

Chair Report
November 14, 2019
Executive Committee Meeting

The Budget Man Cometh

Welcome back, and happy new year! I hope that everyone had an enjoyable holiday season and that 2020 brings us continued progress in addressing the issues and concerns in our community of West Harlem.

We closed the year with an exciting and jam-packed agenda: the coming Manhattan bus network redesign, continued attention on the issues and lack of parking facing our businesses on 12th Avenue, questions about the future of the McDonald's site on 125th and Broadway and the resources available for our schools, the support available to youth in our community, and much more. I am hopeful that through collaborative, deliberate action, many of these issues will see resolution or progress in the coming year.

To that end, though, I want to remind everyone that we are a beautiful, diverse board of 50 people who live, work, raise children in, or otherwise haven an investment in West Harlem. We may live in different places, have different jobs or educational experience, and hold many different opinions on the best way to deal with the issues facing our communities, but we must assume that each one of our fellow board members is attempting to do what they believe is in the best interests of the community. That means that treating our fellow board members with respect, even as we challenge their views or assumptions with which we disagree, is paramount for our board to function effectively as an advocate for and defender of West Harlem. Our diversity of experiences with a shared commitment to our community is what brought us together on this board in the first place, and we must maintain unity, given the many challenges our board faces.

As always, I want to thank you for serving our community of West Harlem.

Barry Weinberg

Follow-up on the Investigation in the Tessa Majors Case

Given the board's concerns around the investigation into the youth who are suspects in the Tessa Majors homicide case, the board is seeking additional information and community engagement from the NYPD, the Manhattan District Attorney's Office, and the Office of Corporation Counsel. Following Detective Harper's update tonight, we plan to discuss with the aforementioned offices ways to ensure that the community is not retraumatized as they continue their investigation and prosecution. I will be keeping the board updated on these efforts as they progress.

Census Recruitment is Still Happening!

Census 2020 is still hiring! Their goal for Manhattan is to have 10,000-15,000 people, as there is at least one census tract in every Community District that is considered "hard to count," with low response rates on previous counts. Community Board 9 held a Census Recruitment Day in partnership with Columbia University and the West Harlem Development Corporation, and we had over 20 people stop through the CB9 office alone to apply for census jobs. If you know of anyone who is interested in working for the

Census next year, please send them to the Community Board office 15 16-18 Old Broadway for additional information on how to apply!

New York Post Features Homeless Encampment in CB9

Unfortunately, the *New York Post* chose to feature a homeless encampment at W 138th Street and 12th Avenue in its January 1st edition. The article notably lacked any compassion for the individuals who lack shelter and have to sleep outside under the Riverside Drive overpass at the intersection. However, it appears that the article drove an interagency task force of DHS, Parks, Sanitation, and the NYPD to conduct another cleaning operation at the site.

This encampment, along with several others in the neighborhood around St. Nicholas Park, Riverside Park, and Jacob Schiff Park, remain persistent symptoms of the underlying housing crisis in our city. A lack of affordable housing, safe shelters, and adequate mental health resources means that our community is facing the very real problem of persistent street homelessness and its accompanying issues in the most severe way in years. This must continue to motivate our fights for additional supportive housing for the homeless and adequate mental health resources. In the short-term, the board is coordinating with DHS in an attempt to have a dedicated caseworker assigned to each existing encampment to build relationships with the individuals there and hopefully connect them with shelter options that meet their individual needs.

Manhattan Borough President's 2nd Public Hearing on Religious Facilities on Tuesday, Jan 14th 6-8pm

Manhattan Borough President Gale Brewer is holding the second public hearing of the Religious Facilities Task Force on Tuesday, January 14th from 6-8pm at Harlem Hospital. While this is during CB9's Housing, Zoning, and Land Use Committee Meeting, I strongly encourage board members to attend. Our churches and other religious institutions have found themselves with valuable real estate and, frequently, shrinking congregations, putting pressure on them to sell or otherwise redevelop their land. It is very important that Harlem's voices be heard at this uptown public hearing.

Community Board Applications Are Now Open

As a reminder, Community Board applications are still open! If you are on the 2018-2020 cycle, please be sure to submit your reapplication to the Manhattan Borough President's Office by going to www.manhattanbp.nyc.gov/cbapplication/. Paper applications can be requested individually from the office for those unable to apply online. Please also be sure to encourage others you know who may have the time, dedication, and interest to serve their local communities to apply!