

Community Board 7 Monthly Meeting Minutes

September 18, 2024

Opening of Meeting

Meeting opened at 6:43 p.m.

Roll Call

Adoption of Agenda

Julio Peña III moved to amend the agenda to note the following corrections: tabling the minutes of the September 9 public hearing until the October board meeting, moving Public Safety with Executive Committee report to item A and noting that no vote was required for Public Safety.

Moved to adopt as amended – *Julio Peña III*

Seconded – *Pat Ruiz*

Passed by unanimous consent.

Adoption of June Minutes

Moved to adopt – *Damien Andrade*

Seconded – *Jerry Chan*

Passed by unanimous consent.

First Public Comment on topics covered on the agenda

- David Fisher described the history of R5b zoning and noted that the only place it exists is in Windsor Terrace, and that the neighborhood does not need increased density.
- Alan Shulman from Windsor Place asked if the Arrow Linen developers would be willing to include a food coop and a youth program as part of their development project.
- Eric Olsen from 406 Prospect Avenue stated that the board should oppose the land use project for Arrow Linen Supply Co.
- Dianne Hauck Johnson from Windsor Terrace stated that they are against the development project proposed by Arrow Linen Supply Co.
- Margaret Kogan from Windsor Terrace stated that the Arrow Linen project is out of scale with the existing structures surrounding their property and that the current infrastructure is not sufficient to support new development.
- Nicole Cartagna from Prospect Avenue stated their objection to the rezoning proposal from Arrow Linen Supply Co.
- Matt Imberman stated their objection to the project.
- Peter Sluszka stated that the project should be voted down and that the developers should create a project that will benefit the local community.
- Susan Valenti from Windsor Terrace stated that they are against the rezoning proposal. They stated that they have not heard if an environmental impact study was conducted for the Arrow

Linen land use project.

- Meryl Breidbart from Windsor Terrace spoke in favor of the Arrow Linen Supply land use project as it will provide more housing in Windsor Terrace.
- Jamie Silverstein stated that the Arrow Linen land use project is disproportionate for the Windsor Terrace community, with not enough affordable housing as part of the project, and no community benefits attached to the development.

These Elected Officials Reported:

- Brooklyn Borough President Antonio Reynoso – *represented by Alicia Rey-Miller*
- NYC Mayor Eric Adams' Community Affairs Unit – *represented by Anastasia Yaskova*
- NYC Councilmember Shahana Hanif
- NY State Assemblymember Robert Carroll – *represented by Victoria Guisinger*
- US Representative Dan Goldman – *represented by Mayra Molina*
- NY State Senator Andrew Gounardes – *represented by Francesca Lando*
- NY State Assemblymember Marcela Mitaynes – *represented by Emmitt Mendoza-Gaspar*
- NYC Councilmember Alexa Avilés – *represented by Rob Aguilar*

Committee Reports

Joint Committee Meeting with Public Safety and Executive Committees – Cynthia Jeffers

- Jeffers reported on the discussion regarding an adult-use retail dispensary application from the Brooklyn Green Project located at 512 55th Street and the discussion on an adult-use retail dispensary application from the First Class Cannabis LLC to be located at 754 4th Avenue.
- As per CB7 bylaws, since these applications came during summer recess, the Executive Committee met immediately after the Public Safety Committee and affirmed their recommendations.

Transportation Committee – Katie Walsh

- Walsh reported on a Presentation from the MTA regarding the 36th Street ADA elevator project, a presentation from Councilmember Alexa Avilés' Office about Local Law 171, and several other transportation committee issues.

Land Use and Landmarks Committee – Diana Gonzalez

- Diana Gonzalez reported on a presentation from Arrow Linen Supply Co., Inc., owner of 441 & 467 Prospect Avenue to request approval of the following actions:
 - o a) Zoning map amendment changing an R5B zoning district to an R7-1 zoning district on the mid-block of Prospect Avenue between 8th Avenue and Prospect Park West,
 - o b) Zoning text amendment to zoning resolution to establish the rezoning area as a mandatory inclusionary housing,

- o c) Zoning special permit pursuant for a waiver of required accessory off street parking spaces to facilitate affordable housing within the transit zone.
- Gonzalez noted that the Land Use Committee met on September 16 and voted to disapprove, with conditions that Arrow Linen withdraw the application, engage with the community and resubmit after planning and visioning meetings.
- Julio Peña III read aloud a letter from Arrow Linen. He then opened the floor for a discussion on the motion.
- Damien Andrade commented that he does not recall Arrow Linen coming before the community board to speak about the project prior. Julio Peña III stated that there was an informal planning meeting prior to Arrow's public hearing. There was a discussion between Pat Ruiz and Julio Peña III concerning the meaning of "Informal and Formal" and Pat Ruiz stated this type of meeting needs to be reported on.
- Fay Walker stated they are an affordable housing researcher and rent a couple of blocks from Arrow. Walker supported the proposal and thought it should have deeper affordability. There are no units in that census tract that are affordable, and those units would be a win. More supply also brings more affordability.
- Jeremy Kaplan was disappointed in Arrow Linen's letter. The developer in an East Harlem rezoning made the property a truck depot to spite the community. Kaplan stated that the community is against the Arrow rezoning and believed a much better deal would be possible. Discussions should be started over again.
- Nick Jackson stated they were the only person to vote against the motion in committee. They would support the proposal if the owner commits to 40% affordable housing. They believed those most impacted by the proposal are low-income renters. They stated this would be the perfect location because the average income in Windsor Terrace is \$50K higher than in Sunset Park. The alternative could be no low-income housing gets built.
- Antoinette Martinez stated they agreed with the no recommendation as it provided an opportunity to work with the community and elected officials. Martinez stated that affordable is not really affordable and Councilmember Avilés worked with community members to build land use principles in Sunset Park, which could be a model for this project.
- Julio Peña III read a statement from Catholic Charities.
- Antoinette Martinez said Fifth Avenue Committee was able to build 100% affordable housing in Sunset Park, and this vote would set a precedent. The board has an opportunity to say no and give power back to the community.
- Jamie Fried stated economists say increasing supply decreases prices. They found a 2019 study that looked at every project in a 10-year period and found that within five hundred feet of a project for every 10% of unit increase, prices went down 2%. So, this project may provide benefits for renters, but mostly for middle- and high-income households. The research showed that the bottom 25% did not show any benefits. Fried stated that the developer was opaque about costs and benefits of the project at the committee meeting, and they found the developer untrustworthy.
- Dan Kaminsky stated that their concerns were about the viability of the Catholic Charities proposal and if the owners were even willing to go with a 100% affordable option.
- Erin Keith stated they are an architect. In their experience, a developer will always plan to

maximum capacity and to achieve maximum tax credits when adding affordable housing. Keith is in favor of building housing, but projects like this this could lead to taller buildings in the community.

- Jerry Chan stated they spoke with developers of other projects in the neighborhood, and people are afraid of high-rise housing, but there are a lot of people who need homes. However, they felt Arrow and the community needed to work together.
- The question was called on the motion to disapprove, with conditions that Arrow Linen withdraw the application, engage with the community and resubmit after planning and visioning meetings.
- The motion to disapprove passed with thirty yes, six no, and no abstentions.

Second Roll Call

Chairperson's Report - *Julio Peña III*

- Julio Peña III tabled his report.

District Manager's Report - *Jeremy Laufer*

The District Manager spoke about the launch of the CB 7 News Ticker, the Borough President (BP)'s Public Hearing on Arrow Linen, the BP's Community Air Quality Monitoring meeting, the Sunset Park Task Force and the EDC Special Purpose Fund for which they are seeking volunteers to vet applications. They also spoke about Equinor's Small Grants program, which also seeks volunteers, a new traffic signal for 6th Avenue and 17th Street being approved, recent IBX meeting, the upcoming Capital & Expense meeting, the change in date for the next board meeting, and provided an update on the project of making CB7's bathrooms ADA accessible. There were forty-seven new and renewal liquor license applications and two cannabis application since June.

Old Business

- None

New Business

- None

Public Comment

- Jack Walsh asked when the results of the vote and language of the resolution will be published.
- Antoinette Martinez noted an upcoming visioning session for the Brooklyn Marine Terminal.
- Maria Roca discussed UPROSE's upcoming festival.
- Jerry Chan brought up the upcoming Tunnel to Towers run.
- Sam Sierra brought up cleanliness issues on Fifth Avenue.

Adjournment