

DRAFT - Brooklyn Community Board 7 Meeting Minutes

January 19, 2022

Meeting hosted over Zoom

Opening of the Meeting

Chairperson Zuñiga officially called the meeting to order.

Agenda adoption

Pat Ruiz made a motion to adopt the board meeting agenda. It was seconded by Julio Peña III. Motion was approved by unanimous consent.

Adopt minutes of 12/15/2021 board meeting

Pat Ruiz made a motion to adopt the minutes of the December 15, 2021 board meeting. It was seconded by Julio Pena III. Motion was approved by unanimous consent.

Public Comment

Dana Mulwanda, principal of the Windsor Terrace Elementary School within Brooklyn Prospect Charter School, thanked them for their time to review their application to operate a school at 341 39th Street in Sunset Park, Brooklyn.

Committee Reports

1. Land Use / Landmarks Committee

- a. Board of Standards and Appeals Application #2021-56-BZ from the Brooklyn Prospect Charter School to locate a K-5 school facility at 341 39th Street.
 - i. Committee Chair Fontillas reported that the public hearing was held in November 2021 to discuss the application. Further discussion and additional information from the applicant were needed, and the committee held another meeting in January to address those issues.
 - ii. Fontillas reported that Brooklyn Prospect Charter School informed the committee of their plans to hire a school safety management company that would assist the school with the arrival and departure of their students to address concerns about truck and traffic conditions near this area.
 - iii. Fontillas reported that the committee voted to recommend approval of the BSA application. The committee vote was 8 in favor, 1 opposed and 0 abstentions. There was a discussion on the motion among the board members.
 1. **MOTION:** To support the BSA Application with 2 friendly amendments:
 - a. The applicant continues to participate in Community Board 7's review and study of the 39th Street corridor with regards to truck traffic and pedestrian safety and that they commit to an ongoing discussion for review and study of truck traffic and pedestrian safety on 39th Street.
 - b. For further consideration the board requests that DOT meet with Community Board 7 to discuss possible safety improvements to 3rd Avenue & 39th Street. The board has continuously been asking DOT to provide a forum for the

board to voice issues about loss of life etc. the board has been requesting this for over a decade.

2. **VOTE:** The motion passed by a vote of: 36 – In Favor; 2 – Opposed; 1 – Abstention; 1 – Present

b. Grand Prospect Hall update

- i. Mr. Fontillas reported on his 1/12/22 discussion with Jim Glaser & Victoria Alexander, local residents who have put together a group called “Save Prospect Hall,” concerning the communities’ efforts to preserve the building and influence development on that site. They are circulating a petition appealing to the developer to engage in a process of gathering more community input.
- ii. It is an R6-B Zoning District. This building is an as of right development. There will not be a ULURP process. The building on the site is on the National Register of Historic Places, which provides tax credits that could be applied if the developer chose to incorporate the historic structure into their plan, but it does not protect the structure as landmarking would. The internal part of the structure has been demolished.
- iii. At the January meeting, the committee made a motion that the board provide Save Prospect Hall with a letter of support for Save Prospect Hall’s efforts and to recognize the historic and cultural significance of Grand Prospect Hall and encourage the developer to include a cultural facility or event hall as part of the plan to carry on the legacy of the site.
- iv. There was a discussion on a letter of support for the board and what it will mean. Cindy VandenBosch asked if the letter could also include language that includes the community board’s wishes for the developer to preserve the historic exterior of the building as part of their design plans if possible. Fontillas expressed that this could be included.
- v. Mr. Murphy seconded Mr. Fontillas’ motion for a letter of support from the board. There was a discussion on the wording of the letter.
 1. **MOTION:** Write a letter of support indicating the community board’s expressing support for Save Prospect Hall’s efforts, to acknowledge the historical and cultural character and value of Grand Prospect Hall for the community, to encourage the developer to incorporate facade elements representative of the original structure and also to pursue community facility use within the structure, and also granting an FAR bonus, if feasible.
 2. **VOTE:** Motion carried by unanimous consent.

2. Health and Mental Health Committee

- a. Cynthia Gonzalez referred to the committee report. Genesis Detox on 5th Avenue and 39th Street gave a presentation and received a favorable vote from the committee for a letter of support for their NYS OASAS application to open an outpatient facility within their current building.
 - i. **MOTION:** Offer a letter of support for Genesis Detox to open an outpatient facility within their current building.
 - ii. **VOTE:** The motion carried by unanimous consent.

Elected officials

Senator Brisport reported that the New York State Senate extended the COVID-19 state disaster emergency provision which allows any public body to continue to hold meetings remotely during the state emergency. Senator Brisport shared resources regarding assistance with eviction proceedings. He stated that the NYS eviction moratorium expired on January 15. Senator Brisport provided updates on several legislative bills that he is working on. Senator Brisport announced that their office will be distributing masks and COVID-19 at home test kits in #25 Senate district. Senator Brisport answered questions from board members.

Assemblyman Carroll announced that the NYS Assembly has passed legislation on NYC Department of Buildings reform to also include reporting violations to the local community boards.

Councilperson Alexa Aviles gave an update on their new office and staff, their committees and issues.

Frida Zurita from Senator Myrie's office gave updates on rent relief.

David Sosa from Assemblymember Mitaynes' office gave an update on their office being temporarily closed.

Edward Cerna from Councilperson Aviles' office greeted the board as the Councilperson's chief of staff.

District Manager's Report

The District Manager spoke about free covid tests from the federal government, organics composting, updates on a Sanitation and Environment meeting, permeable pavement and bioswales in Windsor Terrace and USPowergen's retirement of the Gowanus Generating Station and conversion to battery storage.

Chairperson's Report

Zuñiga announced that two new board members have been appointed to CB7: Joseph Lara and Mohamed Bahi.

The Chairperson stated an Executive Committee meeting was being scheduled about the potential for future hybrid or in person meetings. They also spoke about comprehensive planning about the waterfront.

Old Business

Karen Rolnick asked about the board member handbook mentioned in the new By Laws. Julio Pena stated the board will be working on it this year.

Cindy VandenBosch asked about minutes posted on the website and stated Ability and Access would meet in the next month.

Jeremy Laufer stated the website update was in process and coming soon.

Grisel Amador gave an update on United Senior Center.

New Business

Barbara Lee spoke about garages illegally using public spaces to park vehicles. Paul Mak brought up noise complaints in Sunset Park.

Public Comment

Sylvia Agosto spoke against the request from Genesis Detox. Siobhan Fagan reiterated Sylvia Agosto's concerns and concerns about traffic on 39th Street.

Adjournment

Julio Peña III motioned to adjourn. Nicholas Azadian seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 8pm.

Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by Cynthia VandenBosch