sky exposure plane, parking, and off-street loading berth regulations in order to permit the enlargement of an existing medical research facility at the premises to provide additional laboratories, offices and multi-purpose rooms.**

**Mr. Sheldon Lobel** informed that this application for a variance to the Board of Standards and Appeals, is for the enlargement of an existing building at 760 Parkside Avenue, Brooklyn. The building is operated by the Downstate Bio-Technology Center which is an affiliate of SUNY Downstate Medical Center. In attendance are: Architect Paul Drago, who will explain the plans for the building; Eva Cramer, President of the Bio-Technology Center and David Norton, who is also with the Bio-Technology Center.

There is an existing building there with research labs and related research facilities. SUNY Downstate and the medical community are very interested in Bio-technology, in order to do the things that are very important to the medical community and to all of us. Eva Cramer will describe some of the things that are done at this facility and why the enlargement of the building is required.

The enlargement will provide additional research space and auxiliary spaces, back up space. Many of the private research companies that are in the building are start-up companies. They need space as economically as possible, these start-up companies cannot afford large rents. The city is anxious to set up these centers because they do important things. These start-up companies have discovered many devices, instruments and other medical paraphernalia which have aided in medical research.

The enlargement will also create jobs at the facility. One of the programs at the facility is the work that is being done with students, particularly in the summer, teaching important things about medical research. When the students complete the program they are often recruited by other companies in the city because of the wonderful training they get at the research center.

The application for variance is necessary although in an M1-1 zone this particular use is permitted, we are seeking to expand the floor area ration. The existing floor area ratio is one, in other words if you take, the size of the lot and times it by one, that is the size of the building that can be put on the lot, the proposed enlargement to the building will be approximately 1.4 FAR. It is not a major leap but enough to satisfy the needs of the institution; and there is a setback requirement also. The enlargement will be similar in scope and setback to the existing building. There is also a parking area that is necessary, as space is needed for parking as well as additional space to create the labs and other auxiliary spaces in the building.

The application has been supported by many political representatives and others who are involved in the State and the City. We can give to the Community Board the many letters of support for this application. A number of letters have also been sent to people in the surrounding area which will be filed with the Board of Standards and Appeals. The ULURP Committee believes that this is a worthwhile project, the minimum necessary for this institution to secure the relief which they need to carry out their very important functions.

**Mr. Paul Drago, Architect**, used a short power point to describe the architectural drawing, structure of the building and the structure of the lab.

### **Questions and Answers**

Q: Inaudible. It is going to be publicly funded. It will be publicly advertised and publicly bid. It is wide open to any contractor who has the necessary prerequisites. Beyond that he is not aware of that specific program.

Q: Inaudible. Most of the money will be from the federal government as well as state and city government, so that any bidding must go with the guidelines of federal, state and city guidelines.

Ms. Eva Cramer informed that the original building was built with federal, state and city funds and the next part will also be built with federal, state and city funds, therefore they must follow all the guidelines. They will advertise, it is an open process.

In New York City there are a number of research institutions and New York City should have been at the top of biotechnology. It has not been due to the fact that there is not adequate space for start-up biotechnology companies. So to try to alleviate this problem SUNY Downstate has been involved in developing biotech incubators. This is what this facility is about. When the company becomes successful they can then move to the Brooklyn Army Terminal to expand and begin to do manufacturing in New York City. This is wonderful to bring in an industrial base to the City.

If we are going to bring in this kind of industrial base we need the workforce to go with it. To help develop that workforce, we have been very involved with workforce development programs. We have been working with students in the CUNY system who are Science majors. Not only the CUNY system but students from other schools are also welcome to take this workshop. In January and June students are taught biotechnology techniques, then spend a month doing it. They get three hours of lectures in the morning, and work in the laboratory the rest of the day. The students then get internships with biotech companies or other institutions around the city. When they are ready they get them jobs. So far two hundred and sixty students they have been trained. About one hundred and fifteen have had jobs as a result of this program. It is a wonderful program. The intent is to keep the program going.

#### **Questions and Answers**

Q: What kind of companies do we have at the incubator right now? Basically the purpose of the biotech companies is to bring innovative inventions to the market place. An example of a company that is currently at the incubator is one that has made a little miniature EEG machine. You know that when you have a heart attack you need an EKG machine and sometimes you have to wear a halter, something to protect you, and to monitor you when you walk around all day. This is a new company that does the same thing for brain waves. This EEG machine constantly monitors you all day, for example if you have Epilepsy.

The machine is so small that it could be in every emergency room in the country. It can also be in underdeveloped countries that do not have the ability to have such a device. Recordings are picked up through computer systems and can be sent anywhere in the world. It could be monitoring the brain waves of a sick child and relay it to a Neurologist at Downstate who could then say the child is okay or not. You could be on a battlefield and get hurt, your brain waves could be checked and sent to any part of the world and have it evaluated to see if you are okay.

Those are the types of companies that are at the incubator. There is also the international AIDS vaccine initiative, a vaccine to prevent AIDS so there are wonderful things happening at the incubator. It is good for our children with Diabetes. Diabetes is a major part of our research. Everyone knows there has been a great increase in diabetes and there is a tremendous need to try to prevent it. There is a very interesting research going on right now.

Q: Inaudible. Anyone in the whole CUNY system is welcome, I'm unaware if there are students from outside the New York area attending or participating in the research. A large percent is from Brooklyn.

Q: We are in the neighborhood; we would like to get work. These contractors bring in their own people. How do we go about getting work in this project? Anyone can apply.

Q: Does this have to go through ULURP? ULURP is not required. This is filed with the Board of Standards and Appeals. The Board of Standards and Appeals require us to go to the Community Board. We have sent all of the information to the Board. That information is also sent to the Borough President and to the City Council. They have meetings which we attend, then it is sent to the Board of Standards and Appeals. ULURP is more of a City Planning matter; there is no zoning change in this application.

**Second Vice Chair Demetrius Lawrence**, thanked Mr. Sheldon Lobel, Attorney at Law and his team for their presentation.

**Presentation by Ms. Ann Webster, Vice Director for Planning and Architecture, Brooklyn Museum, on the Museum's plans to add a terrace in the back of the Museum building; the proposed terrace would be a part of the Museum's relocated café. The Museum is seeking the Board's support.**

**Ms. Ann Webster**, Vice Director for Planning and Architecture, Brooklyn Museum, informed that this is a small project but one that is important to the Museum. It is a project to create an outdoor eating space at the back of the Museum (power point was used to explain). Many might be unaware that the Brooklyn Museum is on park land and is also subject to landmark review. The building is very old. The building is complicated. The work to be done is the terrace. We need to expand the Café. A new gallery will be created.

A main part of the project is to create a much more exciting and dynamic entrance into the gallery. The café owners are trying to make the place more attractive and to make more money for the community. A new gallery will create a much easier situation for visitors. They can get their tickets and see immediately where the café and the shops are. There will be relocations of the sculpture and trees which will make the area more visible as well as space to create various eating spaces. The smaller trees will be planted on the Washington Avenue side entrance. The two trees will remain and they will build around it.

### **Questions and Answers**

Q: So many constructions will be going on, there will be dirt in the street, how will this be contained? The work to be done will be mostly done on the inside of the Museum. There will be very little excavation done.

Q: How much will parking cost and food cost? I have no idea. We do not expect the food price to go up during the day. During the day it will basically be what it presently costs. We have not settled on any food vendor; however there is one at the present time.

Q: Will the reconstruction be in line with the present architecture? The present design in the back we will keep. It is fairly new, I believe it was built around 1986. The back looks a little different from the front. We are trying to make it very simple.

Demetrius Lawrence, Second Vice Chairperson, thanked Ms. Webster for her presentation, and expressed the importance of the Brooklyn Museum to our community.

**Review the application submitted by Transportation Unlimited Car Service, Inc., located at 1226 Nostrand Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11225, to the NYC Taxi and Limousine Commission for the renewal of their For-Hire Base License – Base #B00037.**

Representing Transportation Unlimited Car Service, Ms. Denise Marriott-Pierce, President. Ms. Marriott-Pierce explained that she succeeded her father in the business. Transportation Unlimited has been serving the Flatbush community since 1982. They are located at 1226 Nostrand Avenue, Brooklyn. They are the thirty seventh car service to be licensed by the New York City Taxi and Limousine Commission.

Ms. Marriott-Pierce is here to ask the Board's support for the renewal of the Base license which is pending at the Taxi and Limousine Commission. Their circumstances have not changed over the 29 years they have been at the same location, doing the same business. The base has not changed. Their endeavor is to provide high quality services. There have been no complaints from the community, the business model is affiliated independent driver owners, dispatched when drivers radio in from the road that they are available for hire. Drivers schedule their availability. They service hospitals, schools, churches and many other institutions. They provide services to numerous jobs in the community, drivers and support staff. It is a small community-based business. All they would like to do is to continue to serve as they have been doing since 1982.

#### **Questions and Answers**

Q: What do we do to keep you in service? We have a renewal process which we complete every two years. This is an application to the Taxi and Limousine Commission, which are about six to eight pages long. This has been done on several occasions. Tonight we are here to follow the process.

#### **New York City Board of Elections – Ms. Mirang Cho**

Ms. Cho informed that there will be an election in 2011. For successful elections forty thousand poll workers are needed. This is a good opportunity to serve your community on Election Day and also to get paid \$200.00 for the day. Ms. Cho would like the community's assistance in recruiting. She would be happy to supply information and materials. There are applications and flyers at the back of the room to give you more information or you can go to the website [www.vote.nyc.ny.us](http://www.vote.nyc.ny.us). Anyone can be a poll worker.

#### **New York City Fire Department – Chief Richard Bienenstein**

Chief Bienenstein informed that the Mayor has put out his dooms' day budget. Twenty fire stations are slated to close. Flyers are in the back. This will show how for the past ten years every year through the budgeting process they have rejected over a trillion dollars and at the end of the year there is a surplus of billions of dollars. This money goes to bond holders. This is great, but what is not great is that our communities are losing service.

The Fire Department needs your help. We need you to contact the elected officials, tell them they cannot close the fire stations. The Fire Department gets approximately two percent of the City's budget. Eighty percent of the money the Fire Department has is in the fire stations, there is very little money for administrative costs. There are not many places from which they can take money, but to close the fire houses. The history of the New York City Fire Department is to save lives in the city. Closing these services can result in loss of lives for our communities. Each fire company does approximately 4,000 runs a year. Take away one

company and you will be taking away from those four thousand runs for the year. They will not be available for a fire because they will be out doing something else.

What we are talking about here is 20 fire stations costing about \$25 million a year, to save \$40 million a year with the city having a surplus of two to three billion dollars a year, using that money to buy stocks and bonds.

### **Questions and Answers**

Q: **Roosevelt Rose** – What do they do when they close the fire stations. Do they free up the money? They put it in the budget.

Q: **Roosevelt Rose** – What about volunteer firemen? Volunteer firemen won't work. Firemen have to be paid to do the job if you want to save lives. Volunteer firemen may come one day and be absent the next day. You cannot treat saving lives like that. New York has the largest Fire Department of any City. No city has the population density that New York City has. Cutting companies is a recipe for disaster.

Contact your elected officials, let them know the seriousness of closing these fire stations.

### **Business Session**

The Business Session began at 8:07 P.M, with 22 members present.

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

**District Manager Pearl Miles-Lee** encouraged the Community to call their elected officials on the closing of the fire houses. Councilmember Letitia James (718) 260-9191; Councilmember Mathieu Eugene (718) 287-8762; Councilmember Darlene Mealy (718) 953-3097.

The District Manager reported that beginning in May on the west side of Troy Avenue, from Empire Boulevard to Crown Street, parking meters will be installed. Parking will be (\$0.25c) twenty five cents for twenty minutes.

Princess Chambers Organization will be having their third Annual Prom Dress Drive. For further information call (347) 240-1887 or email [princesschambers@gmail.com](mailto:princesschambers@gmail.com)

This weekend is the Cherry Blossom Festival at the Brooklyn Botanic Gardens, from April 30 – May 1<sup>st</sup>. It starts at 10:00 A.M.

Brooklyn Botanic Gardens is offering a free urban gardening course. Applications are available, fill out the application and send it to Brooklyn Botanic Gardens at 1000 Washington Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11225.

Chairman Jacob Goldstein sends greetings from Australia. He is having a good time.

### **Committees' Reports**

#### **Transportation Committee – Edmund Fanning (see written report)**

Ed Fanning reported that the committee met on April 4, 2011.

The renewal application from Transportation Unlimited Car Service was reviewed. The Committee's recommendation is for the Board to support the renewal of the license.

Potholes are a major concern in the district. Identifying pothole locations will be undertaken by committee members and the findings presented to the Board's office.

Speed Cameras will be looked into. They will be discussed with the agencies involved prior to bringing it to the Board. The Committee needs more information on how speed cameras work in Manhattan.

**ULURP Committee – Michael Cetera (see written report)**

- Presentation by Ms. Ann Webster Vice Director for Planning and Architecture Brooklyn Museum regarding plans to add a terrace in the back of the Museum building, the proposed terrace would be part of the Museums' relocated café.
- Variance application on behalf of SUNY Downstate Medical Center, BSA Calendar No. 25-11-BZ for 760 Parkside Avenue, Brooklyn Block 4248 Lot 22. The proposal is for a new laboratory adjacent to the existing one on Parkside Avenue. This proposal will benefit the Community and encourage economic development in the district.

**Public Safety Committee – Rosemarie Perry (see written report)**

- Action plan for Public Safety related items in the FY 2012 Capital Requests for FDNY and 71 Precinct (this was tables for the next month's meeting).
- Battalion Chief Thomas Richardson reported on Mayor Bloomberg's proposed closing of 20 fire houses in Brooklyn and the modified response program recently started by the Fire Department to reduce accidents involving fire department vehicles.

**Housing Committee – Gwen Carter (see written report)**

Reviewed Community Board 9's responses to FY 2012 Preliminary Budget Responses – Department of Housing Preservation and Development and Department of Buildings. Development of property on the grounds of Kingsboro Psychiatric Center, as well as the Department of Buildings responses relating to request for more building inspectors.

Discussion of City Council Int. 477 Tenants Bill of Rights

**Education Committee – Demetrius Lawrence (see written report)**

Discussion regarding the resignation of Cathy Black – Chancellor and the appointment of Deputy Mayor Dennis Walcott interim Chancellor.

Reviewed of the agency's' responses to the education related budget requests in the FY 2012 Preliminary Budget and discussed the importance of having much needed funds.

Discussed the environmental conditions that pose a threat to children's learning and made plans to target MS 61, PS 161, and PS 92 by inviting the Principals of those schools to the next committee meeting.

**Environmental Protection – Brian Dean (absent) Leslie Davis reported on behalf of the Committee (see written report)**

The Committee met on April 5, 2011 and then on April 19, 2011. Several issues were discussed.

- The green infrastructure proposal grant due April 29, 2011. They did not have the chance to attend the first grant workshop. The grant is three million dollars. The grant is not an easy proposal but they will continue to do research.
- Rain barrels to beautify the community.
- We need more trees, trees provide oxygen, especially for children/adults with asthma.
- Rodent and raccoon infestation in the district
- Clean oil initiative

#### **Health and Social Services – Dwayne Nicholson (see written report)**

SUNY Downstate Annual Community Health Fair on Saturday May 14, 2011, located on Lenox Road between East 35<sup>th</sup> and 37<sup>th</sup> Streets from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm. For Further information call (718) 270 3739.

**Demetrius Lawrence acknowledged the following elected officials/representatives and agencies representatives:** Hon Karim Camara, Hon. Olanike Alabi, Alfred Chiodo representing Councilmember Letitia James; Carlene Keil representing Councilmember Mathieu Eugene; John Berman representing Comptroller John C. Liu; William Boone representing Medgar Evers College.

**Assemblyman Karim Camara** thanked the District manager and board members “leaders” for the work they are doing.

He informed that on Tuesday, May 5, 2011 he will deliver his State of the District, address at SUNY Downstate Medical Center at 6:30 pm. All are invited. He will address his vision for the future 43<sup>rd</sup> Assembly District.

His absence is due to his work in Albany, this year has been a brutal one in trying to work on the budget. There is a \$10 billion deficit. This will impact our communities particularly as it applies to healthcare and education.

The Assemblyman referenced the Housing Committee’s report regarding Rent Stabilization. We have until June 15<sup>th</sup> before current rent laws expire. Many of us are advocating for a repeal of the current laws. He is not optimistic that this will happen. The rent laws have to be strengthened. He believes that the threshold has to be increased due to the cost of living. Some people will leave for other states. The burdens are on working families and the middle class.

This year we did not do the Millionaire’s Tax and that is why he voted “no” on the Revenue Bill. The Millionaire Tax expires on December 31<sup>st</sup>. He is optimistic that there will be a vote on that tax. He asked that we call on our Elected Officials New York State Hakeem Jeffries and New York State Eric Adams in the Senate as well as our local officials. We need to make our voice heard.

The office has moved to 1216 Union Street. Anyone with an organization needing a meeting place can use the space to hold their meetings; just call the office to reserve the space. This is your office.

#### **Chairman’s Report**

**Demetrius Lawrence** announced the Community Health Fair sponsored by Councilmember Mathieu Eugene, Medgar Evers Flatbush Beacon Program and the CEC 17’s Education Committee, on Saturday, April 30, 2011 from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm at Middle School 2, 655 Parkside Avenue between Rogers and Nostrand Avenues. For further information call (718) 287-8762.

**District Manager Pearl Miles** referred to the Certificate of Incorporation application for "Friends of Brooklyn Community Board 9" that was sent to the Board members. Ms. Miles expressed her gratitude to the Brooklyn Law School interns who worked on the application. It was on the agenda for the March meeting but was not addressed. We will file the Certificate of Incorporation shortly. One thing that must be done before the Certificate of Incorporation can be filed is to elect a new First Vice Chairperson to replace the late Dr. Marco Mason the former First Vice Chairperson.

Ms. Miles announced the following persons who were named to the Nominating committee by the Chairman Rabbi Jacob Goldstein: Maurice Jean-Baptiste (Chair), Gwen Carter, Samuel Marmulzsteyn, Frank Nicholas, and Yvonne Straker. The committee will poll Board members for the respective offices, bring back the names and offices to the May meeting; the voting will take place at the June meeting.

#### **Election for the Office of First Vice Chairperson**

The Chairman of the Nominating Committee, Mr. Maurice Jean-Baptiste explained that Ms. Rosemarie Perry withdrew her candidacy, therefore, there is only one candidate for the office of First Vice Chairperson: Ms. Gwen Carter.

Mr. Jean-Baptiste requested Secretary Shelia Foster-Golding to cast one vote for Ms. Gwen Carter to fill the office of First Vice Chairperson. The Secretary, Ms. Shelia Foster-Golding cast one vote for Gwen Carter for First Vice Chairperson of Community Board 9. This concluded the special election.

Ms. Carter said that although she won by default, she will do whatever she has to do until the next election takes place.

Ms. Miles advised that Ms. Carter's name will be added to the Certificate of Incorporation of "Friends of Brooklyn Community Board 9" to be filed with the Department of State.

#### **Adjournment**

Second Vice Chairperson, Mr. Demetrius Lawrence adjourned the meeting at 8:50 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Shelia Foster-Golding  
Secretary  
May 24, 2011