**Community Board 17**

**Land Use Committee Virtual Meeting**

**Thursday, June 2, 2022**

**Present: Guests: Excused:**

Rachel Goodfriend

The **Land Use Committee** Virtual meeting was held on **Thursday, June 2, 2022 at 7:30pm.**

**Mr. Kwame Afreh** called the meeting to order for June 2, 2022.

**Chairperson’s Report**

**Mr. Kwame Afreh** said there is nothing new as far as Land Use business. Everything that is in their purview currently, no new applications, no new or landmarking applications, nothing of the sort. Observationally, there are a lot of new developments that are popping up in their neighborhood and one he is paying attention to is on Brooklyn and Church Avenues. It was many row homes and he did some research to see how much FAR they actually have. There are no official plans there, but they are boarding it up and he believes excavation has started. This will change the character of what that corner was typically over time.

They missed last month’s meeting, both he and his Co-Chair had emergency situations, and unfortunately, the meeting could not be held. This concludes the report, because there is nothing else to report.

The next item is the approval of the minutes. They do not have a quorum to approve the minutes, so they will be tabled until the next meeting.

**Ms. Joan Bakiriddin** with the development on East 98th Street, did they receive any feedback from the Councilmembers that was requested or did they reach out to him regarding that space.

**Mr. Afreh** said he did not receive any feedback from Councilmember Mealy’s office and he does not know if anyone else was contacted. Emails were sent and phone calls were made to her office and they were not returned. It has not been very fruitful in trying to get them to converse with them in regards to that particular development.

He asked if there were any unfinished business, Land Use related, especially going into the summer months that they would like to discuss? He knows they will not have official meetings, depending on exactly what gets brought up. He is not going to let the official meetings stop any communication with departments they have been doing business with.

**Ms. Adele Bennett** said in regards to the building that is going to be demolished on the corner of Church and Rogers Avenues, there used to be a Roti shop there and they are buying up that whole block on Rogers Avenue and those businesses are being put out. She wants to know what is going up there. They also shut down the laundromat that was there and it looks like they are slowly shutting down everything on that block.

**Mr. Afreh** said he did go by there the other day and that is where the infection started. Something is odd about that particular corner on Rogers Avenue as far as zoning is concerned and how it is zoned and there should be public records of who is acquiring this.

**Ms. Bennett** said she thinks they are going to sweep through and put up mega buildings because it is close to the trains.

**Mr. Afreh** said there are major rules that happen for major strip like that, especially in proximity to the trains. They have to pay attention as a group, as a team to try and keep an eye out for things like that. He wants to keep ledger of stuff like that and if he starts to see familiar names or companies and if he can get ahead of them and having to deal with them, and he can do the research to see if it is an as-of-right build. They are trying to acquire enough just not to have to communicate with them.

**Ms. Bennett** said they need to pressure the Mayor’s office to amend the as-of-right business.

**Mr. Afreh** said now that the training is completed, he needs to reach out to DCP, and he has been in those communications for a while. He will follow up with them to see where they stand. Even though this is the last official meeting before the summer, he would like to keep in communication with everyone and asked that they keep their eyes open.

**Ms. Bennett** said when she was on the subcommittee years ago, they kept their eyes on everything, because when they are sleeping, they are building.

**Mr. Afreh** asked if anyone else has seen developments popping up or potential developments in their particular areas?

**Mr. Ozni Lewis** said on East 35th Street and Snyder Avenue, they seem to be at a stand still with that. The steel is up, but that has been there for a long time.

**Ms. Bennett** said that is because they have a stop order.

**Mr. Lewis** said on Church and Brooklyn Avenues, they actually have a majority of the outer shell, the concrete brick and they have not completed the roof as of yet, but the retaining wall is up.

**Mr. Afreh** said that means they are moving along, and they have not contacted them, which means it is probably as-of-right and he will look into it. That corner opened up the flood gates and he has had his eyes on that property. All the other ones in his neighborhood are more or less complete. The turn around for these low-rise developments is getting faster. In the blink of an eye, they are done. Has anyone noticed any other developments?

**Ms. Bennett** said on East 98th Street and East New York Avenue, right behind the supermarket, there is a hotel there and it is not completely finished and it has scaffolding up and permits with information on there. They do not need a hotel across from a school.

**Mr. Afreh** said he will take a drive by there. He asked if there were any other unfinished business or new business to discuss?

Mr. Tait will be holding an event at Paerdegat Park on Saturday, June 4th and the flyers were sent out and he is looking for support for this endeavor. The event will be from 9am to 1pm. They will be planting flowers and cleaning up the park.

The Social Services Committee will be hosting a health fair on Saturday, June 18th from 10am to 3pm at Paerdegat Park.

**Ms. Bakiriddin** said the Housing Committee is also holding an event in Paerdegat Park also on Saturday, June 18th on the Foster and Albany Avenues side of the park, from 10am to 5pm.

**Roll Call**-Kwame Afreh, Adele Bennett, Allyson Martinez, Marguerite Vigliante, Joan Bakiriddin, Brie DaCosta, Vanessa Quashie, Yolanda Alleyne, Ann Hudson, Ozni Lewis, Lilieth Heron Robinson, Dale Dawes, CK Price

He thanked everyone, this is his first time doing this and it was a learning experience. He appreciated everyone that aided and help him. It was challenging and there were some hiccups. They did some events and they reached out to the community. He felt good because they were a part of something and wishes they could have done more, but the City was not ready to do business with them.

He still wants to stay in contact with everyone about their ideas. He was speaking to Allyson and Mr. Lewis about doing some outreach and getting the youth involved so they will know exactly what they are doing. If anyone has any ideas, he would like to push those ideas forward. They will talk about generating a subcommittee and he wants to create a location where they can keep all the information gathered. They can keep a log of what is going on in the community. it may not stop what is going on, but they will be attentive to what is going on around them and maybe they will be able to put themselves in the right position to ask the right questions to see what is going on.

**Ms. Bennett** said some developers would start the demolition without the permits and that is how they would get fined.

**Mr. Afreh** said COVID-19 probably stepped that back a little bit. They have all those resources and over this year, they learned everything is on-line now. There is nothing to hide from the AHVs, After Hour Variances, which he is actually keeping his eyes on quite a bit. He has not heard any complaints for over night construction and it shows that they are being respected and listened to and their connection at the DOB were responsive to **(INAUDIBLE)** which is also progress.

It was a tight knit group and they had their day in the sun and did their business and created new agendas and new dialog and they have a whole process in place for landmarking and what their role is in it. He thanked Ms. Allyson Martinez for reaching out to the LPC to give them the training. He needs to go on the community resource page **(INAUDIBLE)** to avoid over development or out of context building.

It is all about education, the more they know, the stronger they will be. They cannot just assume things and they have to learn from each other to figure out what avenues they can take to combat the things that are the problems. Picking out and targeting the right agencies, sending the complaints to the correct agencies is more effective. Once they all know as a group, they can work as a **(INAUDIBLE)** to combat what they are trying to do. He wants to be more available and outside of doing this, it was a rough year for him, and he had a lot going on, but he is freeing up and getting more time. He looks forward to hearing from them before, after and during the break and he will keep them posted and they can reach out to him directly.

From the chat, Mr. Price gave an update and $10,000 in penalties were issued to the general contractor, Pacific Rem, at the DOB construction site at 30 East 98th Street. The contractors did not provide the workers on site with the safety orientation and work platforms were found to be unsecured, missing guard rails, missing roof protection and unsafe supportive scaffolding.

He asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting?

**Ms. Bennett** made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

**Ms. Marguerite Vigilante** seconded the motion.

Meeting adjourned.