

COMMUNITY BOARD 9
890 NOSTRAND AVENUE
BROOKLYN, NY 11225

MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY BOARD MEETING
HELD ON TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 2009
MIDDLE SCHOOL 61 AUDITORIUM
400 EMPIRE BOULEVARD, BROOKLYN, NY 11225

Board Members Present

Jenay Alejandro
Dion Ashman
Stuart Balberg
Aldith Clarke
Leslie E. Davis
Geraldine Dease
Rabbi Jacob Z. Goldstein
Theopia Green
Rabbi Jacob Z. Goldstein
Tessa I. Hackett-Vieira
Sylveta Hamilton-Gonzales
Aron Hershkop
Brenda Hutto
Maurice Jean-Baptiste
Jannie Johnson
Yaakov Katz
Demetrius N. Lawrence
Denise Mann
Samuel Marmulzsteyn

Board Members Present

Gary Marshall
Allan Martin, Jr
Carl B. Morgan
Frank Nicholas
Dwayne Nicholson
Rosemarie Perry
Romania Roachford
Myrtle Roberson
Karlene Robinson
Mary Rollerson-Blackett
Roosevelt Rose
Brenda Scott
Chanina Sperlin
Rabbi Joseph Spielman
Victoria St. Clair
Yvonne Straker
Denise Thomas
Jacqueline Welch

Board Members Absent

Rev. Phyllis Brown – sick
Gwen Carter
Michael Cetera, AIA
Julian Daniels
Shelia Foster-Golding
Joan Gill
Ruby Hodge
Dr. Marco Mason
Eleanor Rollins
Evelyn Williams

Elected Officials/Agency Representatives Present

Hon. Letitia James
Hon. Karim Camara – Wanda Gebrehinot
Hon. Eric Adams – Reuven Lipkind
Hon. Darlene Mealy – Anna Lipkind
Hon. Marty Markowitz – Ann Marie Adamson

Kings County Hospital Center – Debra Lesane
Medgar Evers College – Dr. William Boone
Buildings Dept. – Ben Colombo
Dept of Health – Tammy Lee Christensen

Ms. Sheila Robinson, Enrollment Counselor, Elderplan, will provide the community with information on Elderplan and the benefits it provides for senior citizens, including prescription drug coverage.

Ms. Robinson informed that basically Elderplan is a Medicaid based contract program which covers comprehensive coverage, e.g., doctor care coverage, prescription drug coverage, specialist care coverage, as well as hospitalization. The program tries to keep cost down for seniors. This means that eligible individuals with Medicare Part A and Part B coverage. What makes Elderplan coverage different is that they offer plans that provide popular benefits, e.g., you can get prescription drugs as before mentioned, depending on which option one chooses. One can receive reimbursement on eye glasses, hearing aid devices and dental benefits.

The plan includes several plans. One deals specifically with special needs for individuals in nursing homes. This is the Advantage Plan. There is also a plan that deals with Medicare and Medicaid eligibility. There is dual coverage called the Active Plan, then, there is the Extra Plan for those who can save on their Part B by reducing their premiums every year by \$40.00 a month, with a saving of \$480.00 a year. There is also the Premier Classic Plan, a general plan for the majority of people who are looking to save on their prescription drug cost, doctor costs and the cost of specialists.

Within the network there is also a plan where if one would like to go out of the network into a Metropolitan Health Option that is the only plan that will incur a premium. The other plans give the freedom of going in and out of the network; then you pay nothing for your Medicare physician. There is no referral necessary to see any specialist.

Elderplan is a not-for-profit which means that the revenue is held to keep the cost down. This means it gives more money to put back into the benefits program. Elderplan provides the same benefits as Medicare does, Parts A and B. It is not different from Medicare. If one chooses Elderplan what it tells us is that you elect to go into an HMO (Health Maintenance Organization) that you prefer an HMO vs a Medicare Plan.

Elderplan has been in existence for 25 years. It was started in Brooklyn by a group who was concerned about keeping the cost down for medical coverage. The plan has expanded to the Bronx, Queens, Manhattan and Staten Island. Elderplan gives the extra services that Medicare and Medicaid may not give or is not willing to provide. Ms. Robinson can be contacted at 718-490-7394.

Chairman Goldstein thanked Ms. Robinson for her presentation.

Ms. Tammy Lee Christensen, Community Affairs Coordinator, NYC Dept of Health & Mental Hygiene, will provide important information on the City's strategy for protecting New Yorkers from the H1N1 Virus – the information will include the availability of free flu mist and flu shots

Ms. Christensen informed that there are plans in the works as well as plans that they are working on. The focus of the City's plan is to control H1N1 influenza from spreading. There are strategies to prevent it from spreading, such as, food policies and vaccinations. What is influenza? Every year around the fall-winter time, the virus usually changes and we see two or three strains that are different, including the H1N1 flu. What we want is for people to help us in stopping the spread of the virus, i.e., one of the best ways to sneeze is not in your hands but in your sleeve. Sneezing in your hands you could touch your face and other parts of the body. The disease can be spread that way.

Every year about 36,000 people die from influenza in New York City; 11,000 die every year from the flu and pneumonia. The age groups of more concern are ages 5-17 years and 18-64. Ages 65 and over are the least susceptible to the flu. Exposure to the flu takes place within one to four days. In order not to affect others it takes 24 hours after the flu is gone. It is compulsory that if one has the H1N1 symptoms or the flu to stay at home 24 hours after the symptoms are gone. This is one way we can stop the spread.

It has been noted that the virus has not changed since the spring. The first cases are expected between January and February. How is the City going to detect changes in the severity of the virus? The Health Department is making changes in the ICU, admissions, and the emergency room. It is hoped to make changes in vaccinations and hand-washing. Those who are sick stay home so as not to infect others. How safe is the vaccine? The flu vaccine like other vaccines can cause multiple side effects in some people. Reactions however are rare. If someone has a reaction to the regular flu vaccine or allergic to eggs you should consult your doctor about taking the vaccine.

There are two different formulas. One is the nasal spray which has the weakest virus. The other is the injected vaccine which is the best. With the injection one can take both at the same time. You can take one shot in the arm and the other shot in the other arm. With the nasal spray you cannot take both at the same time.

Vaccine is recommended for people who are children 6 months to 18 years old, people with chronic conditions such as asthma, heart disease, kidney disease, diabetes, or any disease that affects the organs. Caregivers, health care workers, etc., also people under 19 years who are on long term aspirin care. People who have had contact with patients with flu

like symptoms; a miscarriage or abortion in the last two weeks; and people with terminal illness which make them more likely to get the flu. Groups 65 and over are not priority groups. They were not affected last year by the H1N1 flu. For the vaccine you can go to your doctor or to health centers or any Health and Hospital Corporation hospital. Clinics are open for the vaccine Monday to Friday 1:00-8:00 pm, Saturdays from 12:00 noon to 3:00 pm.

This year there will be a HHC Health Education Campaign which will focus on flu vaccine education commercials. The news is that health care workers must be vaccinated by November 30th this is not the case anymore. The priority is children they are more susceptible to the H1N1 virus. The flu vaccination plan is for school age children in elementary, junior high and high schools, public or parochial. Private schools are optional.

Children in public schools should have received letters on the flu. Consent forms were sent out October 19th. Weekly flu updates have been sent out to principals, the Department of Education and the school nurses. Please check the website on updates of the flue at the end of each school day. School closure is the last resort. To learn more about the H1N1 flu log on to www.nyc.gov/flu or call 311 or see information in the back of this auditorium.

Questions and Answers:

Are the injections available now? Answer – check the website, there will be information on locations where you can get your H1N1 shot.

Unintelligible – that is an immunization question, please ask your doctor. Will it affect you if you are on medication? Ask your doctor

District Manager – this list of schools given you distributed, when will these shots be given out, there is a list for week end locations. This list is to tell you what queue the schools are in. District Manager – what is phase I? The first group to be given the vaccination shots.

I work with a lot of doctors they have not gone online to register to acquire the H1N1 vaccine. Have they been notified? All providers should have been informed.

District Manager – can anyone take his/her child to any of these schools for the shot? We recommend that children in public or private school receive consent forms they are in every public or private school, pre-school, these are small children. In the JHS and HS they can go anywhere, e.g., the clinics which are open on the weekends.

The District Manager said that the reason for asking is so that parents will know if they can take their child on the weekend to the school in their neighborhood to take the shot. No it is just for the children of the school.

Chairman Goldstein thanked Ms. Christensen and reminded the audience to call 311, visit the website, or call their doctor, and try to get immunized.

Public Hearing on the proposed collaboration between the Health and Hospitals Corporation and CAMBA to provide affordable housing on the J and N Buildings' parcels on the grounds of Kings County Hospital Center (KCHC)

Ms. Laray Brown introduced the representatives from Kings County Hospital and CAMBA – Mr. Antonia D. Martin, Executive Director of Kings County Hospital Center; Margaret Taddy, Project Manager, CAMBA Housing Ventures, David Rowe, Assistant Deputy Director/Director Housing Development; Sharon Browne, Deputy Executive Director; Cindy Harden, Principal, Harden Van Arnam Architects.

Ms. Brown informed that they were there to share what is an important, exciting and productive collaboration with CAMBA. We are proposing to develop with CAMBA, on two parcels which are now the J and N buildings. The reason for the collaboration with CAMBA is because we have rebuilt Kings County and consolidated buildings to make it easier for patients and staff in obtaining their healthcare. The campus has been shrunk in the case of patient care center, it has now allowed for the utilization of buildings that would not be needed for healthcare services over the long term future.

Because HHC and KCH are part of the City of New York, the Mayor is allowing HHC to develop these buildings other than for direct patient care purposes to get benefits from the development, as in money to support the operation of the hospital. Our aim is to take these unused buildings to provide a use that is important to the community, in the form of housing, and with the collaboration with CAMBA, generate a long term lease, the proceeds of which will go to support the cost of services that Kings County Hospital provides to the community.

Many may not know this, but Kings County Hospital, which is a part of HHC, provides care for anyone who comes regardless of whether they have insurance or not. They can get medical services regardless of race, ethnicity, language, religion, etc, care is given to everyone. This lease will provide a source of revenue to support the mission of KCHC. The parcels in question, buildings J and N, will be the site of two residential buildings providing 101 units each. A significant portion of these units will be for affordable housing for the community, including employees of Kings County Hospital.

Mr. Martin reintroduced himself and added that he was also the Senior Vice President of the Central Brooklyn Health Network; he is not "new" anymore because he has been at the KCH for eight months. This was his first time coming before Community Board 9. He is happy to be back. He formerly served as the Director of Health Information Management, Deputy Executive Director for Behavioral Health at KCH. He then went to Queens Hospital where he served as Executive Director for nine years. He is very proud to be back serving as Senior Vice President. Mr. Howard said that he feels very proud to be back serving as Senior Vice President. He feels fortunate to have a great building, a great edifice, the hospital is very beautiful. He is now working on the systems in the hospital to develop a culture that is friendlier to the people that come into the hospital. He welcomed the opportunity to say hello to all and hoped that this would not be the last time. He endorses the project he believes that it has a lot of benefits all across the board.

Ms Margaret Taddy, Executive Director, CAMBA, informed that she has been with CAMBA since 1979. CAMBA started out as a merchants' association (it is no longer that.) The organization has a \$72 million budget providing services to Brooklyn in areas of economic development, education, family and youth services, AIDS, housing development and legal services. Services are provided to over 40,000 individuals and children every year. They are in 50 different locations throughout Brooklyn. They are also in Staten Island and the Bronx, main services are in Brooklyn.

CAMBA runs three homeless shelters: the Park Slope shelter which houses 70 mentally ill and abused women. The Broadway shelter housing 168 abused women; and the Atlantic shelter housing 200 men of the same population. When they were asked to take the third shelter, they appreciated the City trusting them and appreciating their services and how they ran the shelters. Ms. Taddy said that she did not just want to run a shelter she felt strongly that they needed to have an answer and a solution to the issue of homelessness. CAMBA then decided to go into housing development. Since that time they have developed two finished housing developments.

Morris Manor is located at 1247 Flatbush Avenue. There are studio units with a kitchenette, bathroom, closets and furniture. The reception area overlooks the garden. Morris Manor has been opened for almost a year. It looks the same as when we started. We maintain our buildings and I expect to walk in there each day and see it looking exactly the same as the first day we opened. Morris Manor has 46 units of studio apartments. It is 60% special needs population and 40% low income communities.

The Anna Gonzalez is located in Bushwick, it has 100 units of supported housing, this means it is permanent affordable housing. There is 24/7 security, they look like condos or coops, they are well maintained.

We are closing with HPD on a third project in the middle of November; it is located at 97 Crooke Avenue in Brooklyn construction will begin the day after closing. This will be 53 units.

The Kings County Hospital project is slated to begin in July 2010. This project is exciting for a number of reasons, mostly because this is in cooperation with the City for supportive housing. It will be looked at closely by the other housing organizations throughout the country as a project that can be replicated. This is being looked at because it will be an example of community based developers and the hospital working as a team to develop supportive housing. It is 60% special needs and 40% low income. We are committed and stand firm on my word that we will be working with this

community board. We will do training to help fill out the applications to get into these units. Once the applications are filled out it is out of our hands, it goes into the computer. If an "i" is not dotted or a "t" is not crossed it will get spitted out. It is imperative that we train so that for instance Kings County staff can qualify on an income level for residency.

Secondly, we will be working with Kings County to ensure that the residents get services; there will be no reason to say we can't get services. We are also looking for out-patients, people who need ongoing physical therapy, etc., who find it hard to get to the hospital. They too, if qualified, can live in the building without worrying about transportation or the weather. We are totally committed to this project.

CAMBA provides 156 different programs. People who live in these buildings will have access to these programs. We are working with tony and his staff from the hospital to develop new programs, this is really critical. People are looking at this as a model because CAMBA is so rich in services. I am committed to these services. I have been with CAMBA for 30 years, I love what I do, I continue loving it and I want to keep building and developing programs so that populations in our communities can be self-sufficient.

As Mr. Rowe said, there will be 202 units. There will be studio units as well as 1, 2, and 3 bedroom units to accommodate families. Cindy is our architect, I know her designs, what you see here is what you will get. I don't want an architect that will design a building and then build something completely different, that is not what we are about. I know that Cindy does excellent design work. The interiors are absolutely gorgeous, making you feel at home; we want to make people feel at home. There will be community use as well as for people living in the building. In Morris manor in particular, we have two large community rooms, one has computers, a library and television; the other is used for meetings. CAMBA has meetings, community board meetings also. The rooms are opened to the community to be used for appropriate meetings for the community. It is important that the residents feel that they are a part of the community we do not want the special needs population to be by themselves. This is one of the reasons why we have gardens, people are able to sit in the garden and enjoy themselves.

The Kings County project will be just like the Morris Manor and the Anna Gonzalez projects. The total cost of the project will be \$72 million. \$50 million is for construction. The funding is from the Department of Housing Preservation and Development; we already have a commitment letter for \$28 million from HPD. We will get a bond issue from the State to do the construction. There will be money also from HHC, also Congresswoman Yvette Clarke is trying to get us \$2.5 million for the project; she is committed. Our syndicator is trying to get us tax credits; we have an application to send to Home Loan Bank from which we hope to get the funds. Basically, our funding is in place when we are ready to go. We already have committed our service dollars from the Department of Mental Health for \$2.3 million for the services within the building. We also get about \$350,000 from the Department of Homeless Services for 24/7 security services. There will be cameras throughout the building, lights that light up as much as needed, and within the hospital we will make sure that the building is maintained according to regulations.

Ms. Taddy introduced CAMBA staff members: David Rowe, Director of Housing Development; Cindy Harden, Architect; herself, Margaret Taddy, Project Manager, who makes sure everything is done; Sharon Browne, Deputy Executive Director, oversees all the housing services and programs. One thing I forgot to mention and that is that we interview every single applicant with a Psychotherapist, and if the hospital wants to be a part of it they can. We do the interview and if we feel that someone would not fit into the setting then they would not be accepted. We need tenants that will pay their rent and keep the building the way it should be kept. We will have supportive staff in the building, we are looking to hire locally as well. Our contractor has agreed to that and we hope to do the same for this project.

Questions and Answers

Inaudible question. Answer – it is not really public area, but in the two buildings there would be areas for the residents.

Denise Mann (inaudible) – Answer – it is 60% of the applicants. The applications go to a property management company; they review the applications and certifications. The income certification is critical because we get a tax credit. If people are not certified to live there we will lose the tax credit and therefore will have to pay the syndicate back. Mr. Rowe explained that 60% will follow federal income guidelines for low income for studios and one family units.

Jacqueline Welch – how much would the rent be for people to be able to afford? Mr. Rowe – it is on a range at this point, the range would be from \$500 to \$600 per month, within that range you would have to calculate according to how much the person makes.

Inaudible question. Answer – it is not designated, there is not a designated number for Section 8.

Skei Saulnier – are there any plans to give money to the police for the addition people that will be coming into the community at Crooke Avenue? Chairman Goldstein – that location is not within this community and is not a part of this project.

Same question – Answer – no there is no money to give to the Police Department. We will be meeting with the Police Department as we move forth with this project to discuss what we are doing. Chairman Goldstein added that the planned security with cameras will be helpful.

When and where can we get the applications? The Community Board will have them, they will be available in about two years' time, it takes about that time to build the buildings.

Stuart Balberg – education services (inaudible) – what type of educational services? CAMBA provides educational services, but your question is will CAMBA provide educational services to Kings County employees, the answer is no.

Inaudible question – Answer – the question is “will we be certified for people who are HIV positive” and the answer is no.

Inaudible question – if they come with special needs, then the answer is yes. 60% of the building will be for special needs, this is citywide; 40% of the building will be for affordable housing.

Inaudible question – a study was done on supportive housing and the study found that building Morris Manor added value to the surrounding property.

Inaudible question – we do the interviews, the management company reviews the application.

Inaudible question – Chairman Goldstein – let me explain, because at the end of the day because this is a City project then the contractor has to meet all conditions of the contract, which is bonding, hiring, the guidelines the city has in place, starting with unions all the way down. The Community Board, working with CAMBA, will try to make it work for the people in the community as sub contractors. They should be given preference we will try to make that work.

The Chairman thanked CAMBA for getting involved to change buildings that have been wasting away for years and develop them into meaningful habitable buildings.

Public Hearing on Community Board 9's FY 2011 Capital and Expense Budget Requests

Capital Requests

Theopia Green – what kind of housing will be at Kingsboro. District Manager explained that there was approximately five acres of property on the grounds of Kingsboro, the Board would like to see this property used for affordable housing.

Denise Mann – why are council districts missing on the requests? Pearl Miles – prior to final submission, all priority numbers and council districts will be included.

Expense Requests

There were no comments.

Chairman Goldstein thanked the District Manager for the PowerPoint presentation on the budget requests this was the first time it was done. The chairman also thanked Richard Vilabrera, MAS Intern for his assistance in the presentation.

BUSINESS SESSION

The business session began at 8:00 p.m., with 37 members present.

Minutes of the September 2009 Meeting

The minutes of the September 2009 meeting were adopted.

District Manager's Report

1. District Manager Pearl Miles reported that the Department of Transportation was inviting community groups to apply for the "Weekend Walks" project. Weekend Walks is a program where the streets would be closed to traffic. A community group or organization could apply to close a street or location, for example, every Saturday during the summer. Anyone interested visit www.nyc.gov/weekendwalks. There you would find all the information you need, as well as other locations that had weekend walks location before and the type of things they did, this would give you ideas so you could plan a program. A word of caution though, the street can't be closed to have a block party every weekend.
2. The Community Service Society has money available for community groups. They are working with the Mayor to give groups \$500 cash awards for beautifying their blocks. The application deadline is November 30th. Interest groups must attend one of two workshops, one is on November 9th and the other on January 13, 2010. The project implementation phase is from April to June 2010. To learn more about the block transformation program contact Scott Cody at 212-822-9563 or email scody@citizensnyc.org or call Alisha Roault at 212-822-9558, email aroault@citizensnyc.org

The District Manager welcomed back Richard Vilabrera, MAS Intern, who has helped to make the meetings more user friendly with his mapping skills. Richard is a junior in high school and would like to become an Architect. He is very goal oriented and we really appreciate his services.

Committees' Reports

Education Committee – Demetrius Lawrence, Sr.

Mr. Lawrence reported that a meeting was held on October 19th. The members basically discussed concerns and new ideas for doing new things with the schools and for education in general. They discussed working with Medgar Evers College, Medgar Evers Prep School; organizing college fairs, etc. They are reaching out to parents and would like to get everyone in the community involved.

Youth Services Committee – Dion Ashman

Mr. Ashman reported that the committee would be meeting next month. They plan to continue the series in "Generation X a Generation Not Deferred". For information on becoming a member of the committee call the CB office at 718-778-9279.

Chairman's Report

Chairman Goldstein acknowledged Councilmember Letitia James presence and invited her to say a few words to the audience.

Councilmember James thanked the community for her reelection to serve another term in the City Council; she had the highest margin of victory in New York City. The councilmember asked the men she appointed to the Board to stand. The councilmember said that she wants to appoint more men of color; she wants them to step up on behalf of their community. She would like to give them the charge to turn this community around; she wants more men of color to step into leadership roles; that is the absolute key.

In terms of education we are losing more men especially men of African ancestry, it is really critical that we focus on education and that we teach them that education is the key to liberation. "They have to pull up their pants; it is not cool for someone to see your behind." We will assist them to go to college. You could be a member of a fraternity. I thank God for young brothers who have accepted their leadership roles on this community board.

The councilmember encouraged everyone to come out and vote. She will be working on the budget requests, she received the requests; she wants to specifically look at PS 249. She would like to do some AP classes at Medgar Evers Prep School. This school under the leadership Dr. Wiltshire, This year had a 99% graduation rate. This is a secret. The valedictorian and the salutatorian were two black men; one of them will be going to law school and one to medical school. It is amazing and this story needs to be told what Dr. Wiltshire is doing at this school, it is a fabulous school, it is open on Saturdays up to 9:00 o'clock at night. Dr. Wiltshire is one of the few black men with a degree in Math and Science, he is absolutely amazing, so whatever he needs he will get.

As mentioned, for PS 231 and other schools in district 17, we will be trying to improve the outcome by trying to get our science labs, math labs, art and culture in district 17.

The Chairman acknowledged the following representatives: Ana Lipkind – Councilmember Darlene Mealy; Ann Marie Adamson – Hon. Marty Markowitz; Wanda Gebrehinot – Hon. Karim Camara; Reuven Lipkind – Hon. Eric Adams; Debra Lesane, Kings County hospital

The chairman also reported:

1. Two board members have resigned: Alice Mitchell and Chaz Crowder.
2. Ocean on the Park Houses – these homes on Ocean Avenue were designated as landmarked. Community Board 9 supported this application and recommended landmark status. When this was first proposed it was denied by the Landmarks Preservation Commission, but they persevered and today they received the good news, this is a great victory for the community.
3. There is a critical problem with motorists not stopping for school buses. They ignore the stop sign on the bus and go right past. Children are killed a lot of time because of this. If you see someone doing that take down their license plate number and call it in to the board office. This is State law, you can be fined.
4. November 4th is Election Day – go out and vote. November 11th is Veterans Day; please take a moment to honor our veterans.

Voting Items

FY 2011 Capital Budget Requests – Motion to accept made by Carl Morgan and seconded by Jacqueline Welch – voting: 33 yes; 0 no's; 1 abstention.

FY 2011 Expense Budget – Motion to accept made by Carl Morgan and seconded by Jannie Johnson. Stuart Balberg said that he was against the request for more sanitation enforcement and would be voting no to the requests; voting: 18 yes; 7 no's; 7 abstentions.

Kings County Housing Proposal

Motion to support the proposed building of affordable housing on the sites of Buildings J and N on the grounds of Kings County Hospital Center was unanimously approved.

Adjournment

Motion to adjourn was made by Rabbi Nochum Gross seconded by Jannie Johnson. The meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted
Shelia Foster-Golding
Secretary
November 23, 2009