

Community Board 7 Monthly Meeting Minutes
May 17, 2023

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

First Roll Call

Elected Officials

NY State Assemblyperson Robert Carroll

- State budget has passed.
 - Got record funding for public schools from state.
 - Shored up operating budget for MTA- will increase frequency of service.
 - Governor's ambitious Housing Program was cut due to NYC request for rent protections and suburban refusal to increase density.
- Stopped proposal to change bail law so that defendants would not be able to hear all evidence against them.

NY City Councilperson Alexa Avilés

- Plan to house asylum seekers in the PS 172 auditorium was made without our knowledge. Furthermore:
 - The school is under construction, there are no showers and few adult toilets.
 - The students need the entire the school.
 - Housing homeless individuals there would be extremely disruptive to school functioning.
 - There are no refugees housed there now, the site is held as a place of last resort.
 - Council member is demanding the Federal government step up to help with this humanitarian crisis.
- Public meeting on vending in Sunset Park was well attended. Many of our neighbors rely on vending.
 - We will set up a working group to train vendors and find solutions.
 - We are looking into setting up a concession arrangement in the park.

Adoption of the Agenda

Moved – Pat Ruiz

Seconded – Sam Sierra

Passed by unanimous consent.

Adoption of Board Meeting Minutes from April 19, 2023

Moved – Pat Ruiz

Seconded – Joan Botti

Passed by unanimous consent.

Public Comment (1st session)

- Meryl Breidbart and Jack O'Connell support the proposed safety changes for Seeley Street.
- Liz Darst also supports the plan but prefers Seely St be two-way to McDonald Ave.

Committee Reports

Housing, Antionette Martinez

- Heard presentations about Community Land Trusts, please see minutes.
- Next meeting June 1

Education/Youth, Julio Peña

- PS 958 has chosen to rename building after Dr. Antonio Pantoja.
- Heard community concerns that the Sunset Park High School is no longer following the community-school model.

Joint Executive and Membership & Attendance, Julio Peña

- Welcomed new members and gave procedural overview.

Transportation, Katie Walsh

- **Vote needed** - Co-Naming of 47th Street between 4th & 5th Avenues after Andy Varela.
 - Passed by unanimous consent in Committee.
 - Full board approved by unanimous consent.
- **Vote needed-** Write letter to support DOT proposal to convert Seeley Street and rest of 20th Street into one-way westbound.
 - Passed unanimously in committee.
 - Full board roll-call vote passed unanimously.
- Neighborhood loading zones
 - Committee began collecting feedback on Neighborhood Loading Zones on 41st and 44th St between 6 and 7th Streets. Walsh encouraged sending feedback to Board and to [DOT via their online portal](#).

Economic Development/Waterfront Committee, Julio Peña

- **Vote needed-** Write letter to support Percent for Art's conceptual design for Bush Terminal MiNY Campus. Committee had taken no position. Tabled from last month.
- Roll-Call Vote:
 - 7 – Approved;
 - 14 – Opposed;
 - 14 – Abstentions;
 - 1 – Present
 - No position achieved majority

Second Roll Call

Elected Officials and Representatives

NY State Senator Andrew Gounardes represented by Clay Olsen

- Secured a tuition freeze for instate students.
- Got funding to help migrants in NYC.
- Expanded child tax credit.

NY State Senator Iwen Chu represented by Jane Duong

- Same as above.
- Sponsored Asian American Pacific Islanders event.
- District office at 6605 Ft. Hamilton Parkway is now open.

NY City Councilmember Alexa Avilés *represented by Edward Cerna*

- Avilés opposed rent increases for rent stabilized/controlled apts.
- Introduced a resolution to prevent vulture funds from buying debt and trading it in NY State.
- Introduced a resolution to forbid dumping of radioactive waste into Hudson River.
- Opposes congregate style housing for asylum seekers.

Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso *represented by Mon Yuk Yu*

- Borough President would like to open vacant apartments for use by homeless and asylum seekers.
- Demanding that NY state and Federal government step up to pay their share for affordable housing and shelters.
- Citywide Education Council elections are coming up and still accepting applications.

NY State Congressman Dan Goldman *represented by Mayra Molina*

- Working with federal agencies to fund housing and needed services for asylum seekers.
- Co-sponsored asylum seekers work authorization act to reduce wait from 180 to 30 days.
- Supports working across agencies to find ways process and help migrants in all communities (not just in low-income areas). Need to find open spaces especially federal owned sites.

Chairperson's Report

- Welcome to new Board Members
- June board meeting will be IN PERSON!

District Manager Jeremy Laufer's Report

- New Board website will launch in June.
- Sent letters to DHS and CEC regarding the lack of communication about housing asylum seekers in PS 172.
- Sent letters to DSS/DHS commissioners regarding the lack of communication about opening a shelter on 39th Street. They have been invited to the June meeting.
- Raised crosswalks will be installed at 6th Avenue and 50th Street, and at 7th Avenue and 54th Street.
- Sherman Steet playground is under construction and will be closed for a year.
- Met with DEC about air quality. State DOT did not participate.
- 15 liquor license applications since the previous meeting and CompStat was emailed to all Board Members.

Old Business

- None

New Business

- Joanna Romero concerned about the lack of crossing guards at PS 958. Also concerned about the use of motorized bikes to hold parking spaces for people's cars.
- Cynthia Gonzalez is planning a future Health Committee meeting with Maimonides and would like suggestions for topics. She would like to hold an event concerning incontinence, a common issue that is often swept under the table.
- Cynthia Jeffers announced Sunset Park Day of Action on May 20.
- Damian Andrade wants to improve the board's outreach on social media and the need to communicate in multiple languages. Julio Peña stated this is something the Board is working on.
- Diana Gonzalez announced there would soon be a hearing concerning the impact of the Mayor's "City of Yes" Carbon Neutrality plan.

Public Comment (2nd Session)

- Kanako Kawabe from Academy of Medical and Public Health Services spoke about the Day of Action being rescheduled. Participatory budgeting process is ongoing. All New Yorkers are encouraged to vote.
- Cynthia Gonzalez asked when the 72nd Precinct would be at the meeting and spoke about the need for electric bike enforcement.
- Roxana Benavides from the Sunset Park Branch of the Brooklyn Public Library spoke about numerous programs at the library and impacts of proposed budget cuts to libraries.

Motion to Adjourn at 9:16.

Moved – Pat Ruiz

Seconded – Sam Sierra

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.*