

# Community Board 7 Monthly Meeting Report

May 21, 2025

## Before the Meeting

### These Elected Officials Reported:

- NY State Senator Andrew Gounardes – *represented by Francesca Lando*
- Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso – *represented by Alicia Rey-Miller*
- NY State Assemblymember Robert Carroll – *represented by Sean Gurl*
- US Representative Dan Goldman – *represented by Jessica Bravo*
- NY State Senator Steve Chan – *represented by Ray Morales*
- NY State Assemblymember Marcela Mitaynes – *represented by Emmitt Mendoza-Gaspar*
- NY City Councilmember Alexa Avilés – *represented by Edward Cerna*
- NY City Councilmember Shahana Hanif – *represented by Iqra Shafik*

## Opening of Meeting

- Chairperson Julio Peña called for a moment of silence for victims of the boat accident earlier in the week.

## Roll Call

## Adoption of Agenda

- Moved to adopt – *Damien Andrade*  
Seconded – *Gladys Bruno*  
Passed by unanimous consent.

## Approval of April 16, 2025 Minutes

- Moved to adopt – *Pat Ruiz*  
Seconded – *Karen Rolnick*  
Passed by unanimous consent.

## First Public Comment on topics covered on the agenda

- Johanna Bjorken opposed Brooklyn Rise’s plan to build a Charter School at 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 40<sup>th</sup> Street. The neighborhood no longer needs the school capacity.
- Antonia Ferrara Martinelli, president of CEC 15, spoke to oppose the Brooklyn Rise project. There are more questions than were asked at the committee meeting. This school would be located in a corridor with six other schools in four blocks and threatens the enrollment and funding of these schools.
- Robin Kilmer stated agreement with the previous speakers and suggested there may be environmental problems at the Brooklyn Rise site from the previous gas station.

## **Chairperson's Report – *Julio Peña III***

- Julio Peña III thanked Board members who stepped off the board and welcomed new members.
  - Peña stated that the Board will be honoring Beatrice Desapio's 51 years of service in June.
- Since the last meeting, Peña met with BQE Community Partners about the stalled Third Avenue plan. Peña also spoke to Gothamist/WNYC for a story about the longstanding problems with the Avenue.
- Peña sent a letter to DCP about the proposed last-mile text amendment and toured the new Con Edison facility on 27<sup>th</sup> Street.
- As Barbara Lee left the Board, there was a vacancy for the Assistant Sergeant-at-Arms position.
  - Per Article 12, Section 5 of the By Laws, Peña appointed Dan Kaminsky to fill the vacancy, but the appointment needed to be ratified by the Board.
  - Cesar Zuniga moved to approve the appointment of Dan Kaminsky as Assistant Sergeant at Arms. Pat Ruiz seconded the motion. The motion to appoint Kaminsky was approved by unanimous consent.

## **Committee Reports**

### Joint Executive and Attendance Committee – *Julio Peña*

- Peña reported on the joint committee meeting with the Executive and the Membership and Attendance Committees, which focused on new board member orientation.

### Parks and Environment Committee – *Diana Aguilar*

- Aguilar stated that the committee met with Beyond Plastics, an organization whose mission is to end plastic pollution worldwide.
  - Beyond Plastics asked for a support letter on the Packaging Reduction and Recycling Infrastructure Act (PRIA), but there was no quorum at the committee meeting.
  - Damien Andrade moved to provide a letter support for the PRIA. The motion was seconded by Jeremy Kaplan.
    - There was a discussion on the motion.
      - Jeremy Kaplan spoke in favor of the resolution to support PRIA.
      - Jonathan Martinez asked who would receive the CB7 support letter.
      - Julio Peña stated that the letter would be shared with all the NYS elected officials who serve CB7.
  - The motion to support PRIA passed via unanimous consent.
- Aguilar reported on a presentation from Blue Horizon Sailing regarding a sailing program that they would like to bring to Bush Terminal Piers Park year-round.
  - Blue Horizons is seeking assistance with obtaining access to the waterfront through EDC.

- Peña stated that a letter can be sent to EDC to get clarification regarding obtaining access to the waterfront for this type of programming.

### Education, Health, and Human Services – *Jonathan Martinez*

- Martinez reported that the Committee met with Brooklyn Rise Charter School to discuss their proposal to build a new school building at the site of a former BP gas station located on 4th Avenue & 40th Street.
  - Demolition will take place starting on April 15 and the development should be completed by April 2026. The school is scheduled to open in this location in September 2026.
  - Brooklyn Rise’s new facility will have capacity for up to 420 students.
- The Committee met with the Department of Health & Mental Hygiene for a presentation about measles outbreaks and prevention.
- The committee also met with the American Heart Association who are requesting a letter of support from CB7 for Intro 1152, which seeks to prevent the sale of menthol flavored cigarettes in NYC.
  - Martinez moved to provide a letter of support for Intro 1152. The motion was seconded by Diana Gonzalez. There was a discussion on the motion.
  - Tailisha Gonzalez proposed a friendly amendment to the motion asking for the letter to include funding for support programs. Martinez accepted the amendment.
    - The motion passed via unanimous consent.
- The committee discussed legislation from the NYS Assembly and Senate A136/S138: Medical Aid in Dying Act.
  - This bill would permit adults with terminal illness (6 months or less) to request self-administered medication to end their life.
  - The bill calls for certain stipulations to be met before the medication would be given to the individual.
    - Martinez moved to provide a letter of support for the bill.
    - The motion was seconded by Jerry Chan.
      - There was a discussion on the motion.
        - Jamie Fried spoke in favor of the motion.
        - Michael Tom asked if an amendment could be made to the letter to include a waiting period after the request is made by the patient and for the physicians to look into the reasons the patient has made the request.
        - Martinez accepted the amendments.
      - A hand vote was conducted, and the majority was in favor with 2 opposed and 0 abstentions.
- Jeremy Kaplan proposed a resolution that CB7 should send a letter to Brooklyn Rise Charter School in opposition to their proposed school development.

- Martinez stated that he would hold another committee meeting to hear additional comments and feedback from the community regarding the Brooklyn Rise Charter school development.

### Joint Housing and Land Use/Landmarks Committee – *Antoinette Martinez*

- Martinez discussed plans for 783 4th Avenue to be converted into three residential buildings (13-story, 8-story, and 7-story) with 257 total units.
  - The committees shared a list of questions with the project’s developers and the committees will meet again with the developer on June 4 to discuss the responses to those questions.
- Martinez also highlighted an as-of-right development which will be constructed at 179 22nd Street.
- The Rent Guidelines Board will hold a meeting on June 9 to discuss proposed rent increases.

### Joint Land Use/Landmarks and Transportation Committee – *Diana Gonzalez*

- Gonzalez provided a recap of the joint committee meeting, which focused on a proposed change to zoning regulations which would define and regulate last-mile warehouse/trucking facilities.
- While the proposed amendment will eventually go through the ULURP process, right now it is in the Environmental Scoping Process, which determines what is studied in an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).
- Neither committee had quorum so the committees could not vote to pass any motions. This means CB7 was not able to be on record regarding this current DCP action.
- Gonzalez highlighted committee feedback and concerns about issues such as a loophole that would permit the building of last mile parcel delivery facilities with less than 50,000 square feet as-of-right and the lack of mechanisms to prevent warehouses from being sited near schools and community facilities, nor to prevent truck deliveries from occurring during school pickup and drop-off times.
- At this stage, the Environmental Assessment study is complete. Now, committees are commenting on what the scope of the Environmental Impact Study (EIS) should include.
- When the EIS is completed, the text amendment will be certified and come back to CB7 for further discussion and comments.

### Transportation Committee – *Katie Walsh*

- Walsh discussed the application for Express Bus Inc. to operate an intercity bus serviced from 8<sup>th</sup> Ave between 60<sup>th</sup> and 61<sup>st</sup> St. to Philadelphia.
  - Transportation Committee members highlighted several important issues such as traffic congestion, operation of other, possibly unlicensed bus services, concerns about pickup and drop-off schedules, and more.
  - The Transportation committee voted to disapprove of the application 6-2.
    - As the motion came out of committee, there was no need for a second.

- There was discussion on the motion.
- A roll call vote was conducted, and the motion to disapprove the Express Bus Inc. site on 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue between 60<sup>th</sup> and 61<sup>st</sup> Streets passed: 18 – Yes; 15 – No; 0 – Abstentions.
- Walsh discussed a presentation by Get Women Cycling focused on traffic safety issues. The presenter Angela Azzolino discussed several issues including the fact that traffic lights that are constantly out on 60<sup>th</sup> Street and 3<sup>rd</sup> Avenue, and on how dangerous delays in addressing safety infrastructure can be.
- Walsh also reported on committee discussion regarding DOT delays with the Third Avenue redesign.

### **District Manager's Report – *Jeremy Laufer***

- Laufer reported that DOT informed the board that there will be three open streets over the summer.
  - These will be located at 18th Street between 4th & 5th Avenues: 43rd Street between 7th & 8th Avenues and 54th Street between 5th & 6th Avenues.
- The New York State Liquor Authority will conduct a hearing regarding Family Hall, located at 201 46th Street.
- A ULURP Certification for Prospect Farms, which is a community garden, will be taking place in June.
- There will be a Sunset Park cleanup on Saturday 5/24/25.
- There have been 22 new/renewal liquor licenses since the previous month and NYPD statistics were available.

### **Old Business**

- None

### **New Business**

- Damien Andrade introduced a resolution stating that the Board should call on the Rent Guidelines Board to freeze or rollback rent increases. The motion was seconded by Jeremy Kaplan.
  - There was discussion on the motion.
  - Diana Gonzalez moved to table the resolution and refer it to the Housing Committee. The motion to table was seconded by Karen Rolnick.
  - There was discussion on the motion. Antoinette Martinez stated that Andrade's resolution should not be sent back to the committee because the committee is having problems meeting a quorum.
  - Cynthia Jeffers noted that many Board members had left and asked whether quorum remained in effect.
  - A quorum call was conducted, and only 22 board members were present, so quorum was lost.
- Due to lack of quorum, the Board meeting was adjourned.

### **Public Comment**

- Adrianna Medina from Sunset Park stated that Sunset Park is being overly populated by schools. She

also commented that someone is illegally using an empty lot which is next to her home as an illegal parking lot.

- Roxana Benavides from the Sunset Park Library announced several upcoming programs and events at the library.
- Kat Trujillo from UPROSE commented on Blue Horizon's waterfront use proposal and how Blue Horizon are not giving back to the community.
- Ahmad Perez from UPROSE stated that outside companies are coming into Sunset Park without taking the community into consideration.