

Brooklyn Community Board 7 Meeting Minutes

March 16, 2022

6pm-8:54pm

Meeting hosted over Zoom

Opening of the Meeting

Chairperson Zuñiga officially called the meeting to order.

Agenda adoption

Cynthia VandenBosch added a vote for the Ability and Access Committee. Pat Ruiz made a motion to adopt the agenda as amended. Joan Botti seconded. Motion was approved by unanimous consent.

Adopt minutes of February 16, 2022 board meeting

Joan Botti made a motion to adopt the minutes of the February 16, 2022 board meeting. It was seconded by Pat Ruiz. Motion was approved by unanimous consent.

Public Comment

Emily Shapiro, the project director for PS958, spoke about safety concerns at 5th Avenue and 36th Street, where the new school is being built and shared some suggestions for safety improvements.

Sylvia Agosto spoke about the plan for 3rd Avenue and 39th Street and questioned if they did a study and stated there will be additional traffic on 3rd Avenue. Agosto expressed that it was important to get the opinions of drivers.

Committee Reports

1. **Sanitation/Environmental Committee-** Referred to the written report

2. **Land Use/Landmarks Committee Report**

a. **Summary of Board of Standards and Appeals Application #2022-3-BZY**

Committee Chairperson John Fontillas reported that the committee met on February 23 and held a public hearing to discuss the Board of Standards and Appeals Application #2022-3-BZY for a partially built 9-story mixed used building located at 4923 2nd Avenue that would hold a transient hotel and an ambulatory diagnostic treatment health care facility.

John Fontillas reported that the applicant is requesting the Board of Standards and Appeals extend the building permit for the property which was originally issued in 2018. Fontillas further stated that the M1 Hotel Text Amendment allows for a hotel to be built at this location. Fontillas announced that CB7 board member and Land Use/Landmarks Committee member Kenny Guan is the managing director for this project and therefore is ineligible to vote on this application. John Fontillas reported that the completion of the building was delayed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Fontillas reported that the committee has some concerns of a hotel being developed in an industrial business zone and of the possibility of the hotel being converted into a homeless shelter.

- i. **MOTION:** John Fontillas stated that the committee voted in favor to support the application with the following conditions, with a vote of 6 in favor, 1 opposed and Kenny Guan was ineligible to vote:
1. The committee acknowledges that the permit would be an extension of the “as of right” use for this project and that the BSA required that the community board to review the application
 2. The committee has had issues with non-industrial use projects being developed in industrial use zones and issues with hotels becoming havens of prostitution and human trafficking or the hotels become converted into homeless shelters.
 3. The committee will request the owner of property to apply for a restrictive declaration that would limit the property to be used only as a hotel and medical offices.
 4. The committee is requesting a written statement from Kenny Guan that he would not permit a homeless shelter at 4923 2nd Avenue.
 5. The committee will request that the Department of City Planning develop a comprehensive site planning process for land use applications like 4923 2nd Avenue

ii. **DISCUSSION**

Karen Rolnick stated that she does not support a hotel being built at the location.

Julio Peña III expressed concerns about a hotel being built in the industrial development zone.

Nicholas Azadian stated that he does not support hotel development in industrial zones but understands that the project is “as of right”.

Katherine Walsh stated that she does not support the application.

Justin Collins expressed his concerns of a hotel being developed in an IBZ.

Cynthia VandenBosch disclosed that she would vote present as her business has worked with Southwest Brooklyn Industrial Development Corporation.

Antoinette Martinez stated that the hotel is not in line with the Board’s 197a plan.

Kenny Guan gave testimony on the positive aspects of having a hotel with medical offices in the community including providing local jobs for the community and the convenience of the location of the hotel near NYU Langone Brooklyn Medical Center.

iii. **VOTE**

A roll call vote was called – 17-Yes, 17-No, 0-Abstention, 5-Voting Present. John Fontillas stated that since the full board vote did not

confirm the Land Use committee's motion, CB7 is not supporting the BSA application with the conditions presented.

Cynthia Gonzalez asked for clarification on what it means to vote present. Julio Peña III explained that voting present is permitted when a board member has a conflict of interest with the item that is being voted on and to maintain quorum.

3. Ability and Access Committee

- a. The committee met on March 15 to hear a presentation from AHRC, a disability service provider that provides support services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.
- b. Letter to elected officials and relevant agencies
 - i. **MOTION:** Ability & Access Committee Chairperson Cynthia VandenBosch said that the committee voted with unanimous consent on sending a letter to elected officials and relevant agencies to raise awareness of the community board's priorities related to accessibility in the district.
 - ii. **VOTE:** The motion to send the letter to elected officials and agencies with all the requests outlined passed by Unanimous Consent by the board.

4. Joint Committee Meeting with Transportation & Education/Youth - Referred to report

5. Transportation Committee

Committee Chairperson Zachary Jasie gave a brief report on:

- a. Discussion with EDC on anticipated roadway and sidewalk changes on 3rd Avenue & 39th Street.
- b. Discussion with Seeley Street residents on their concerns about safety and transportation issues on Seeley Street.

6. Housing Committee

Committee Chairperson Antoinette Martinez gave a brief report on the 3/11/22 committee meeting on discussions the committee had with the Department of Homeless Services & Samaritan Village on the opening of a shelter to be located at 5113 2nd Avenue.

Elected officials and their representatives

1. Councilmember Aviles

Councilmember Alexa Aviles spoke about the Mayor's preliminary budget and budget negotiations. They spoke about housing and homelessness issues and equity issues, as well as last mile issues. They spoke about proposed budget cuts, particularly sanitation, and public housing issues.

Cynthia Gonzalez asked about sanitation cuts. Councilmember Aviles stated they vote on citywide budgets and don't know how it would specifically affect the local community. Gonzalez asked about DHS cuts. The Councilmember stated there isn't an increase in the budget for housing in the preliminary budget.

Nicholas Azadian stated that the City can rezone for a homeless shelter without going through ULURP. They asked if the Councilmember was in favor of a special permit in M

districts. They are open to discussing new regulations. Azadian asked for help in getting the truck study from DOT. The Councilmember stated they have been advocating for it, too.

Jimmy Li spoke about the anniversary of the hate crime against the Asian woman in Georgia and asked about the City's plan to deal with anti-Asian violence. Councilmember Aviles stated it is abhorrent and there is funding available from the State. They need to get back to us about the City's efforts.

2. Assemblymember Carroll

Assemblymember Robert Carroll spoke about the State's budget negotiation and stated this is the most generous budget for the City since they were elected. They spoke about CUNY and SUNY and city school budget increases. They spoke about covid and people who need help with bills as well as the need to generate more green energy. They also spoke about redistricting.

Katherine Walsh spoke about last mile issues and asked about the Governor's announced interborough express. The Assemblymember spoke in favor of increasing mass transit. They are concerned about the expansion of last mile in the local community.

Julio Peña stated they are excited there is money in the budget for universal child care but stated it needs to be accessible for members of our community. They also brought up fair pay for human service workers. The Assemblyman agreed with both.

Chairperson Zuñiga spoke about the importance of funding for child daycare in the community. Assemblyman Carroll spoke and answered questions from board members. Chairperson Zuñiga referred the board members to read the Sanitation Committee report as it did not require a vote.

- 3. Mayor's Office** - Anastasia Yaskova from the Mayor's Office spoke on several items that the Mayor is currently working on, including his vision for the economic recovery of the City, and noted that the Mayor recently announced funding for a free expanded summer enrichment program for over 100,000 elementary and middle school students that will be administered by the Department of Youth and Community Development.

Chairperson's Report

Chairperson Zuñiga spoke on the board's rule to allow non-board members participate on the board's committees.

District Manager's Report

District Manager Jeremy Laufer reported on:

1. Training he will be taking to learn about the City's Website Accessibility Laws, also spoke on what our new website will have.
2. Gave update on DEP flooding locals in the district and on the completed emergency replacement on 37th Street.
3. Kermit Place being recommended for larger sewer pipes.
4. Laufer attended the 72nd Pct. Council meeting in support of Fr. Gilmore from O.L.P.H. because of the difficulty they are having with the homeless population.

5. Laufer also inquired about the accident at Bartel Pritchard Square where the memorial was knocked down.
6. Laufer spoke on increase in crimes in CB7.
7. Liquor License New/Renewal were 6.
8. Comp Stats were emailed.

Cynthia Gonzalez commented on how she had made several requests to Chairperson Zuñiga to have someone placed on her committee and how she has not heard back from him on this request.

Mr. Galarza wanted to get an update on a shed that was placed on 43rd Street & 5th Avenue.

Katherine Walsh inquired about a 2/28 assault on a woman exiting the 45th Street train station.

Old Business

None

New Business

Katherine Walsh commented on the Transportation meeting and EDC's presentation and encouraged everyone to watch it on YouTube.

Public Comment

Sara Ostolaza from NYU Langone wanted to make it clear to the board that the application for the hotel that will include a medical facility does not have any affiliation with NYU thus far. They wanted to know who the medical provider would be for the facility.

Laurel Leckert spoke on the No North Brooklyn Pipeline Coalition that is fighting to stop the construction of a frack gas pipeline that is being constructed through North Brooklyn.

Callias Zeng spoke about a free stop and swap event that will be held on 4/27/22 at the Brooklyn Army Terminal.

Sylvia Agosto spoke on all the changes at 39th Street & 3rd Avenue and the study that was done.

Roxana Benavides from the Sunset Park Library spoke on all the resumed services at the Sunset Park Library.

Maria Roca spoke on the gathering of men at the entrances of the Sunset Park and their aggression towards women and the elderly.

Meeting Adjourned

Julio Peña III made a motion to adjourn. Nicholas Azadian seconded the motion at 8:54pm.