**Community Board 17**

**Parks & Beautification Committee Meeting**

**Tuesday, October 4, 2022**

**Present:**

Berlotte Antoine

Adele Bennett

Alexandra Schmidbauer

Jackie Williams

Ricky DaCosta

Jorge Tait

Linda Turner

Brie DaCosta

Frederick Watson

Karlene Gordon

Jeanick Williams

Audrey Henderson

Rae Beth Maye

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

The **Parks & Beautification Committee Virtual** meeting was held on **Tuesday, October 4, 2022 at 7:30pm.**

**Ms. Berlotte Antoine** called the meeting to order 7:36pm.

She asked if everyone received the minutes for the Sept. 6, 2022 meeting? She asked for a motion to accept the minutes for the Sept. 6, 2022 meeting?

**Ms. Linda Turner** made a motion to accept the minutes.

**Ms. Jackie Williams** seconded the motion.

**Chairperson’s Report**

**Ms. Antoine** said at the last meeting, they spoke about the Tree Lighting Ceremony, voted on a date and the subcommittee stated what they can do. From September 6th until now, she has worked with the office. The flyer was put together and will be sent to them and they can share the date with the community. The event is for the community to enjoy what they are doing. At the General Board meetings, there is a push to let the community know what they are doing, and this will be published for the community to know what they are doing. She heard that the community participated. A request for toys was sent to Toys for Tots and she heard that they provided toys for this event and she hopes they can get toys from them again this year. The Chair also reached out to other agencies and she has reached out to other people, so they can have more toys.

She has the letters for the elected officials and the businesses to request donations and they will be sent out to community members and they will start a drive to see how they can use what is provided to them. The go-to person will be Ms. Fraser for everything that is provided to them. She asked the committee members to share the task, so they will know who will do the follow-up, because there are a lot of Churches, and if there is no follow-up, they will forget. They can divide up the task so they will know who has to make the phone calls after the letters are sent out to follow-up. There is a lot of outreach they need to start doing. There is a loot of outreach they need to start doing and she invited other people to come to the meeting and she sent applications to members that wanted to be a part of this committee, so they will know what they will be doing. If they know of any one that would like to be a part of this committee, let her know and she can send them an application. She does have a list of the Churches in the community and they can mail the letters to them.

**Ms. Bennett** asked if there were an alternate date for the event?

It was stated that there are no alternates for events.

**Ms. Turner** said in 2015, because it had snowed, they held the event in the Board office.

**Ms. Williams** said they should think of an alternate date and location, because they do not know how the weather would be, because to put all these efforts and plans into place and then nothing happens.

The Parks Dept. does not offer alternate dates for anything in the parks.

The thing with using the school is, they may want to charge them, and the Board does not have that kind of money, that is the reason they are soliciting funds.

**Ms. Bennett** said they can get a price and then the Chair can help out with the school.

**Ms. Antoine** said the committee should reach out to the school to see what they are willing to offer.

She asked if there were any other suggestions for a location if they cannot get the school as back up?

**Ms. Turner** asked about the space next to the office>

**Mr. Jorge Tait** said a part of that location is still for rent. The other space has a medical facility there.

**Ms. Antoine** asked if they could reach out to the landlord to see if they can get it

**Mr. Tait** mentioned Tropical Reflections on Glenwood Road and East 45th Street. He does not know if someone wants to contact them to see if they would be willing to help out with this.

**Ms. Antoine** said she had requested some funding from the Board for gifts early, so they can start wrapping them. She also requested a list of the vendors they could buy from, that they used before.

Funding can be requested from the elected officials through their discretionary funds.

**Mr. Tait** said his suggestion is to reach out to the elected officials and request funding as soon as possible and also to the different businesses in the community.

**Ms. Antoine** said the letters will be printed for the members to give to the businesses in the community. The letter will also be sent to the Churches. She asked the members if they would be willing to come to the office to help mail the letter to the Churches that they do not have emails for? She asked who would like to be on that team? She asked what is their ideas on outreaching to the Churches in terms of giving them the letters? Do they think they should mail the letters to the Church or go to them and hand deliver them?

**Mr. Tait** asked what kind of assistance are they requesting from the Churches?

**Ms. Antoine** said the letter to the Churches is to basically ask them for contributions of money or in-kind donations, and also ask them to participate. The big thing for now is to make sure they have the donations for them to purchase what they need.

**Mr. Tait** said with the mailing out of the letters, are there stamps in the office? The members can take the flyers to their Churches or any Church in the community that they walk by.

There were stamps in the office, but everything is now emailed to the members.

**Ms. Antoine** said she will reach out to Ms. Fraser to see if they can use the postage in the office for the mailings. Flyers will be at the office and they can pick them up and distribute to the community. She asked if they accept the flyer as is and they can move forward with the printing

**Ms. Williams** said they can ask the Youth groups from the Churches to do the caroling

**Ms. Antoine** said they have a letter requesting donations, but a second letter can be done for the Churches requesting the Youth groups to do the caroling.

It was mentioned at the subcommittee meeting that they can also reach out to Assemblymember Monique Waterman.

How are they going to follow up with the elected officials and the Churches after the letters are sent to them?

**Ms. Karlene Gordan** said they can give x amount of Churches to the members and they can follow up with them and get a feedback directly from them.

**Ms. Antoine** said she has a list and it can be divided amongst the members for the follow ups.

She asked the members if they have done anything since the Sept. 6th meeting? It was mentioned that Mr. George Gayle will be contacted regarding being the Santa again this year.

**Ms. Turner** said she will follow up on that, Mr. Gayle is her neighbor.

**Ms. Antoine** asked if she should contact the Fire Dept. to bring Mr. Gayle to the park. She heard it was done in the past. Do they have any objections?

The members agreed with the idea.

She asked everyone to introduce themselves for the roll call.

**Roll Call**-Berlotte Antoine, Adele Bennett, Audrey Henderson, Alexandra Schmidbauer, Linda Turner, Karlene Gordon, Brie DaCosta, Jorge Tait, Frederick Watson, Jeanick Williams, Jackie Williams, Ricky DaCosta

**Ms. Antoine** said at the last meeting, they spoke about tree planting in the park. There are 2 projects she would like to bring to the floor, tree pruning and the signs for Curb Your Dog. These are the 2 projects they can work on.

**Mr. Tait** said he would like to bring back the Spring Concert in the park. They would have participation from the different Churches with their choirs and dancers. They have not had it for a couple of years.

**Ms. Antoine** said she would love to organize that if the subcommittee votes on it, and if she could have 2 or 3 people to work with her on that with flyer and reaching out to the Churches. She asked what date was this done on in the past?

**Mr. Tait** said he thinks it was done in early June, but he will check.

**Ms. Antoine** said she would need a subcommittee of 2 or 3 people to work on that if the committee agrees and they vote to do it. If they agree, they can work on that at another meeting and she will have some information to share with them.

The committee agreed that this was a good idea.

**Ms. Antoine** said at the last meeting, they spoke about the Tree Lighting Ceremony and also a Health Resource Fair and have vendors to talk to residents on how to cook healthy foods. They will also reach out to the schools in the community. They will discuss this at a later meeting.

**Ms. Jackie Williams** said she thinks this is a good idea because they can buy the food and don’t handle it properly, it is a waste of time and money. They can reach out to the WIC program as an excellent resource of agencies to contact to provide nutritional education and information and also the Health Dept.

**Ms. Antoine** said she will reach out to Kings County Hospital because the have the Diabetic Educational component and she will follow up on that because she would love to have them on board.

**Ms. Alexandra Schmidbauer** said another good resource for health education is Edible Schoolyard and they have a program which is focused on gardening and the vegetables they can grow locally, and they come out to schools and do cooking and nutrition demonstrations. She thinks they also do community events and not just schools.

**Ms. Antoine** said she has a list she is compiling, and she asked if by the next meeting, they know of any organization, schools or Churches that would like to be a part of this event, let her know by text or email and she will add them to her list of people to contact. All of their ideas are welcome.

**Ms. Bennett** said at Kings County Hospital, they also have classes on nutrition.

**Ms. Antoine** said if she a contact for that, give her the information and she will reach out to them.

**Ms. Gordon** said she was on the Kings County Hospital’s Community Advisory Board and she has a good relationship with some people there and she would not mind making the contacts with the different departments. She just needs to know what their focus is.

**Ms. Antoine** said she will work with the office to put a letter together that can explain the goal and what is needed and when she reaches out to anybody, she can show them what they are trying to achieve. Her goal is to have this event well attended for the community. They are planning this event for May or June.

**Ms. Gordon** said this is an excellent idea because she thinks at this time, they definitely need to focus on good health and Kings County is about that and they would be happy to partner with them, in terms of getting the information out to the community.

**Ms. Antoine** thanked Ms. Gordon for her idea and willing to assist.

**Ms. Jackie Williams** said she thinks this an excellent idea, but for clarification, are they labeling it Farmer’s Market, but that sounds more like it is going to be a health fair, which is all inclusive and would include a lot.

She is connecting with the WIC program at Kings County and they have Nutritionists that do excellent education and she is sure they would be interested in participating, because that would be a form of outreach for them to attract participants. She is willing to make the contact.

**Ms. Antoine** said the event will be called, Healthy Eating, Healthy Cooking and that is the theme that she picked.

For the next meeting, all of the things they spoke about tonight, she will be in touch with those that said they can contact people and they can report back on what they will be doing.

The next project she wants to bring to the committee is the beautification of the parks and sitting areas. When they say beautification, she thinks of the parks and sittings areas being cleaned and having trees. They can start this project and they will be assisting her, and they can also talk about the dog signs to see what can be done.

At the last meeting it was mentioned that CB 17 had a project in the park and the trees that were planted did not have good maintenance and it was like a waste of time. She looked at the sitting areas and it is needed in the community to have trees. How can they do something that is meaningful, and they know that they participated in the beautification of their neighborhood?

**Mr. Tait** said he agrees that a lot of the blocks do need trees. He was working with City Trees and they have stopped responding to emails and phone calls. He heard it had something to do with the new Mayor coming in.

He mentioned there was a statement in the minutes that there were no follow ups done in terms of maintaining the plants. He followed up with the Parks Manager several times. A lot of effort was put into the planting of the plants, the Park workers did not water the plants as agreed.

**Ms. Jackie Williams** said her statement was misunderstood and she did not mean to say there were no follow ups made by the members.

**Ms. Antoine** asked if they still want to do the planting again?

**Ms. Gordon** said this is something that is doable and useful. Is there any way they can partner with the schools and get the youth involved in the planting so they will feel invested in the environment?

**Ms. DaCosta** said they did have students and children there to help with the planting, and the high school students were given community service hours for something school related.

**Ms. Antoine** said she reached out to the Flatbush Development Corp. because they also work with youth and she asked if the students would get any credit and she did not get an answer. She said if they know of any schools that would love to help out, that would be happy to work with them on that project, let her know.

**Mr. Tait** said they did reach out to the schools and there were a lot of students there from the 67th Pct. Explorers and Elite Learners and he did sign for them to get the credit for their work on that day. They can reach out to all the schools and let know they will get credit.

**Ms. Antoine** said she will put together a letter to be sent out to the schools when they pick a date. She asked what date would they like to do this? She will put together a calendar of their dates for the committee members.

**Ms. DaCosta** said June was good because of the weather. Since they did Paerdegat Park the last time, do they want to do Tilden Park this time?

**Ms. Antoine** asked which park do they want to use this time besides Paerdegat Park?

**Ms. Turner** said they could use 2 trees around the perimeter of Tilden Park. The trees were cut down, for whatever reason and it would be nice to have them replaced.

**Ms. Jeanick Williams** asked where would the trees be planted, on the blocks or in the parks and how would they come up with a plan? There have been a lot of trees knocked down by the weather and storms, people repaving in front of their houses and having the tree beds cemented. How do the get a copy of the blueprint of where the trees should be or have been, and maybe they can try to replicate a more green environment? On her block when she was growing up, they had a green block and now they have maybe 4 trees on the block. They see what is going on with the environment and they need more trees, clean oxygen and water and she thinks this a step in the right movement so they can educate themselves on the air they breath to the foods they put in their bodies.

**Ms. Antoine** said she likes the idea of having a blueprint or record of where the trees were before so they would have an idea.

She answered 2 emails, one from Assemblymember Monique Waterman to work on trees collapsing in their neighborhood. She also replied to an email from **(INAUDIBLE)** on Parks to work with the committee and assist in their goals. The 2 projects will be trees in the parks and the second will be trees to be planted in the neighborhood and they are a part of the committee. She asked which park would they like to implement the project in? She asked if they want to put this on the next agenda and vote on it then?

The members agreed to put this on the next agenda.

**Ms. DaCosta** asked when will they continue the discussion on the upgrades for Tilden Park, so they won’t be left out of the budget when plans are made for money to be spent in the community. The park is outdated compared to other parks in the area.

**Ms. Antoine** said she will reach out by email and they will move this to the next agenda as well.

**Ms. Gordon** asked if they reached out to the media to cover the Tree Lighting? They can write an article to send to the local papers about what they are doing and would like their support as well.

**Ms. Antoine** said that is a great idea to reach out to the media and she asked Ms. Gordon to work with her on the media outreach.

**Ms. Bennett** asked does anyone want any bulbs to plant at their house or in green space areas?

**Ms. Antoine** said she will an email to follow up on that and get back to them.

**Mr. Tait** said the planting in the park was plants, not trees. The organization that planted trees was Forest for All NYC and they plant trees in schools and in different areas in the City. They also taught forestry to the children. He does not know if they want to try that again this year, because they do need trees. Regarding the renovations at Tilden Park, that is something they need to work on.

**Ms. Antoine** asked if there were anything else to discuss? Having heard none, she asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting?

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

**Ms. Turner** seconded the motion.

Meeting adjourned.