

BKCB 17 General Meeting

February 15, 2023

Start:

Adjourned:

Online/Webex

---

**Meeting called by:** Rodrick Daley      **Type of meeting:** General Board Meeting

**Facilitator:** Rodrick Daley      **Note Taker:** Tamara Thomas

---

**Time Keeper:** Tamara Thomas

---

**Attendees:**

Please read: February 2023 Agenda

Please bring:

---

**Agenda Item:** Chairperson's Report

**Presenter:** Rodrick Daley

**Discussion:**

- Hopefully, they had the opportunity to submit their application to the Community Board for membership, young people 16 and older. If they have any questions, go to the Borough President's website.
- Today's meeting will be dedicated to Rezoning. Everyone can sign up to get an opportunity to testify.
- He had a meeting with the Parks Chair, Ms. Berlotte Antoine and the meeting had to do with the DDC. If people have minority owned businesses, they will be presenting a forum in April. Look out for those notifications.
- He met with the Carshare and they presented in November that they wanted to do a carshare in CB 17. They met to discuss some of those things for the community in terms of what they need to do.
- In terms of the move, that has been halted. They are now looking at 1107 Rogers Avenue. They will no longer be moving to 350 Clarkson Avenue

and he had met with the City and DCAS to halt the move. That was decided by the Executive body. As appointed, Chair Persaud is the point person to look at the move to 1107 Rogers Avenue.

- He welcomed Ms. Karlene Gordon-Murray to the CB 17 team as the new Assistant District Manager

**Ms. Karlene Gordon:** She does plan to work with CB 17 to achieve the goal they have laid out. It is good to be here and be a member of this team.

**Conclusions:**

Yield back to the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair, Mr. Cunningham.

---

**Agenda Item:** District Manager's Report      **Presenter:** Sherif Fraser, District Manager

**Discussion:**

- Thanked the members and residents for attending the meeting to help they address the issues that impacts the community.
- The Chair introduced Ms. Karlene Gordon and as of yesterday, she finally has the help in the office and will no longer be working 60 plus hours a week. She needs the assistance to move their agenda forward.
- Mr. Daley is in contact with DCAS regarding a new site they are looking at. As they make progress, Ms. Persaud will be giving an update.
- Board members, the deadline for reappointment to the Board has been extended to February 23<sup>rd</sup>, and reminders were sent to those members. They encourage residents who are interested in joining the Board, to speak to their Councilmembers. They have a lot of open slots and they need active members, using their voices against the things that causes a negative impact in the community.

**Conclusions:**

Yield the floor back to the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair, Mr. Cunningham.

---

**Agenda Item:** NYPD

**Presenters:** Lt. Merkle, Special Operations,

67<sup>th</sup> Precinct, NYPD  
Sgt. Urena, Neighborhood  
Coordination Sergeant, 67<sup>th</sup> Pct.

**Discussion:**

- Today, within the confines of the 67<sup>th</sup> Pct. Crime Stats, crime is down 27%, for a 28-day period. Down 43% in robberies, 24% in assaults, 21% in grand larcenies and 33% in grand larceny auto.
- There have been 24-gun arrests, criminals with guns, year to date, and 25 guns recovered within the confines of the Precinct. Anything they can do to make the confines of the 67<sup>th</sup> Pct. and the neighborhood safe, that is what they will try and do.
- The FIO, Field Intelligence Officers did a search warrant recently, there were 3 arrests and 7 firearms recovered. The crime trends within the confines of the 67<sup>th</sup> Pct. are robbery pattern # 25, which involves East 98<sup>th</sup> Street, a knife point robbery inside the building and # 28, Albany Avenue and Farragut Road, from East 37<sup>th</sup> Street to Foster Avenue, 2 Black males displaying knives on the street. They are here to serve them and the community and please be careful and anything they can do to help each other, let them know.

**Sgt. Urena:**

**Discussion:**

- There have been noticing mailbox phishing scams around the 67<sup>th</sup> Pct. and the 70<sup>th</sup> Pct. as well. If they see anyone messing with a mailbox, call the Police right away and they can do the investigation.

**Q & A:**

What is being done regarding illegally parked cars?

**Lt. Merkle:** He will have the Neighborhood Coordination Sergeant send his Officers over there and they can also perform an operation over there. They will need the locations of the areas being affected. As of today, they have towed 53 abandoned vehicles from around the Precinct. Last year, they towed 228 abandoned and discarded vehicles along the roads of the 67<sup>th</sup> Pct. They do tow operations all the time, just call the Precinct.

**Conclusion:**

Yield back to the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair.

---

**Agenda Item:** FDNY

**Presenter:** Battalion Chief Victor Gordanello,  
41<sup>st</sup> Battalion, Flatbush

**Discussion:**

- A month ago, on January 27<sup>th</sup>, there was a fatal fire at 3400 Snyder Avenue, a 7-story, multiple dwelling building, fire was coming from a 6<sup>th</sup> floor window when they arrived. There was 1 fatality, a 13-year-old child succumbed to his injuries.
- When they get a 9-1-1 call, they will get an address associated with the call, the SIDS Program system will give them a description of the building, what sort of hazards they will encounter and it gives them a snapshot of what they might encounter before they arrive to when they get there, such as how many floors and stairwells there are or can they cross from one stairwell to another.

**Q & A:**

**Ms. Grandison:** (INAUDIBLE)

**Battalion Chief Gordanello:** Right now, the fire is under investigation by the Fire Marshall.

What annual reviews, tool kits or workshops do they hold for small landlords to help educate them about what they need to know to educate their tenants?

**Battalion Chief Gordanello:** They have a Building Inspection Safety Program and the field units are assigned geographic areas. All the field units within the FDNY comprising of the 5 boroughs, each perspective field unit is responsible for a certain area and they do annual inspections on buildings that require inspections. When they do inspections, they have the Supers walk through with them informing them of what they need to fix.

The 41<sup>st</sup> Battalion Fire Station is located at 2900 Snyder Avenue and the telephone number is 718-965-8341.

**Conclusions:**

Yield back to 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair.

---

**Agenda Item:** Commerce Committee Report

**Presenter:** June Persaud, Chair

**Discussion:**

- The Chair decided that the liquor licenses will be voted on tonight, because the Commerce Committee does not meet until next week.

**Liquor Licenses:**

- **Zuriah Events-Absent**
- **Oval Sports Bar**-located at 1770 Nostrand Avenue, is applying for a liquor license renewal.  
**Police Report:** 6/16/2022-9-1-1 call for disorderly/assault-customer removed-report closed.  
The applicant has been in business for 10 years.

**Q & A:**

**Ms. Bennett:** What is the floor space available and are there any fire code violations, and when was the last time he was inspected?

He does not know of any fire violations. He has 3 doors and (INAUDIBLE) He was inspected about a year ago.

- **Trendz Cultural Club, Inc.**-located at 8906 Ditmas Avenue, is applying for a full liquor license renewal.  
**Police Report:** 2/11/22-2/12/23-41 9-1-1 calls for various reasons-closed. 4/20/22-assault reported-incident report taken. 9/2/22-harrasment reported-incident report taken. 10/8/22-assault reported-arrest made. 1/8/23-assault reported-incident report taken. 1/8/23-summons issued for disorderly crowd-closed.  
The applicant has been in business for 8 years.  
**Mr. Patrick Agard** will be representing the Trendz Culture Club.

**Q & A:**

**Ms. Bennett:** When was the last fire code inspection?

**Mr. Agard:** Their last inspection was pre-pandemic, because they were closed for the last 2 years and reopened late last year and does not have an updated one as of yet. Those inspections are set by the FDNY.

**Ms. Bennett:** In the Police report, it says there were a few incidents.

**Mr. Agard:** This is a lounge that is only open on weekend and they always have a Police car there. They have had incidents because there is an illegal spot that is across the street from them that gives trouble, and they get them mixed up. There is one case that is pending until March, the others are closed.

- **African Cultural & Catering Center, Inc.-Absent**
- **DSC Hospitality Management, LLC-DBA-Kendra's Place**-located at 1744 Nostrand Avenue, is applying for a full liquor license and to change the method of operations. They had a stipulation from the SLA of 12am when they received their license during the pandemic. They are asking for an extension until 4am for their liquor license hours of operation. The applicant has been in business for 1 year.  
**Police Report:** 9/17/22-loud music-(2) 3-1-1 calls -different times-non crime corrective-closed.

#### **Q & A:**

**Mr. Tait:** They are requesting to change the hours of operation until 4am, will this be every night or on weekends?

It will be mostly on weekends, because right now, with the 12am, when they have events, they have to stop at 10pm, to make sure they get everyone out by 12am. If events happen during the week, and if someone has a repast, they want to be able to accommodate those events.

**Ms. Vigilante:** Isn't staying open until 4am during the week a bit much? For the noise complaints, do they have soundproofing?

They just want to have that window optional. The building is soundproofed. The night of these incidents, they were not open, but there is an event space/restaurant down the block that has speakers outside.

**Ms. Persaud:** In defense of the applicant, if there is an event space down the block, they usually put the fine to the licensed establishment, unfortunately.

**Conclusions:**

Yield back to the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair.

---

**Agenda Item:** Roll Call

**Presenter:** Tamara Thomas

**Present:**

- Kwame Afreh, Berlotte Antoine, Joan Alexander-Bakiriddin, Hassan Bakiriddin, Theresa Brereton, Herminia Brown, Asshur Cunningham, Pearlene Fields, Allyson French-Kenton, Dr. Charles Galbreath, Rose Graham, Gail Granderson, Ozni Lewis, Monzurat Oni, June Persaud, Julia James, Dion Quamina, Janice Reid, Dr. Carol Reneau, Jorge Tait, Tamara Thomas, Marguerite Vigliante

**Discussion:**

20 Present-They do not have quorum.

They cannot vote on action items and the liquor licenses.

**Conclusions:**

This concludes the roll call.

---

**Agenda Item:** Approval of minutes

**Presenter:** All attendees

**Discussion:**

The minutes were not sent out on time.

**Conclusion:**

The minutes cannot be approved.

---

**Agenda Item:** 40<sup>th</sup> Council District

**Presenter:** Rita Joseph,  
Councilmember

**Discussion:**

- Her office is located at 930 Flatbush Avenue and on Tuesdays, they have an Immigration Attorney there from 12-6pm.
- On Thursdays, she has a housing professional there, hosted by Kuff. If they need housing help, they can make an appointment and come in, and also on Thursdays, they have a Paralegal person there. They are working on quite a few things, like reimaging Uma Park, on Ocean Avenue, by building it all over. They have been doing community engagements pieces.
- They are still on the African Burial Grounds, and they were able to move the money from HPD to Parks. She will still be looking for more money, because \$4 Million is not enough to build a memorial to truly honor the ancestors. Budget season is coming up and she will be fighting for more money.
- There was not enough funding for the Shirley Chisholm Museum Monument on Ocean and Parkside Avenues, so she allocated extra funds.
- Wingate Park will be completed renovated from top to bottom and it will cost \$17.7 Million to get it done.
- As the Chair of Education, investing in schools, making sure they have what they need. At MS 246, she is investing \$800,000.00 to upgrade the library and a new technology lab and MS 249 will also get a technology lab. PS 139 and PS 106 will get upgraded auditoriums. She really came to invest in young people and infrastructure for the community. This what she has been doing for the last 13 months, passing legislations, like the Bathroom Bill and a Maternal Healthcare package, done with her colleagues. She passed the bill about the bathroom to do a study of where the bathrooms could be, since they rank the lowest on the list.
- Her office number is 718-287-8762.

#### **Q & A:**

**Pastor Thornton:** (INAUDIBLE)

**Councilmember Joseph:** The Bathroom Bill for Parks to study to see which zip codes need them. They don't have enough bathrooms, and this also inspired MTA to renovate the bathrooms in the subways.



The subway at Church and Caton Avenue is finally ADA compliant and they will be installing an elevator. The closest train station with an elevator is Lincoln Road. Parkside does not have one, nor does Church Avenue.

**Ms. Bennett:** In regard to the African Burial Grounds, can she be a little more elaborate about the format of what they want to do or what they need to see there.

**Councilmember Joseph:** They just started the conversation, and this is going to be a we project, not an I, and they will be doing community engagements. They held their first forum where people came and talked about what they would like to see, and they will continue these conversations. and this will be on-going. She does not want to rush the project, because she wants to get it right.

**Ms. Bennett:** It is not just that area, but the surrounding area that those buildings sit on.

**Councilmember Joseph:** She cannot destroy the school, but she can find out and that is going to be another conversation. She knows the adjacent lot where they sell the used cars, is part of it, but they need to see how to acquire that. The person knows it is a valuable piece of real estate, and they are not going to sell it to NYC.

**Conclusion:**

Yield back to the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair.

---

**Agenda Item:** Community Session

**Ms. Cecilia Belyn:** She wants to bring to the attention of the Sanitation Dept. and Transportation that on the corner of Remsen Avenue and Lenox Road, there is a bodega and they constantly throw food and uncooked rice on the sidewalk. She has spoken to them several times and they say they are feeding the birds, but they are encouraging rodents in the community. She has made several complaints, but is getting the run around because no one seems to care. Is there anything that can be done about that? They also need more garbage receptacles in the neighborhood.

**Ms. Lena Scantleberry:** She is the new Brooklyn Outreach Coordinator for the NYC Civilian Complaint Review Board. They are a Government agency, independent from the NYPD that investigates, mediate and prosecutes against Police misconduct. Their jurisdiction is excessive force, abusive authority, discourtesy and offensive language.

They just recently reported a 20/20 George Floyd and Brianna Taylor Protest Report. The CCRB received 321 complaints related to the protest that were within their jurisdiction which is fatal. They were able to conduct a full investigation of 226 of those complaints, which contain a total of 1,800 allegations. The Board substantiated 259 individual allegations of misconduct involving 146 members of service.

There board meetings are held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of every month. Community members are welcome to come to talk about Police accountability and express their concerns to the Board.

They can reach out to her, she will be doing a lot more workshops and outreach presentations for organizations that want to learn more about the CCRB, how to file a complaint on the website or come to the office located at 100 Church Street, Lower Manhattan, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor. They can also follow them on social media. They can also file a complaint at their local Precinct.

**Mr. Tyrone McDonald:** He is here on behalf of the Neighborhood Housing Services of Brooklyn. In light of the recent fire and the few fires that happened in the community. NHS of Brooklyn, on March 2, 2023, at 6pm, at the Lenox Road Baptist Church, located at 1356 Lenox Road, they are having a Fire Safety Event with the Red Cross, FDNY, Ready NY and other agencies to discuss some safety tips. They can go to the website at [nhsbrooklyn.org](http://nhsbrooklyn.org) for more information.

On Tuesday, Feb. 21, 2023, they will be holding an Estate Planning workshop. They will be discussing a living wills and healthcare proxies. They can get more information from their website.

**Ms. Anna Lipkin:** She is with Connect ICC, Crown Heights. ICC is a mental health clinic, located on Utica and East New York Avenues. This is a new program under DOHMH with holistic services. There are 9 other Connect programs in the City and 3 in Brooklyn. This is a unique program based on data that they collect through surveys. They work through community feedback. Their programs have therapy, community engagement, which they avail the community to come and apply for benefits. In addition, they will go to the clients if they can't go out. They also accompany them to fair hearings. They have all the HRA benefits, vocational services and they do special events based on the data that they get from the feedbacks.

They are gearing up for a Public Safety Quality of Life event. They will have representatives from NYPD, Cure Violence, and all kinds of agencies and CBOs. This will take place Wednesday, March 22, 2023 at the Brooklyn Children’s Museum.

**Ms.** : She is the owner of 1770 Nostrand Avenue and is always receiving tickets for garbage in front of her place. She has seen people come from all over and dump garbage there. When they bring food, the rodents come.

**Conclusions:**

Yield back to the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair.

---

**Agenda Item:** Public Hearing Report

**Presenter:** Julia L. James, Chair

**Elected Officials-Roll Call:**

Jummane Williams, Sen. Zellnor Myrie, Assemblymember Rodnesye Bichotte-Hermelyn, Assemblymember Latrice Walker, Sen. Kevin Parker, Sen. Roxanne Persaud, Assemblymember Brian Cunningham, Assemblymember Monique Chandler-Waterman, City Councilmember Rita Joseph, City Councilmember Farah Louis, City Councilmember Darlene Mealy

**Discussion:**

- She met with Councilmember Charles Barron and he is giving his 100% support to make this happen. This is the most important issue facing this community. If they do not address this commemorating Black History Month. These are villages and towns that have disappeared, Seneca Village, in Central Park, Oscarville and the Tulsa, Greenwood districts. These were primarily, predominantly, black owned neighborhoods and the Government came in and made them disappear. If they do not assertively speak up, they are going to be included in that list in the next 50 years, that this used to be East Flatbush, where Black homeowners and tenants had the ability to live here.
- The primary cause of all these problems is the State has allowed other areas of the State to not have multi-family developments. In Long Island, they have

a low density per square mile, and here in Brooklyn, there are 40,000 per square mile. This has caused developers, as a matter of right, cannot develop in Long Island. It has taken 40 years for one developer to try and get 1 site in. The number of sites going up in Long Island cannot support the need, so their children cannot live on Long Island once they graduate from college. They will move to the City and they will bare the brunt of it.

- This is a call tonight for the State officials, who did not show up, to ask them to work with the Governor to resolve this issue. Other parts of the State specifically Long Island, has to pick up its share of housing for its own residents because they are baring the brunt of it. In the past, they would move to Manhattan, but it has become too expensive, so they move to Brooklyn, so consequently, they end up having to be displaced.
- They are doing this to preserve their homeownership and they are losing their homeownership in Brooklyn. They are being asked to pay a disproportional share of the housing right here in CB 17, because developers can build as they so choose, and the end result is a lot of buildings going up and none of them had to come to the Community Board or the residents because they can come as a matter of right.
- The last time a developer had to come before the Board was in 2009. In other areas of NYC, any developers that want to do a major project, have to go to the Community Boards and speak to the community.
- The major problem is called R-6 and R-7. This district has the biggest R-6 in the entire Brooklyn. R-6 permits a developer to go in and construct whatever building he wants without coming to the Board and getting community approval. Every other district in Brooklyn has small segment of R-6 zoning.
- The best resolution is Contextual Zoning to avoid the tall buildings. Contextual Zoning does not stop the development of housing. They will still be able to build, it just has to be done contextually. They don't go to blocks with single family houses, buy 2 or 3 homes, and tear them down, that would not be permitted in any other communities, except them.

- In 1987, New Yorkers got upset with what developers were doing, they rallied and the City had to change the zoning code to have contextual zoning. Any area in Brooklyn that has contextual zoning, they cannot put a 20-story building on a block where there are single family homes and that is the problem they are having.
- Of the 18 community districts, CB 17 is the only one that does not have contextual zoning and it is the one with the most black homeownership.

**Mr. Jummane Williams, Public Advocate:**

**Discussion:**

- He was the Councilmember for a number of years and this has taken way too long and it has harmed the community. He has been blamed for some of these structures that go up because the community thinks he approves them. As of right means they don't have to come to the Council or the Community Boards. They are coming and building with no additional permission. When people came in, they bought into blocks with one- and two-family homeowners and they thought that is the lifestyle they would always have. The problem with that is it was (INAUDIBLE) it just was not profitable at that time. When they come into the black and brown communities, they just want to suck some profit from it. When it got profitable, that is when they started to build in the zones that already existed.
- He tried to kick start the process when he was a Councilmember and there was a spiciness when trying to move this forward. Every year they waited, the more buildings that went up. How many people believe housing and homelessness is one of the biggest issues they have in the City right now? Do they think the way to address that is with additional housing that people can afford at their income level? How many people want a taller building next to them? Those 3 questions get answered the same wherever they go in the City. Nobody wants taller or bigger structures, and no one wants to give up density and that is the problem. Any housing plans has to go through Preservation first to preserve the housing they have. They do need

additional units and in order to get those units, they have to give up density.

- In other communities, they did contextual zoning and they actually down zoned and those communities are not getting anything built right now and the folks feeling the brunt of it are the folks where they have more places where they can actually build. The zoning has to be changed so they can build up. They do not want to change the communities overnight. They need to have a zoning process where a community like CB 17 can preserve those one- and two-family units and blocks so they are no longer getting those monstrosities and find a way to give up some density in other areas where the community itself would not mind. In exchange for that, it has to be truly affordable to the income target, so the community residents that lives here now, and their families can stay here as well.
- This is what the process has been about. He started to relook at the plan that was (INAUDIBLE) and the framework that is there, he thinks it is good and they should begin to move forward on it, even if it needs to be tweaked as they go and they don't need to finalize it if it is not where it needs to go. The longer they wait to start, the longer it takes to finish, and in between that time, more and more buildings are going to start going up.
- MIH 1 is there now, and he does not think that is enough affordability, and as they move forward, they have to get more affordability than what is there now. He voted against Mandatory Inclusionary Housing because it did not provide enough affordability. He thinks the framework is good and they should start moving forward with this.
- They need for thing to change, so the developers have to come to the Community Boards more often to get permission.
- They are paying for the infrastructure in the suburbs, because they don't have enough units.

**Q & A:**

**Ms. Vigilante:** Did he look at the plans proposed by the Land Use Committee?

**Mr. Williams:** There are a lot of plans bouncing around, one by WXY, is the plan he is referring to, and in his opinion, it was a good framework to start moving this forward.

**Ms. :** He mentioned having the tall buildings next to them. There are a lot of buildings that are built already, and they are empty. How are they going to repurpose those buildings so they can maintain what they currently have? The one- and two- family homes they want to preserve in the district, are in R-4. How do they reconcile that with the need to build up higher?

**Mr. Williams:** Those tall buildings were not built for the community, because the rents for the units are super high, even the ones they call affordable, something affordable to everyone. The higher the rent ban, the more vacancies there are, and the lower they go, the less vacancies. He would love to repurpose them to make them affordable for the people that are actually living here. For mixed used unit, a low income is needed, and middle income also needs assistance. Those who need the most assistance are the ones getting the least assistance.

**Ms. :** The Nehemiah houses built in East New York were built to maintain and give people of lower incomes the opportunity to own houses. Can they use that model again today or maybe 2 or 3 family homes they can own here? There are young couples making good salaries and cannot afford to live here.

**Mr. Williams:** Homeownership is often left out of the housing conversations, and there might be a way moving forward, usually in their area, the co-op condo is the best opportunity for homeownership.

He knows a gentleman that knows about the opportunities and how they can get into homeownership, even for 1 or 2 family homes and they can find ways to include that.

**Conclusion:**

Yield back to Ms. James.

---

**Ms. Rita Joseph, Councilmember:**

**Discussion:**

- She had a conversation with Chair James about that, and this is an on-going conversation she has with the neighbors, once she became a Councilmember. The district is changing, what do they have, they have power. If they allow the density, they can stop the construction, if they have a voice. For the record, Councilmembers do not give away their district. Because of as-of-right, they come in and they build, and they don't engage the community, because they don't have to talk to them. They get a permit and build up.
- If they do this, they will have to come and talk to them and they have to be a part of the conversation. With the as-of-right, they do not have to assign any units of affordability to them, but if they work with the City, they have HPD and MIH, and they have a certain number of units set aside for low and middle incomes. All of these buildings are high income, the rents are \$4,000.00 to \$5,000.00 a month, and this freezes out this community. That is why it is important that they are a part of the conversations.
- They are also helping with the housing crisis. When people do find apartments, they cannot afford them. She has visited a new site in the district just to see what they are offering the community, there is nothing for them. There could be something for them if they come to the table. They have to be at the table to be a part of the decision making and if they are not at the table, they will be left behind.
- As a former educator, she has seen her students entering the shelters because their families could not afford the rent, and that number has doubled in the last 10 years from 60,000 students to 114,000. This is not a problem, it is a crisis and they can be a part of that solution. She is here as a partner to listen and learn, to be a part of the solution with them.
- They have to rezone, it has not been done since 1961.

**Q & A:**

**Ms. Bennett:** In regards to the tax abatement that is given to some developers, it seems that as these buildings are going up, they are warehousing and do not care because they



are not paying taxes. Who gave them the right of way? The buildings next door are the ones paying and bearing the brunt of the taxes.

**Councilmember Joseph:** In the census in the last 10 years, they allowed R-6 to build, and everyone rushed in, in the last 10 years and this is an opportunity to fix this. The 421-A is from the State as an incentive and it expired, and right now, the Governor is working on a deal that is currently on hold and they are reworking it. This is a State issue, not City.

**Ms. :** While they are warehousing these buildings, what are the chances that the State or the City, because of the housing crisis, will they turn these empty buildings into shelters? She bought her house for generational wealth, and with all of these buildings going up that they cannot afford, in the next 3 years, she is going to be surrounded by shelters.

**Councilmember Joseph:** They have been very vocal with the Mayor about the current condition of migrants coming into their communities and they have been completely against them creating shelters in their communities, particularly in areas that have a large portion of homeowners. She has sent out statements, press releases, had protests when they tried to open shelters in the district, including halfway houses, that they got shut down because they were not appropriate for this community. With the shelter system, it is impossible for them to control them as Councilmembers, because if there is a private landlord that decides to go into business with the City or State to create a shelter, it can be done because it is a private acquisition. They can be vocal and be against it, but they need to join forces with them to push back on it.

The case is completely different when it comes to migrant shelters, especially if it is a hotel, because it is a private space. Right now, they are opening (INAUDIBLE) around the City, and they don't have any in the CB 17 area because they do not have the space and capacity for that. She agrees that the City or State should not be utilizing spaces in residential areas to create shelters and they will continue to push back against it.

**Ms. James:** CB 17 has been trying since 2005 to rezone. They were the first or second community district to start it. They helped CB 15 to rezone, and 18 years later, they are still struggling, and this has to come to a very quick end.

**Mr. Cunningham:** Something has to be done as it relates to the escalation of these high-rise buildings that are going up. He was looking at the newspaper as it relates to what

rents cost. For a 1 family, the person had to make between \$60,000.00 to \$108,000.00, and a lot of people do not make that kind of money. They realized they have to partner with them in terms of pushing back. What is the strategy, how do they move expeditiously, because while they are talking, things are happening and he wakes up everyday to a new structure, like Linden Blvd., he can't see the Congregational Nursing Home because of all the large buildings that have gone up, that they cannot afford. How do they develop strategy to work with them, so they can begin to put some kind slow down to what is happening so expeditiously?

**Councilmember Farah Louis:** Currently, in CB 17, if a developer comes into the community and a homeowner decides to sell their home for \$1 Million, they can build as-of-right. They try to encourage homeowners that if they are going to sell, sell to people they know are going to do right by the community. If they are going to selling to a landlord and they know they are coming to develop, there is nothing they can do because they don't have the money to stop that process. They need the residents in the community to want to preserve the community and they need the support from the residents in the community to understand that if they give it over, they are selling out the community. They have to work together to stay in the community.

When developers come before her for support, she often tells them they would prefer homeownership in the community, but they find a way around it because they don't have to necessarily speak to her, but if they are trying to do right by the community, by asking them to build some Mitchel Lama housing. They are working with the Governor right now to help support in those efforts, but to build condominiums, co-ops and small homes, would make more sense for this district. That is a collaboration that cannot be done by one person. If developers are coming to the Community Boards, they need to have a conversation with one another about what this looks like, and not allow them to come into their community and do whatever they want.

The Christian Cultural Center has an Urban Village, that encompasses Mitchel Lamas, condo, co-ops and is going to be mixed use. They need more of that in this community and it takes all of them working together.

She and Councilmember Joseph will be sending a letter to the Director of the Dept. of City Planning letting him know that he needs to have a conversation with CB 17, and they do support WXY's recommendation in order to prevent out of context development, because it is not right for CB 17. She hopes the Community Board can

share this letter with everyone, to get the Director to come here to work with them and tell him exactly what they need for this district.

**Councilmember Joseph:** They wrote the letter in collaboration to make sure that when they come, they are a part of the conversation. Normally, people want to have conversations for them, not with them, and they want to change that with this partnership and be at the table and no one is being displaced. This is a serious conversation about how they can preserve their community and intergenerational wealth.

They had a meeting with the Mayor about the shelters and he was told that certain communities have no shelters, while some of the Council communities are oversaturated with shelters.

**Mr. Ozni Lewis:** In terms of AMI, Area Medium Income, how can the Council and State Assembly influence those people to limit that to a specific area, 1-3 mile radius instead of what it is currently. That is one of the biggest issues when talking about affordable housing, they don't understand how AMI affects that and who the AMI is for. A lot of times, people don't understand why they cannot afford that. This is where they have to get legislation or something to change that dynamic in their community. They need to bring the AMI down and that would force the developers to offer something and they have no choice but to make it affordable for the specific community they are building in.

**Councilmember Joseph:** That was one of the things she talked about, is a neighborhood AMI, versus the one they have now, which is controlled by the Federal Government and out of their jurisdiction, and there is a bill in the State and they are making sure to pass that bill to make sure they have neighborhood AMIs, not an AMI that covers everyone. This AMI keeps people out of some of the housing markets.

**Mr. Mathew:** One thing not mentioned was, what are all of the effects this development has on the communities. There are a lot of other things on the communities that are stockpiled like the overdevelopment, and the grocery stores and all the other things that are needed in the community. If those buildings are filled to capacity, it will put a strain on the network of things that make this community what it is and that supports this community. There is no development really happening and the other auxiliary facts of what they need for their living. The closest real park is Prospect Park, over a mile away, and a lot of the other child parks are not really in walking

distance. That is not real regular development in that mindset. They come and think building, money that's it. With all that said, where do they go from here, how do they try and push other types of development or changes to restrict the development?

**Councilmember Joseph:** She would love to see a community center for the young people and investments in the community in the infrastructure. They are putting money into Prospect Park and that is why she decided to put money towards the parks and green spaces. Uma and Wingate Parks will be done over, and those are changes for their community, and she wants to make sure they upkeep the green spaces and with the partnership with the Borough President, they are going to do that.

**Ms. James:** In terms of access to the green spaces, they are number 17 out of 18, 51%. There are districts where 80% of the residents have access to green spaces and they are 51, and also the infrastructure cannot support what is in place here, with increased flooding, they have a major problem, because they are building without any regards to the infrastructure in place. They also need to tackle small businesses in terms of (INAUDIBLE) as well because they are losing small businesses, the line of entrepreneurs to be able to open up a barber shop or restaurant, and that will disappear if they don't do something.

**Councilmember Louis:** What they have been able to do so well, especially under this Community Board, is approach developers and landlords in order to include small businesses within existing spaces and she has seen this Community Board do a great job with it under the Congress Committee, and she thinks they need to continue that same precedence moving forward, being a bit more aggressive now, because developers don't have to take in any of their recommendations.

**Rev. James Thornton:** He is the Pastor of the Salem Missionary Church, the largest and oldest African American Church in Flatbush, founded in 1910, for the record.

**Councilmember Louis:** As far as infrastructure is concerned, as the Councilmember mentioned, one of the first things they worked on was their recreation centers because they are going to get everything they need within that space. They are more than welcome to join the Community Board that is a part of every conversation of what this is going to look like, and they are looking forward to that expansion in Councilmember Joseph's district, and she is sure the Mayor will work with to provide some space in her district. If they are interested, they should volunteer, so they can get the support they need to increase infrastructure for park space.

**Rev. Sheldon Hamlin:** He is the Director at St. Paul's Church, in the village of Flatbush, an Anglin (INAUDIBLE) Church, Archdiocese of Long Island. He thanked his colleague, Pastor Thornton, for inviting him to this meeting. He is actually in CB 14. They need to acknowledge that some of the elected officials are in bed with the developers, and they must speak truth to power. They are in an urban setting and not everyone will be able to purchase a single or two- family home. They have a slew of pre-war buildings, 2 bathrooms, 4 bedrooms, and their elected officials, along with other community leaders must come together to see how they can use some of those buildings, from rent to ownership. Many of those buildings are owned by absentee landlords, that live far from where they are. They have made millions and millions of dollars for themselves and their families. The time is now for them to make sure their people begin to own those apartments, so in turn, they can use the equity generated from those apartments to increase the wealth. He will hold the Councilmembers accountable and they need to find a way to do it, because it has been done already in this City, and they need to do it again.

**Councilmember Louis:** They do have a model in this district on Hawthorne Street, HDFC, and she was having that conversation with a housing organization about how do they take some of these distressed buildings and turn them into HDFC, where the tenants become the owners of the building and take care of it, just like a Community Land Trust. She was in contact with them about the process, what did they learn and what route should they take to make it easier. She is thinking how can they do it.

**Ms. :** In District 45, the CB 17 area, she did a walk thru with Speaker (INAUDIBLE) a couple of months ago, to show her particular areas in their community where they can turn particular buildings into co-ops, HDFC. This is something she is interested in and they are going to need partners to partner with them, and she would love if they could help them in that effort, both on Hawthorne Street and in Flatbush Gardens as well. They are seeking support from the community in order to push her colleagues on the Citywide and Statewide levels to support their efforts.

**Dr. Charles Galbreath:** He thanked the Councilmembers for being here and for their dedication, as well as his other colleagues. He is the (INAUDIBLE) and Pastor of the Alliance Tabernacle Church, on Clarendon Road and New York Avenue, formerly, the Clarendon Road Church, as well as a member of CB 17.

It was shared, concerning residents staying and having ownership here. He reiterated and note that some people in his own congregation are sometimes bullied, pushed or harassed and are levied with unfair fines as well as water bills and other things. This is a reality that is taking place as to why some people are having a difficult time staying within this community, when it feels as though they are being pushed or shoved out, when they are desiring to stay here for their family, and it is multigenerational, it is not just one family member that is taking place.

In regards to the infrastructure, they see all these buildings coming in, is there enough needed infrastructure to support all of these as-of-right buildings that are coming in, in regards to sewage, water and the sinkholes and all the things that are seeing and witnessing taking place.

What is holding up the rezoning process and what do they need to do as a Community Board and neighborhood to address this?

**Councilmember Louis:** The Public Advocate said they need to galvanize and come together, in order to get this done. He started the process before he became the Public Advocate. He was able to fund a Consultant to come in and provide a recommendation, and they have been halted ever since. Even before that, it was taking a long time with some of their colleagues in the State. Now that they are here and have a recommendation and they are planning to let City Planning know they want to move forward with this and get it done.

One of her biggest concerns has been the infrastructure, and she did a walk thru with (INAUDIBLE) in October in the district and the biggest issue has been Clarendon Road, because of the leaning homes. When she first got into office, she tried working with her State colleagues in order to address it. They also came in with DOT and asked for an estimate of how much it would cost for them to fix the infrastructure. They gave them a number, but said the State had to be involved. She would love their support if they could help with her State colleagues in order for them to get the funding they need to fix some of the infrastructure. It will take all forces to come on board to get the funding. Now is the time because the Governor has the money, and she is thinking about everything else, but the infrastructure for this community. The infrastructure issue is happening in all the Council districts.

**Ms. Lilieth Herron Robinson:** What do they have to do to get the process started and get the ball rolling to get this done?

**Ms. James:** They need to focus amongst themselves and see what is the next best steps to do in terms of dealing with this critical situation, because it is the most important situation that is facing them as a community. Everyone that signed in, they will keep in touch with them by email moving forward. She proposes as the next step, they start a petition to let the Mayor of NYC know, that enough is enough. The Mayor of the City is in charge of the Dept. of City Planning.

For rezoning to take place, the requirement of City Planning is a lead agency. The City Charter is very clear that there needs to be an agency that has the capacity, a facility to put together the package, which is needed to give to the City Planning Commission. It is very expensive for them as a community to do. Other communities do this individually by getting together with a non-profits and they are able to do it. It is very expensive, and they are relying on DCP and unless they move forward, then they are stuck. Whether they are galvanized or not, when they get the petition, ask your neighbors and other residents to sign it. Their goal tonight is to send the Mayor a petition with over 1,000 signatures on it, and guaranteed, it will get his attention, because he will realize that these are people who vote.

**Conclusion:**

Yield back to the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair.

---

**Agenda:** Action Items

**Presenter:** Asshur Cunningham, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair

- Oval Sports Bar-
- Trendz Cultural Club
- Kendra's Place

**Roll Call:**

**Presenter:** Tamara Thomas, Secretary

- Kwame Afreh, Berlotte Antoine, Joan Alexander-Bakiriddin, Hassan Bakiriddin, Asshur Cunningham, Pearlene Fields, Dr. Charles Galbreath, Rose Graham, Gail Granderson, Julia James, Ozni Lewis, Monzurat Oni, June Persaud, Dion Quamina, Janice Reid, Dr. Carol Reneau, Antoinette Smart, Jorge Tait, Tamara Thomas, Marguerite Vigliante, Theresa Brereton, Jessica Welch, Herminia Brown

**Mr. Cunningham:** Earlier this week, an email was sent out regarding the discretionary funding presented to each committee. The allotment of funds to the committee that presented their proposals were: Commerce, \$500.00, Land Use, \$1,000.00, Sanitation, \$600.00, Youth & Education, \$400.00, Housing, \$1,000.00, Communication, \$1,000.00. Parks & Beautification already received their allocation. They will be voting in bulk for the allocation of funds that the committee decided.

**Roll Call:**

- Kwame Afreh, Berlotte Antoine, Joan Alexander-Bakiriddin, Hassan Bakiriddin, Theresa Brereton, Herminia Brown, Asshur Cunningham, Pearlene Fields, Dr. Charles Galbreath, Rose Graham, Gail Granderson, Ozni Lewis, Monzurat Oni, June Persaud, Dion Quamina, Janice Reid, Dr. Carol Reneau, Jorge Tait, Tamara Thomas, Marguerite Vigliante, Jessica Welch

**Unfinished Business:** None

**New Business:**

**Mr. Kwame Afreh:** At the next month's Land Use Committee meeting, they will have their first ULURP application for 5381 storage facility. They have done a presentation in the past and he is encouraging everyone to be present, because this is their first application and they need to make sure they fully understand what is being built there. The meeting will be held on Thursday, March 2, 2023 at 7:30pm, and it will be dedicated to this applicant. They will be distributing the application with all the pertinent details soon. This is a 60-day process, where at day 45-50, there is a process and at the next General Board meeting, their attendance is going to be imperative, because they will be voting to oppose or support that application. If they do not have a vote in time, it would be considered null and void. If they do not have quorum at the Land Use meeting, then the item moves forward without their input.

**Mr. Dalton Robinson:** He is representing Assembly Member Monique Chandler-Waterman. The Assemblywoman is in Albany working hard for them and just passed her first quality of life legislation relating to guns in the neighborhood. She is also looking for any not-for-profit agency within the 58<sup>th</sup> Assembly district that is doing programs. They can call her office and put in a request to see if there are any funds available (INAUDIBLE) Her office is located at 903 Utica Avenue, between Church and Snyder Avenues. The telephone number is 718-385-3336.



**Mr. Dion Quamina:** The Car Share program came before them in December, and the Board sent a cease and deceit letter about that program. Last week, the Chair, the District Manager, Himself and Ms. Thomas had a meeting with DOT and the Brooklyn Borough Commissioner about the Car Share program and further reiterated their point as a Board that they were not happy with how it went down when they came to them seeking feedback, that was basically factious and at this point, they had slated for 35 slots to be coming into the community, and now they have dwindled the number down to 15, as well as the concession in not being any consecutive spots on consecutive blocks. Now, they are going to come back before the committee with a new proposition and once they see it, they will announce it to the Board.

The Transportation Forum is slated for Tuesday, March 14, 2023, from 6-9pm, at Erasmus Hall High School Auditorium. The flyer will be coming out next week and he is looking forward to seeing them all there.

**Ms. Lisa Derrick:** She is with Assembly Member Rodneyse Bichotte-Hermelyn's office. Assembly Member Bichotte-Hermelyn will be delivering her State of the District address on Tuesday, February 28, 2023.

The NYS Association of Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic and Asian Legislators will be hosting their conference this weekend. They have tons of workshops to educate people in the community and a lot of the topics discussed here today, will be covered.

**Conclusion:**

Yield back to the 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Chair.

---

**Ms. Tamara Thomas:** On the matters of liquor licenses, they have 20 yeses across the board, 2 abstentions.

For the matter of the budget, they have 22 yeses. Both motions carried.

**Ms. Debbie Lewis:** She is the Chief of Staff to Assemblymember Brian Cunningham. The office is opened from 9am to 5pm, Monday-Friday. She heard their concerns in regards to the rezoning and she would love to discuss this with them. They can contact the office at 347-487-9762.

**Mr. Cunningham:** Asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting?

Meeting adjourned.