

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

**MINUTES OF THE
COMMUNITY BOARD MEETING
HELD ON MARCH 24, 2009
MIDDLE SCHOOL 61 AUDITORIUM
400 EMPIRE BOULEVARD, BROOKLYN, NY 11225**

Board Members Present

Dion Ashman
Stuart Balberg
Gwen Carter
Aldith Clarke
Sheila Foster-Golding
Rabbi Jacob Goldstein
Theopia Green
Rabbi Nochum Gross
Tessa Hackett-Vieira
Ruby Hodge
Brenda Hutto
Maurice Jean-Baptiste
Jannie Johnson
Denise Mann
Samuel Marmulzsteyn
Gary Marshall

Board Members Present

Allan Martin, Jr
Dr. Marco Mason
Alice Mitchell
Carl B. Morgan
Frank Nicholas
Dwayne Nicholson
Rosemarie Perry
Romania Roachford
Myrtle Roberson
Karlene Robinson
Eleanor Rollins
Brenda Scott
Rabbi Joseph Speilman
Yvonne Straker
Jacqueline Welch

Board Members Absent

Rev. Phyllis Brown
Michael Cetera, AIA
Chaz Crowder
Geraldine Dease
Joan Gill - Sick
Sylveta Hamilton-Gonzales
Aaron Hershkop
Roosevelt Rose
Denise Thomas

Elected Officials/Agency Representatives Present

Hon. Marty Markowitz – Ann Marie Adamson
Hon. Karim Camara – Wanda Gebrehinot
Hon. Hakeem Jeffries – Wayne Keith Williams
Hon. Eric Adams – Reuven Lipkind
Hon. Darlene Mealy

Hon. Mathiew Eugene – David Morisset
Hon. Letitia James
Kings County Hospital Center – Denise Peterson
Kings County District Attorney's Office – Judith Destin

PUBLIC SESSION

Representatives from the Department of Transportation, the Department of Parks and Recreation and the Department of Design and Construction will present information on the status of the reconstruction of Eastern Parkway from Washington Avenue to Grand Army Plaza – Project ID HWKC1019

Christian Zimmerman, Vice President for Design and Construction, Prospect Park Alliance and the lead Landscape Architecture for the project informed that the Department of Design and Construction oversees the surface treatment of Eastern Parkway.

The project consists of the last section of Eastern Parkway from Washington Avenue to Plaza Street around the Brooklyn Museum, the Botanic Garden, Mount Prospect Park, and the Brooklyn Public Library. This will be

a complete road reconstruction. DOT, DEP, and DDC will all be involved. There will be replacing water mains, etc. They will upgrade the entire area including the median and the walkway, these are dangerous, unsafe, and in bad condition. They will also do roadways, re-alignments, pavings and markings to regulate the traffic, making it better. Work will also be done on the service roads. Then there will be a complete restoration work which will include roadway work, median widening and landscaping, water mains, sewer work, street lights, curbs, sidewalks, pedestrian ramps, neck downs, bike lanes, and trees.

There will be many more trees planted in the area. There are areas with subway grades where trees cannot be planted. The subway is very close to the surface at that point. Additional trees will be planted on Washington Avenue. A safe sidewalk will be created all the way to Plaza Street. The same treatment will be kept on Eastern Parkway and Washington Ave except the granite curbs, the grass verges, the hex blocks, benches, and light poles. There are only light poles at the present time. Pedestrian lights will be added to give more light to the area. There will be two crosswalks at Underhill Avenue. Currently there is only one. There will be one crosswalk added at Brooklyn Botanic Garden. There will be raised islands so that one can wait for the light at Eastern Parkway. The Median at the Brooklyn Museum will be extended with a crosswalk.

Questions and Answers:

Rabbi Jacob Goldstein - What is the expected start date and duration of the project? Answer: Start is Spring 2010, completion 2013.

Pearl Miles - Is the money already appropriated? Answer: We are expecting stimulus money.

Ruby Hodge – What about the flow of traffic during the construction phase? Answer: During the construction two lanes of traffic will be maintained. Parking will be eliminated in order to create the two lanes. The hours will be established for parking. Did you say the project will start Fiscal Year 2013? **Pearl Miles** – No, the completion will be 2013. Rabbi Jacob Goldstein explained that President Obama will be giving New York stimulus money because of that they are anticipating a one year earlier start.

The Department of Transportation representative explained that once the contract is bid they will come back, including his group and the construction group to inform of how the project will be done, regarding the timeline of the project and regulation of traffic.

Ruby Hodge - What about bike lanes? Answer: This is the Department of Transportation's concern. For information call (718) 222-7259.

Pearl Miles – Where will the two islands be? Answer: One crosswalk at the Library and two crosswalks at Underhill, with one going to Mount Prospect Park.

Kay Dunham – What about the traffic lights? Answer: All the lights and traffic signals will be studied and redesigned.

Chairman Jacob Goldstein thanked the representatives from the three agencies for their presentation. He is delighted that this project for Eastern Parkway is on the way.

Mr. Ian Jack, Street Forester, Department of Parks and Recreation will speak on beautifying the community with Street Trees and Green Streets.

A: Street Tree planting – How to request a street tree; How to request a GreenStreet; Caring for Street Trees and green streets; Tree Maintenance and Pruning; The benefits of street trees on the environment and on community health; Stewardship Program for Street Trees.

B: Mr. Jack will also share information on his experiences in Africa as it relates to caring for the environment.

Mr. Jack informed that he is working on the Grand Army Plaza project, where the trees are somewhat run down. They will be planting English Oaks. These trees are estimated to last 120 years.

The Department of Parks is working on the Mayor's "Million Tree" program. The objective of the program is to help with stabilization. The trees will be larger in order to suck up the water as well as to prevent the sidewalk from lifting up. Sometimes, some trees lift the sidewalk causing people to trip.

You can call 311 if you would like a tree, but this will take a long time. The best way to get a tree is by calling the District Manager, who will act as his conduit. Maintenance and pruning go to the Brooklyn office; they will come around and prune the trees. The number for Brooklyn Forestry is listed on the NYC website under "trees".

Beautification and stabilization of the ground are two things that we need to know about trees. The third thing is planting an urban forest. We learn from school biology that trees have sticky oil on their leaves, in the country side this acts as prevention against predators and parasites. Here in the city it acts against the dust brought about by vehicles. Trees dramatically reduce asthma. It makes you feel psychologically better. It is very cheap to plant trees; it is a cheap and effective way in reducing very serious medical conditions.

We would like people to become stewards of trees. There will be training and equipment on how to care for the trees. For a twenty four hundred dollars in ones neighborhood in front of ones house all that is asked is to water the trees and keep the garbage out. This is what it means to be a steward. When you join the Stewardship Program you will get a T' Shirt. A million trees will be planted in New York. It has become politicized. This will take place over a ten year period.

This technology is very old coming out of Africa. The city infrastructure is not merely pipelines and tarmac roads. Africa is in three dimensions. It has electricity to run, for example: air conditioning and refrigeration. They have depended on methods of planting trees dating back to the Babylonians and the Fertile Crescent. What we are doing in New York City is to re-invent this custom. We are now taking the technology from the old country where they get their fuel for heating water, for sterilization and cooking, etc. Trees produce oxygen. It is not the tangible result that you see, but rather what you get out of it. The tree canopy will help to eliminate the ozone layer.

Finally Mr. Jack asked that we support the Stewardship program. Don't let the dogs use it as a latrine. Keep the trees beautiful that they will last generations to come.

Questions and Answers:

Rosemarie Perry – When is the training? Answer: You can go to the training. The training begins in April. We will be happy to have you become a steward.

Chairman Jacob Goldstein thanked Mr. Jack for his presentation and hopes the community will get involved.

Acknowledgements – Elected Officials and/or their Representatives

The following officials and representatives were acknowledged: Ann Marie Adamson from Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz Office, Wanda Gebrehinot representing Hon. Karim Camara, Wayne Keith Williams representing Hon. Hakeem Jeffries, Hon. Letitia James, Hon. Darlene Mealy, Reuven Lipkind representing Hon. Eric Adams, David Morriset representing Hon. Mathieu Eugene, Denise Peterson from Kings County Hospital Center, and Judith Destin from Kings County District Attorney's Office.

Announcements

Chairman Jacob Goldstein informed that last year Council member Letitia James put \$200,000 in the budget for the reconstruction of Clove Road. Many thanks to the council member.

Councilmember James informed that she also has planned to put in the budget a phone system for the 71 Precinct. The system is obsolete. Whenever the money is appropriated, she will return to inform Community Board 9.

Wanda Gebrehinot representing New York State Assemblyman Karim Camara informed that on Thursday March 26, at the Marcus Garvey Nursing Home at 6:00pm, 810 St. Marks Avenue, the Assemblyman will host a Financial Management Workshop. Representatives will be present to answer questions on any financial need that you might have. Refreshments will be served.

Denise Peterson – Kings County Hospital – reported that the Health and Hospitals Corporation will have various sites for colonoscopy screening. Kings County Hospital, Coney Island Hospital, and Woodhull Hospital are designated sites. Chairman Goldstein added that anyone over 50 years of age should have a colonoscopy every three years.

Reuven Lipkin representing New York State Senator Eric Adams reported that the Senator will host a Women's History Month Celebration honoring women who have made a difference. The event will be held at the Kings County Hospital "T" building at New York and Clarkson Avenues at 6:00 p.m. There will be a Walk-A-Thon with the Borough President Marty Markowitz on Wednesday, March 25. For further details log on to nyss.senate.com.

On April 4th at 9:30 am at the Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM) there will be representatives from the Governor's office, Congressional officials, Mayor's office, and all the elected officials in the group will be there to tell you where all the money is coming from and how the stimulus money will be spent in our communities.

Ann Marie Adamson – Brooklyn Borough President Marty Markowitz reported that the Borough President's office is in the process of working on the reappointment applications. We are still looking for more applications so that there will be a diverse group of people on the Community Board. Anyone knowing of such people who will attend meetings and serve faithfully on the board, please contact Ann Marie Adamson at (718) 802-3874.

David Morriset representing Councilmember Mathieu Eugene reported that the Councilmember along with the Brooklyn Congregations United Church will be hosting a foreclosure forum on April 2nd at the Holy Cross Auditorium from 6:00 pm to 8:00pm. The forum will be conducted by a minimum of seven organizations. There will be Legal Services, Banks, etc, to help with foreclosure notices served on homeowners. This is to help people who are at risk of foreclosure as well.

BUSINESS SESSION

The business session began at 8:05 pm with 28 members present.

Minutes of the February 2009 Meeting

The minutes of the February 2009 meeting was presented for correction and adoption. Motion to accept the minutes was made by Jannie Johnson and seconded by Gwen Carter. The minutes were adopted.

District Manager's Report - None

Committees' Reports

Environmental Protection – Allan Martin, Jr.

Allan Martin Jr. reported that on March 14th the committee voted to renew their efforts in finding a new sanitation garage. If one cannot be found in this district we will have to look elsewhere. We would like to have a new state of the art facility in Community District 9. The facility will be self contained.

Pearl Miles – informed that in the budget response discussed at last month's meeting, the response from the agency was that there was not a location for the sanitation garage. We have looked all over the district for many years and there is no location. The Sanitation Department also looked for property and came up with a location in Community District 17; however Community Board 17 is not in favor of the idea.

The District Manager recommended that since Community District 9's present sanitation garage is located on city owned property, and there is an adjoining parking lot on Parkside Avenue, which however is state owned property (where Downstate has a parking garage) that we join the current sites to build a state of the art facility. We can build the garage as well as parking on the site.

Chairman Goldstein – I think this is a terrific idea which the committee should persue.

Youth Services Committee – Dion Ashman

Dion Ashman reported on the speak-out with Boys and Girls held at Medgar Evers College. This was the third speak-out and it was extraordinary. Dr Wilshire, the Principal of Medgar Evers College High School would like a mentor program for the girls. To learn about the mentoring program log on to www.hiphopotherside.com.

Each week a particular topic was discussed. The mentoring program will be held every Friday in the Month of March, the first Friday, April the 3rd and Monday, April 6th. There will be a break for spring break and will resuming Monday, April 20th and 27th. The last day will be Friday, May 1st. This date will be the completion of the program. There will be a celebration for the children.

Observing these students they cannot tie a "tie" properly. They cannot comb their hair properly or brush their teeth. All this might seem absurd to us but this is happening to our youths. There are about thirty youths who attend regularly.

The meeting with the PTA was interesting. The mothers were present, not the fathers. Three quarters of the boys who are born in this country are from single parents. The dropout rate in our high schools in this city is 46%. Jamaica High School in Queens graduated zero percent four year seniors last spring.

Jannie Johnson – would like parents to attend the next speak-out. It was discovered that children cannot talk to their parents. They feel that the parents don't listen to them.

Tessa Hackett-Vieira – The students complained that there are no crossing guards at the corners adjacent to the school. That is of concern to them at dismissal.

Eleanor Rollins – Unfortunately there is a gap between the middle school and the high schools. It is not widely known that these are children after graduation from junior high school who do not go on to high school. She would like to congratulate Dion and the other young men who are making a great impact on the children in this community. They are stepping up to the plate.

Dion Ashman – We have discovered that there are some of our young men who want to be computer programmers, politicians, engineers, etc. What is being done is to pair these students with adults who are involved in such areas.

Mr. Ashman thanked the District Manager for a proposal which they will use to beautify the school's surrounding. This will be done in the fall.

The group is about to put together a documentary "The Other Side of Hip Hop: The Sixth Element". The effort is to decriminalize Hip Hop culture. This will be at Medgar Evers High School on Friday March 27, at 7:00pm.

Councilmember Darlene Mealy

The Councilwoman expressed how ecstatic she was after coming from a graduation from Rikers Island where 16 – 18 year old young men who got into trouble were obtaining certificates. They were on the right track getting their GED and culinary certificates, so that when they get out of incarceration they can find a job.

There are so many questions she would like to ask the committee but time does not permit it. All this information the committee is doing should be out there in everybody's newsletter. The councilmember's office is open everyday from 10:00 am to 7:00 pm. We need safe havens for our children. The Committee should ask for funding. There will be a community outreach event for property owners on Tuesday at Brownsville Recreation Center at 8:00 pm

Chairman's Report

Only 31 members on the Community Board have submitted their email addresses, many have not.

The Community Board's Budget has been cut. The Governor is planning to lay off so many people.

The community has lost two people, one was a reporter named Joyce Shelby. She was a great lady and a friend. We will not see her bylines anymore. Another individual was Lance Johnson. He was very helpful especially to the youth of this community.

Voting Items

The Reconstruction of Eastern Parkway from Washington Avenue to Grand Army Plaza

A motion was made by Dr. Marco Mason to accept Project #HWKC1019 Reconstruction of Eastern Parkway from Washington Avenue to Grand Army Plaza, the motion was seconded by Carl Morgan. Voting – Yes = 29, Abstain = 1, No = 0.

Chairman Goldstein wished everyone a happy Passover and a festive Easter.

Adjournment

Since there was no further business for discussion the meeting was adjourned on a motion made by Dr Marco Mason and seconded by Jannie Johnson.

Respectfully submitted
Shelia Foster-Golding
April 23, 2009