

**Community Board 17  
Land Use Committee  
Meeting Minutes  
February 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023**

**Attendance**

C. Johnson  
Joan Bakiriddin  
Brie D.  
Kwame Afreh  
Allyson Martinez  
Jay Sorid  
Vanessa Quashie  
COMMUNITY BOARD ...  
Darryl Hollon  
Dr. Dawes

Lilieth Heron Robinson  
Tamara  
Adele Bennett  
JL James  
Pearlene Fields  
Marguerite Vigliante  
H. Martinez  
JLEC-Ozni Lewis  
Alexandra Schmidbauer  
Timothy Davis

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The meeting of the Land Use Committee was called to order by Chair, Kwame Afreh. Mr. Afreh asked everyone to introduce themselves.

There was no quorum to approve the minutes of the previous meeting, so the Chairperson's report was presented.

**Chairperson's Report**

- No application for Landmarks Commission
- Letter crafted by Land Use Committee is now being reviewed by the Councilmember's office.
- Attended a Town Hall meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup> called by the Chair of CB9 and Chair of CB17 Housing and committee members. Wish there were more representatives to speak more clearly on the issues that affect CB17.
- There were some discussions regarding rezoning in the community. The rezoning message needs to be clear, so residents understand what the Board is proposing to do.
- A communication was received from Jared James regarding a landmark issue.
- Received a call from Mr. Darryl Hollon regarding the certification of the Kings Highway project.

- Also received an email from the District Manager informing the Committee of the certification. The committee has 60 days to finalize the process of which the District Manager informed that process will be started immediately.
- To accomplish the board's responsibilities by the deadline, 6 steps must be taken.
  1. Notify the Land Use Chairperson
  2. Notify the community board of a public hearing via the city record for publishing in its calendar. Email must be sent at least 2 weeks prior to board's voting on application.
  3. The public hearing must be completed within the 60-day deadline timestamp which begins the day board is notified.
  4. All parties must be notified of the date, time, and place of the board's public hearing.
  5. A letter must be prepared outlining the community board's recommendations, including any modifications or restrictions, after which it will be sent to the City Planning Commission. A form must also be mailed to the applicant, the Borough President, and the Board.
  6. The City Planning Commission will notify the board of its decision.

Mr. Afreh's report was concluded, and the public was invited to ask questions.

Ms. Marguerite Vigliante was unclear when the 60 days deadline started; whether it was from the date on the application or the date the board received the application.

Mr. Afreh explained he received information from Ms. Fraser that the application was certified when the board received it. The 60-day deadline begins upon receipt of the notice of certification by the board.

Adele Bennett voiced concern about getting the community engaged in the process, so they have a vote. She was reassured by Ms. Fraser that all procedure would be followed to ensure that the community had a voice.

Ms. Genevieve John suggested a timeline be established to keep everyone informed of the scheduled dates and deadlines. Mr. Afreh clarified that a timeline was already established and would be repeated in the general board meeting.

Mr. Afreh confirmed that the notice of certification in discussion was received that very day. Therefore the 60 days countdown started that date.

Ms. Lilieth Heron Robinson questioned who had the final say on the matter and whether their input was reflected in the board's final recommendations.

Mr. Afreh stated that the recommendations of the committees were absolutely a vital part of the board's final vote.

Ms. Adele Bennett asked how much time the applicant had after the vote was received to make any amendments. 2 weeks after the vote is the allotted time to submit any suggestions or amendments was the answer provided by Mr. Afreh.

Mr. Jay Sorid was introduced and stated he had 2 points to make.

#1 – He wanted to share the experience he had in 2015 – 2016 under DeBlasio’s administration where the Land Use Committee voted against a particular zoning. The City Council made a little change, as did the City Planning Commission and the final vote by the City Council did not reflect that of the community nor committee. Technically the Community Board should have been notified and an emergency meeting scheduled to inform every one of the changes. This did not happen. He wanted everyone to be aware of the ‘games’ that are played in this area.

#2 regarding what was taking place in northeast East Flatbush was set aside to be addressed with new business.

In response to Mr. Sorid, Mr. Afreh stated, going forward, he would pay particular attention to this process and hold the elected officials accountable to the board and community. Mr. Hollon kept him fully apprised to accomplish this.

Mr. Darryl Hollon objected to the process being referred to as ‘games’ since it’s a serious endeavor they didn’t take lightly. He stated that self-storage was a downside to the community with ‘no benefit’. He is in close contact with the City Council’s community liaison, Sabrina, and Mr. Rata. Mr. Rata was scheduled to attend the meeting. There’s an open line of communication and both are very aware of the board’s present concerns.

Mr. Afreh asked to be kept abreast of the situation and was assured by Mr. Hollon.

Mr. Lewis was introduced and suggested that the board work closely with the owners and politicians in a collaborative versus combative way for best results. There must be a mutual incentive and the community must be consistent to achieve its goal. He also mentioned that the investor and politicians have relationships based on financial support.

Mr. Afreh wanted to speak to the 121 Abatement that arose in the Housing meeting and asked if it had expired? How to move forward, and how it affected the community? He asked whether it should be renewed and referred to Harlem and the aggressive building that occurred within the past 2 years. The conversation should continue beyond the meeting, via texts and conversations. The information would be compiled and forwarded to Ms. Fraser who was currently working on it.

It was the 1<sup>st</sup> application in his tenure, so Ms. Afreh was clear to handle the process effectively to avoid any objection.

Mr. Afreh acknowledged Mr. Johnson in the chat, told him he would be formally notified and asked him to keep his neighbors informed.

Mr. Afreh asked for a motion to approve the minutes for January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023. Marguerite Vigilante made a motion to approve the minutes. Ms. Thomas seconded the motion. Motion was approved and properly seconded.

There were no amendment changes to the minutes other than a typographical error on page 5, noted by Mr. Hollon which he would forward to Mr. Afreh.

Members voted 16 Yes. Motion passed and minutes were approved.

Meeting moved to unfinished business.

### **Unfinished Business**

Ms. Adele Bennett mentioned the hotel which was being built on the border. Mr. Afreh had no additional information to add.

Mr. Lewis receive email from McKinzie and McKinzie contractors regarding the packages for the Shirley Chisholm. He wasn't comfortable with the process which was asking for prequalification he believed may be a 'clandestine' way of keeping the MWBE out or limiting their numbers. He wanted to make sure that the community was well represented in the construction field and not left out.

Ms. Bennett asked what the deadline for applications was and where it was posted for the public or board.

Mr. Lewis stated that the application and pre-qualification had to go through McKenzie to be vetted and sub-contractor selected. He suggested the standard be modified to allow black contractors a foot in the door.

The scheduled presenter would not be presenting so Mr. Afreh moved on to new business.

Ms. James announced that there would be a public hearing on the 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm to discuss re-zoning. It would be a general discussion and wouldn't address specific area.

Mr. Sorid mentioned Kings Highway Self Storage and put the link in chat for the benefit of the neighbors.

He wanted the Land Use and Housing committees to be aware of the issue of Kingsborough West housing project that is on the border of CB17 and CB 9 but would affect both. This huge development would be 388 units of supportive housing most of which would comprise of the homeless and mentally ill population. It would be the equivalent of 4 new shelters which is in addition to the existing 364 units. In total, it would be 752 beds on Albany and Clarkson. There would be an issue of over saturation of homeless and mentally

ill. Plus, there would also be an issue with parking that would lead to other problems like people fighting for spots. So, there would be at least 603 units and no parking.

Mr. Afreh acknowledged Mr. Sorid's concern and informed Mr. Sorid it was, in fact, CB 9 issue.

Mr. Sorid stated there was no ULURP. There's an environment impact statement because it's going to affect the community. CB 9, housing committee was given a presentation on January 9<sup>th</sup> and was schedule to present to CB17 housing committee on February 9<sup>th</sup>.

CB17 couldn't confirm that date.

Mr. Sorid stated that CB 17 was never informed of environmental impact, therefore was never a part of the voting process which would end up causing displacement.

When the environmental impact statement is disregarded, the community have the option to object by filing an environmental justice via the public advocate's office.

Ms. James did attend a public hearing on the matter.

Ms. Alexandra Schmidbauer wanted to know how to monitor and hold accountable landlords who over charge tenants in rent stabilized apartment.

Ms. Field, chair of housing committee addressed the issue and invited Ms. Schmidbauer to the next meeting.

Mr. Sorid was passionate about the community addressing the issue he present, disappointed that the issue wasn't more aggressively addressed and that the community is still unaware of this dilemma. He stated the Christian and Jewish community are united; however, he was unable to attend the Housing Committee Town Hall meeting on Saturday because of his religious convictions in the same way Church goers wouldn't attend a Sunday Town Hall.

Ms. Pearlene Fields stated she didn't discuss the matter in the Town Hall at Erasmus Hall because it was in CB 9 and not CB 17.

Ms. JL James wanted to make clear that the site being discussed was a psychiatric center which is being renovated or redeveloped for the homeless because they need shelter also. It is presently the best land use for that purpose.

7187...25 stated she resented that someone from Long Island was trying to dictate what was going on in her neighborhood

Ms. H. Martinez pointed out that Mr. Sorid ought to address the issues he has repeatedly brought to CB17 to CB 9 where they rightfully belong rather than burden CB17 with issues that are out of its jurisdiction. She further stated he ought not to use our committee to get his personal issues resolved. Furthermore, it was not possible to accommodate all the religious groups and did its best to accommodate the residents of the community.

**New Business.**

Mr. Afreh stated he didn't want to disregard the 421 Allison put in the chat and that the governor was trying to extend it. The Governor proposes to extend the abatement to 2030 which allows developers to build on property and not have to pay the residual taxes for extended period from 15 – 25 years which gives them incentives to build. It expired in June and its expiration is a protection.

Allison asked if the taxpayers were losing money.

Mr. Afreh stated if the developer builds a new property and not required to pay taxes for a number of years, then the burden falls on the taxpayers. It's an 'invisible bully'. The expiration is helping to stop the rapid development in a concentrated period we have seen in the past.

Mr. Timothy Davis asked if he could transfer some of his member to Rezoning to establish quorum. There was no objection to his suggestion.

Ms. Bennett motioned to adjourn the meeting.

Mr. Davis seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting.