

Community Board 7 Monthly Meeting Minutes

November 15, 2023, 6:30 PM

Note: Since the quorum had not yet been met Julio Peña III went to the Elected Officials/Representatives portion of the agenda.

Elected Officials and Representatives

Borough President Antonio Reynoso- represented by Mon Yuck Yu

- The Comprehensive Plan, the guiding document for the Borough President's decision-making, is now available on their website
- Community Board Applications are open from 11/15/23 – 2/19/24, and are available on the BP website. Anyone with expiring terms must re-apply.

NY State Senator Ewen Chu- represented by Zunera Ahmed

- Cards with Senator Chu's office information are on the table outside meeting. Copies of the Constitution are available on request. Free leaf bags are also available.
- Senator Chu hosted Halloween and Veterans Day events.
- Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for the opening of the new Sunset Park Library was on 11/30.
- November 30th there will be a metro card van at our office from 11am – 3pm.

NY State Senator Andrew Gounardes

- His office has been working on issues concerning the BQE. Not only is the highway in desperate need of repair, but we must also remediate the harms that it has caused. Parts of the BQE are run by various Federal, State and City agencies. The State Dept. of Transportation has agreed to pursue a Federal grant to study the future of the highway.
- Senator has worked to expand the child tax credit.
- Advocating for more funding for CUNY for teachers and counselors. 47% of CUNY students are food and housing insecure.
- Advocating to build more housing and improve protections for tenants.
- Proposing legislation to protect children on social media.

Assemblymember Robert Carroll

- On 11/30 there will be a MetroCard van in front of the Windsor Terrace Library. They will be providing help with Senior OMNY Card.
- F line 7th Avenue elevator will open within weeks.
- DEP meeting to discuss mitigating rats.

Councilmember Alexa Avilés- represented by Edward Cerna

- Intro 708, which would study existing and prospective truck routes, has been passed.
- Ceremony to co-name 47th Street & 4th Avenue in honor of Andy Varella will be held on 11/19.
- Puerto Rico Heritage celebration on 11/20 at City Hall.
- There has been an increase in stolen Food Stamp funds. Our office is working to get funds returned to victims and to get more protections for food-stamp cards.

US Congressman Dan Goldman

- His staff have been attending meetings to work on BQE issues. He also spoke on several developments that his office has been working on.
- Army Corps of Engineers will do a thorough report on flood remediation.
- Introduced a bill to create a “Children’s Court” within the immigration system to help unaccompanied children navigate the immigration process.
- Introduced “Disarming Cartels Act” to eliminate the flow of US guns going to drug cartels in Mexico.
- Rep. Goldman voted to censure Rep. Talib because he believed Talib spread false information, defamed the President and used language that could incite violence, which Goldman felt was inappropriate for a US Congressman.

NY State Assemblymember Marcella Mitaynes - represented by Emmitt Mendoza-Gaspar

- Assemblymember Mitaynes is launching the “Last Mile Clean Deliveries Act” to make the permitting process go through Department of Environmental Conservation and get more input from communities.
- Promoting the “Good Cause Eviction” bill to enhance tenant protections.
- Supporting the “Housing and Voucher Program” to help shelter residents or those on the brink of eviction to stay in affordable homes.
- “Public Renewables Act” will authorize the public utility authority in NY to step up and expedite the building of renewable energy.
- Focusing on unemployment funds for undocumented immigrants.

Opening of Meeting

Chairperson Julio Peña III announced a that a quorum had been reached and officially opened the meeting.

Roll Call

Adoption of Agenda

Chairperson Peña amended the agenda to delete the Elected Officials report since that took place before we reached quorum.

Moved to adopt as amended - Julio Peña III

Seconded – Cynthia Felix

Passed by unanimous consent.

Adoption of Minutes

Moved to adopt - Joan Botti

Seconded – Cynthia Felix

Passed by unanimous consent.

Public Comment

John Santore - dissatisfied with the Steiner Studios Sequel project and how it was approved. Santore asked the board to take a position on the project before the Public Design Commission votes in December.

Committee Reports

Housing Committee – *Committee Chairperson Antoinette Martinez*

- The committee met over the summer to plan Community Land Trust workshops, but they have been postponed.

Transportation Committee – *Committee Chairperson Katie Walsh*

- The committee voted to approve a street co-naming for 24th Street between 4th and 5th Avenues to honor Ijaira Gonzalez and briefly spoke about Ms. Gonzalez' accomplishments. The motion was presented to the full Board and passed with unanimous consent.
- The committee also met with DOT on their proposal for BQE south and their 3rd Avenue proposal. Both will be discussed at the next Transportation Committee meeting in December.

Executive Committee – *Tabled*. These items will be discussed in the Chair's Report.

Parks/Environment and Economic Development/Small Business Committees (joint committee report)

– *Parks/Environment chair Victor Swinton*

- Proposed improvement to Bush Terminal Park which included a new ADA- accessible playground, improved lighting, plantings and picnic and a seating area which will be paid for by Steiner Studios. The park and all entrances will remain open during construction. Steiner will also donate \$25,000/year to the park for educational programs.

– *Economic Development/Small Business Committee chair Damaris Gonzalez*

- The committee is concerned with truck traffic, electric vehicles, signage, the relocation of the WWII memorial near Bush Terminal, and jobs. Steiner Studio stated that with the reconstruction they plan to maintain the aesthetic look of the waterfront.

- Steiner is collaborating with Small Business and Industrial Development Corp, supporting and funding the Brooklyn Workforce Innovations, and hosting a summer internship program. Steiner has spoken with Sunset Park High School, the Center for Family Life and other local organizations.
- Motion to table the board's vote on the Steiner Studio project. - *Katherine Walsh*
Seconded - *Jerry Chan*. There was a discussion on the motion.
The motion passed: 37 in favor, 4 opposed, and 1 voting "present" due to conflict of interest.

Second Roll Call

Chairperson's Report

- Julio Peña III attended the re-opening of the Sunset Park Library.
- CB7 has streamlined the process on how to request street co-naming and will be made available in a few weeks.
- The Executive Committee met to discuss the challenges of sustaining quorum at committee and board meetings.

District Manager's Report - *Jeremy Laufer*

- CB7 is collecting donations of new and unwrapped toys and clothing from November 20 to December 20.
- Interborough Express (IBX) meeting on November 30 at Widdi's Catering Hall. Info on MTA website.
- March of remembrance for victims of traffic violence on 11/19 starting at 59th St/ 5 Ave.
- Sunset Park 5th Avenue BID tree lighting ceremony will be held on December 1 on 5th Avenue at 60th Street.
- Brooklyn Center for the Independence of the Disabled has created a help line to offer peer to peer support for the disabled. The helpline will be open on Mondays and Wednesdays, from 3pm to 7pm – 929-548-0818 with English and Spanish available.
- Copies of the updated capital and expense budget priorities were available to view.
- 9 liquor license/renewals and 2 cannabis license applications were received for November.

New Business

None

Old Business

None.

Public Comment

- Alyssa Haddad-Chin from Target Margin Theater in Sunset Park announced several artist pop-up events for December.
- Alexa Orr from the Windsor Terrace Library announced their programs for November.

Motion to adjourn - *Jerry Chan*.

Seconded – *Cynthia Felix*

Passed with unanimous consent

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m.