

**Community Board 7 Monthly Meeting Minutes**  
March 15, 2023

**Opening of the Meeting** Julio Peña III opened the meeting at 6:30 p.m.

**First Role Call**

**Adoption of the Agenda**

Motion to amend by Cindy VandenBosch

Moved as revised – Joan Botti

Seconded - Beverly Kleinman

Passed by unanimous consent.

**Adoption of Board Meeting Minutes from January 18, 2023**

Moved – Sam Sierra

Seconded – Joan Botti

Passed by unanimous consent.

**Public Comment (1<sup>st</sup> session)**

- No Public Comments

**Committee Reports**

**Transportation Committee**, Katherine Walsh

- The committee met with DOT on February 2 to discuss upcoming repairs for the BQE/Gowanus Expressway.
- DOT is holding two BQE-related public meetings: in-person on March 21 @ 6:30 p.m. at PS 24 and a virtual meeting on March 30 @ 6:30 p.m.
- DOT will also hold two public workshops to discuss 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue on April 18 and April 27.
- Several BQE Visioning community partners have signed onto a letter requesting that State DOT to attend the March 21 public meeting.

**Housing Committee**, Antoinette Martinez

- The committee met on February 28 to discuss the affordable housing crisis in CB7 and will meet again on March 21 to plan future agendas.
- Applications for the Sunset Ridge senior affordable apartments are due on March 17.
- Community Board 10 is holding a joint committee meeting on April 4 for a presentation from the Office of Environmental Remediation on the Voluntary Cleanup Program for property located at 6128 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue (a.k.a. 6200 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue).

**Executive & Land Use/Landmarks Committee**, Julio Peña III

- The committees met for a presentation from the owners of 155 18th Street, who are seeking authorization to allow a three-story residential building.
- This property is a two-story building with tenants. The owners plan to demolish the current building and rebuild it to make it a three-family home.

- The authorization was discussed in committee, and the committees voted to grant the authorization via unanimous consent.
- Chair Peña III called for a vote by unanimous consent. There was an objection. A roll call vote was conducted: 35-Yes, 1-No, 0-Abstentions.

**Executive Committee**, Julio Peña III

- The committee met to discuss committee membership and committee leadership.

**Transportation, Health & Human Services, Sanitation/Environment**, Katherine Walsh

- Walsh and Diana Gonzalez reported on a Department of Environmental Conservation air quality study currently running in CB7 and on a community air quality study coordinated by Red Hook Art Project.

**Second Role Call**

**Elected Officials and Representatives**

Councilmember Alexa Aviles' office, represented by Edward Cerna

- In the proposed budget, City agencies are facing cuts and elimination of vacant positions.
- The council member's office will host a van from New York Legal Assistance Group (NYLAG) to provide legal services to the community on March 17.
- BQE Walking Tour on March 18 at Cough Triangle.

Senator Andrew Gouardes' office, represented by Melissa Safi

- Provided legislative updates related to Working Family Tax Credit program and New Deal for CUNY.
- Announcement BQE Walk & Talk on March 18 and reminded members about upcoming BQE and 3 Ave workshops.

Brooklyn District Attorney Eric Gonzalez' office, represented by John Watkins

- Speaking on several cases that the District Attorney is currently working on.
- Praised NYPD officers who intervened during U-Haul Rampage.
- Noted celebrations of Women's History Month.
- Responded to questions about the conviction of a developer on the death of a construction work at 39<sup>th</sup> Street & 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue and an arrest related to a shooting at Sunset Park High School.

Congressman Dan Goldman's office, represented by Mayra Molina

- Community project deadline is Monday, March 20.
- Discussed Congressional school art project.
- Provided legislative updates about Early Voting Act.
- Reminded attendees about BQE and 3 Ave workshops.

Public Advocate Jumaane Williams' office, represented by Emmitt Sklar

- Spoke on several updates that the Public Advocate is working on including Access to Representation project, Nurses for Every School initiative, and Right to Counsel for housing tenant/immigrant legal assistance.
- Noted recent release of the Public Advocate's Investment Education Report.

Assemblymember Marcella Mitaynes's office represented by Emmitt Mendoza-Gaspar

- Provided legislative updates on Good Cause Eviction and Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP), and NY power grid priority for renewable energy.
- Noted state of budget negotiations, and proposals surrounding MTA budget and fares.
- Working to reimburse victims of SNAP fraud.
- Met with State DOT Transportation Commissioner and budget director to advocate for community needs related to BQE repairs.
- Walk-in constituent hours have been expanded.
- Answered questions regarding charter school cap, proposed municipal parking permits, and minimum wage regulations.

Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso's office, represented by Mon Yuck Yu

- Deadlines for capital funding, Community Board appointments, and Community Education Council membership have passed, but discretionary grants are still open (contact Borough President's office for details).
- Community Resource information series continues with a Rat Academy event on 3/21 and a Women's History Storytelling event on 3/30.
- Borough President held a convening of elected officials related to BQE on 2/13.

Senator Iwen Chu's office represented by Jane Duong

- Mobile office hours available on Wednesdays at Chinese American Planning Council, Thursdays at New Utrecht Library, and Fridays at McKinley Library.
- Highlighted upcoming tax preparation (4/9) and utility assistance events (3/20 and 3/22).

Senator Myrie's office represented by Freda Zurita

- Noted State of the District event.
- Discussed budget negotiations, the Petroleum Marketing Practices Act (PMPA), and legislation concerning junk food advertising and NYCHA repairs.

Mayor Eric Adams's Community Affairs Unit represented by Anastasia Yaskova

- Summer Youth Employment Program applications are open.

**Chairperson's Report**

- Met with the Borough President about the board's priorities including transportation, particularly the need for NY State DOT to be involved in the BQE study.

**District Manager Jeremy Laufer's Report**

- Testified before the City Council about translation and interpretation services and office security.
- Met with the Civic Engagement Commission about translation/interpretation and other district needs.
- Noted BQE and 3rd Avenue workshops and the reopening of the Brooklyn Social Security office.
- National Grid gas inspections will start soon on 37<sup>th</sup> St and 3 Ave and 39<sup>th</sup> St between 3 and 5 Ave.
- 12 new/renewal liquor licenses.
- Police department COMPStat statistics have been emailed.

#### **Old Business –**

- Katherine Walsh asked for an update regarding when the Brooklyn Public Library will vacate its current space, and what will become of the rest of the facility.
- Sam Sierra reiterated the need for a Fifth Avenue task force to tackle numerous quality-of-life issues on the avenue which he previously mentioned in November.
- Jerry Chan discussed quality-of-life issues on 8th Avenue and issues surrounding lack of resources for city agencies.

#### **New Business**

- Marilyn Melman raised concerns about Local Law 97 and the expenses required to replace/retrofit heating systems in buildings.
- Cindy VandenBosch asked to update the agenda with regard to a typo on the address for 155 18th Street. Without objection, the motion to edit the address was approved.
- Antoinette Martinez expressed interest in having more Economic Development/Waterfront Committee meetings and urged more communications from the chair.
- Jerry Chan asked about the status of in-person meetings. Julio Peña stated the upcoming Executive Committee meeting would discuss that.
- Damaris Santiago noted the Equinor grant deadline is coming up on April 1.

#### **Public Comment (2nd Session)**

- Roxana Benavides from the Sunset Park Branch of the Brooklyn Public Library spoke about numerous programs at the library and proposed budget cuts to libraries.
- Mina Hong from the Windsor Terrace Branch of the Brooklyn Public Library spoke about numerous programs at the library.
- Jimmy Li spoke about a cultural celebration for the Lunar New Year held last month by NY Team Up and several local organizations.
- David Estrada from the Sunset Park Business Improvement District (SPBID) spoke about a commercial district needs survey they held with other local organizations, an upcoming graffiti clean-up effort, and changes to the hours that trash should be put out for collection.

#### **Motion to Adjourn at 8:53 p.m.**

Moved – Jimmy Lee

Seconded – Jerry Chan  
Passed by unanimous consent.

*Full recorded video of all CB7 meetings can be viewed on Brooklyn CB7 YouTube channel.  
See Committee Minutes or Reports for additional committee details.*