

Community Board 7 Monthly Meeting Minutes

June 18, 2025

Roll Call

Adoption of Agenda

- Julio Peña moved to change the meeting's agenda to include the presentation of an award to Beatrice DeSapio honoring her service on the Board, and to remove the item about elected officials reports, as they spoke prior to the opening of the meeting.
 - Moved to adopt as amended – *Sam Sierra*
 - Seconded – *Cynthia Jeffers*
 - Passed by unanimous consent.

Adoption of May Minutes

- Moved to adopt – *Damien Andrade*
- Seconded – *Sam Sierra*
 - Passed by unanimous consent.

First Public Comment on topics covered on the agenda

- Victor Moran spoke in support of the proposed traffic changes for McDonald Avenue, from 20th Street to Fort Hamilton Parkway.
- Johanna Bjorken spoke in opposition of the proposed new charter school development for Brooklyn Rise at 40th Street & 4th Avenue.
- Shilpa Naryan spoke in opposition on the proposed new charter school development for Brooklyn Rise at 40th Street & 4th Avenue.
- Lisa Sposato stated that they are against the bike lane installation proposed for McDonald Avenue in Windsor Terrace.
- Javier Salamanca spoke in opposition to the new school development that Brooklyn Rise is proposing.
- Robin (last name inaudible) spoke in opposition to the new school development that Brooklyn Rise is proposing for Sunset Park.
- Geoffrey DeBery stated that they do not agree with the current redesign proposal for McDonald Avenue and recommended additional community notice, circulation, safety and traffic mitigations, and public input.
- Father Manuel Rodriguez Delgado spoke in favor co-naming 60th and 5th Avenue in honor of Padre Ruskin Piedra.
- Jody Avirgan, co-president of the PS 516 PTA, spoke in opposition to the proposed charter school building and noted concerns about the safety of building a new school development on the site of a former gas station.

Proclamation in honor of Beatrice DeSapio

- Hunter Rabinowitz presented a proclamation from Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso recognizing Beatrice DeSapio's 51 years of service on Community Board 7.
- Julio Peña III also presented Beatrice DeSapio with a plaque from the board acknowledging her work on CB7.

Committee Reports

Transportation Committee – *John DeLooper*

- DeLooper discussed a street co-naming request for 5th Avenue and 60th St. in memory of Father Ruskin Piedra (Padre Piedra), C.S.S.R.
 - DeLooper provided details about Father Piedra's background and his life of community and religious service.

- The Transportation Committee unanimously approved a motion to send a letter of recommendation and support for this co-naming to the office of Councilmember Avilés and to the Department of Transportation (DOT). As the motion came out of committee, a second was not required.
 - The motion passed via unanimous consent.
- DeLooper reported on a presentation from NYC DOT regarding proposed sites for carshare service operated by Zipcar in CB7.
 - Following a discussion of the proposed sites, the Transportation Committee voted to support carshare in general, but not the sites at 5501 2 Ave and 273 44 St, and to support the site at 170 33rd St. The committee also strongly recommend Zipcar and DOT work to identify city-owned and managed properties, such as those in and around Brooklyn Army Terminal, spaces owned by the NYC EDC, and spaces under the Gowanus Expressway.
 - The committee passed this motion with 9 in favor and 1 opposed. As the motion came out of committee, a second was not required.
 - There was discussion on the motion.
 - Jamie Fried presented a friendly amendment asking that 273 44th Street be included as one of the supported sites. The amendment was not accepted by DeLooper. The amendment was seconded by Danny Debare.
 - There was a discussion on the amended motion to support carshare sites at 273 44th Street & 170 33rd Street and not at 5501 2nd Avenue. A roll call vote was conducted and the amendment failed.
 - There was additional discussion on the original motion, including discussion about cost and upkeep of the proposed carshare sites.
 - Julio Peña proposed a friendly amendment asking that DOT consider incorporating traffic and accident data for carshare sites and provide a plan for maintenance and cleaning of the locations. DeLooper accepted the amendment.
 - A roll call vote on the amended motion was conducted.
 - The motion passed by a vote of 27 in favor; 6 opposed; with 0 abstentions
- DeLooper also reported on a presentation from NYCDOT regarding proposed design changes on McDonald Avenue from 20th Street to Fort Hamilton Parkway, and on updates from the Department of Design and Construction regarding the Brooklyn Greenway Plan on Second Ave, and DDC updates on the Fourth Avenue Median Reconstruction Project.
- Diana Gonzalez moved that the Community Board pass a resolution calling on DOT to hold a Public Hearing about its plans on McDonald Avenue before proceeding any further.
 - The motion was seconded by Daniel Kaminsky.
 - There was a discussion on the motion, then the motion passed by unanimous consent

Public Safety – *Cynthia Jeffers*

- Jeffers reported that the Public Safety Committee met to discuss an adult retail use cannabis dispensary application for 695 Fifth Avenue.
 - The committee voted unanimously to move this application to the Office of Cannabis Management (OCM). As the motion came out of committee, a second was not required.
 - The motion to move the application forward to OCM passed via unanimous consent.
- Jeffers also reported on a liquor license application for 480 60th St.
 - The committee voted unanimously to move the application forward to the SLA. As the motion came out of committee, a second was not needed.
 - The motion was passed via unanimous consent.
- At its meeting, the committee heard from Captain Yasin from the 72nd Precinct about a new Quality-of-Life Unit. Representatives from FDNY and DSNY also joined this meeting, which included discussions on vendor enforcement and resident complaints of dangerous conditions caused by vending along 5th Avenue.

- Jeffers noted that 5th Ave is a restricted area where food trucks are not permitted.
- Jeffers also provided information on NYPD enforcement actions including moped seizures, and encouraged the use of 311 to report issues.

Joint Housing and Land Use Committee – Antoinette Martinez and Diana Gonzalez

- Antoinette Martinez reported that the committee met to discuss a resolution presented by Damien Andrade regarding proposed rent increases under consideration by the Rent Guidelines Board (RGB).
 - The committee unanimously voted on a resolution to send a letter to RGB to oppose the rent increase and calling for a rent roll back.
 - There was a discussion on the motion
 - A roll call vote was conducted, and the motion passed by with 27 in favor, 4 opposed, 1 abstention, and 1 voting present.
- Martinez also discussed Watermark Capital/Fifth Avenue Committee’s proposal for rezoning the St. Rocco’s site.
 - The committee voted unanimously to call on Fifth Avenue Committee and Watermark Capital to not certify the ULURP until there is a robust public discussion involving the councilmember, the public, the Diocese and other diverse stakeholders.
- Pat Ruiz made a quorum call.
 - Roll was called. With 24 members present, a quorum remained in place, allowing the meeting to proceed.
 - There was additional discussion on the motion, which was followed by a roll-call vote.
 - The motion passed with 17 in favor, 10 opposed, and 1 present for cause.

Parks and Environment Committee – Diana Aguilar

- Diana Aguilar reported on a presentation and discussion regarding flooding.
- Clean Up Sunset Park hosted an event where they cleaned up 90 pounds of trash across 3 blocks.

Education Committee – Jonathan Martinez

- Jonathan Martinez reported that the Education Committee met a second time regarding Brooklyn RISE Charter School’s new location at 410 41st Street. This gave the public additional opportunity to comment on the plan.
- Martinez summarized RISE’s presentation, including demographic information, information about English Language learners, demolition permits and environmental testing, and construction schedules.
 - There was discussion on the presentation.
 - Jeremy Kaplan passed out a written resolution regarding RISE Charter School’s plan and moved to adopt the motion. Damien Andrade seconded.
 - Nick Jackson moved to amend the resolution to only adopt the first three paragraphs of the resolution, instead of the entire motion. Jeremy Kaplan accepted the amendment as friendly., and there was discussion on the motion.
- The District Manager read the motion aloud:
 - *“Now, therefore, be it resolved that Brooklyn Community Board 7 formally calls on NYSED and NYC DOE to reconsider and rescind their respective approvals given with respect to RISE’s lease of the Proposed Site in response to the concerns of the community;*
 - *“Be it further resolved that Brooklyn Community Board 7 calls on the NYC City Council, NY State Assembly and the NY State Senate to institute legislative action blocking RISE’s relocation to the Proposed Site in response to the concerns of the community; and*
 - *“Be it further resolved that Brooklyn Community Board 7 publicly declares its opposition to the relocation of RISE to the Proposed Site in response to the concerns of the community it represents.”*
- A roll call vote was conducted and the motion passed by a vote of 24 in favor, 1 opposed, 3 abstentions, and 1 voting present for cause.

Second Roll Call

Chairperson's Report - *Julio Peña III*

- Tabled

District Manager's Report - *Jeremy Laufer*

- District Manager Jeremy Laufer provided an update on the Community Board building's air conditioner issues and other building maintenance issues.
- Laufer recently testified at a City Council Government Operations committee against Intro 1318, which would change the appointment date for Community Board members to August 15. Laufer said this does not provide sufficient time for training new members and creating committee assignments, and suggested an appointment date of 7/1 would work better.
- The next Charter Commission meeting, focused on Land Use issues, will be held at the Sunset Park Library
- Laufer provided information on a Charter Revision proposal by the mayor to change the ULURP review period, as well as news and events relate to EDC, Equinor, the schedule of Sunset Park pool, Sunset Park closures due to resodding, installation of trees on Second Avenue, new and renewal liquor licenses, dining out applications, and police department statistics.

Old Business

- Antoinette Martinez asked if there was an update on United Senior Center.
 - Julio Peña III did not know but believed they were given a short-term extension in their current space.
- Karen Rolnick asked about the status of the Steiner Studios project in CB7.
 - Julio Peña III said that EDC's intention is still for Steiner to move into the campus, but there is no timetable for this project, nor any updates on the planned Bush Terminal Piers Park playground.

New Business

- Rosy Mota asked if the Borough President's office could help with the Board's air conditioning issues.
- Pat Ruiz announced that the Boricua Festival Committee donated a portrait by Maria Dominguez of Dr. Antonia Pantoja to PS 358.

Public Comment

- Marcel Kuba, a business owner on 5th Avenue, spoke about the impact of vending on 5th Avenue and asked for help with enforcement.
- John Santore encouraged the board to speak about immigration policy, asked that the board hold meetings over the summer about the St. Rocco's proposal. Santore also asked for the Economic Development Committee to meet.
- Robert Carillo spoke about safety concerns, especially for the elderly, due to rampant illegal parking in bus stops. Carillo also spoke about concerns regarding illegal vending activities and afterschool programs.
- Elyse Shuk spoke about the order of the agenda and said that elected officials should be after public comment so they can listen and respond to the community.
- Juan Garcia spoke about vending issues.
- Cynthia Jeffers urged business owners to call 311 about vending issues, and to call 911 if the issue involves propane so FDNY can come.
- Raul Carmela spoke about the impact of vending and how it affects store business, and about frustrations with poor responses from calling 311.

Adjourn