

**Manhattan Community Board 9  
Executive Committee  
September 10, 2020**

Meeting (conducted over Zoom) called to order 6:45pm. M. Dunn moves to adopt agenda, seconded by multiple committee members. V. Edwards moves to adopt minutes with any necessary changes. Both motions carry unanimously.

**Presentations**

Anjali Verma and Brianna Sturkey, Mobilize African Diaspora (MAD)

Speakers are a Columbia senior and Barnard recent grad. MAD authored letter to President Bollinger demanding university fulfill responsibilities to West Harlem, stop over-policing in the name of safety, carry out support promised in CBA. Demands sourced from correspondence with Morningside Heights Community Coalition and CB9 members, research into old Spectator articles, and original research. Demands cover employment, education, affordable housing, university expansion, and long-term sustainability of the university-neighborhood relationship.

MAD is holding introductory meeting with administrators this week, but will seek to include CB9 and other community organizations in future meetings. Twitter @MadatCU

Committee members question and discussion included expanding concern from Black to BIPOC, addressing Columbia's historical connection to slavery, the Landmarks committee's efforts to uncover untold parts of the neighborhood's history, and the efforts of other academic institutions to organize around these issues and invest in their surrounding communities.

**Chair's Report**

Budget season is coming up -- one of the CB's biggest charter-mandated responsibilities is to communicate priorities to agencies. Committee chairs have received information about when agency meetings are happening, and documents/resources to prepare.

Ask agencies what service changes would result from budget cuts -- and what cuts have already happened. Budget documents difficult to read, but if we become more fluent in reading and understanding them we will be more effective advocates.

Board working on balancing priorities re homelessness: do not want to criminalize homelessness or associated afflictions, but also do not want substance abuse to result in increased drug activity in our community. Report encampments to 311, violence to 911. Approach the problem with empathy. Do not yet have satisfactory way to communicate with DHS and CUCS (contracted agency for our neighborhood) -- want to know about successful outreach.

Efforts to boost census response rates in our neighborhood. Outreach to businesses, organizations, congregations to communicate about census and why it is so important.

### **Treasurer's Report**

Report provided to committee members. \$10K each from CMs Levine and Perkins, and \$1K from CM Kallos. Budget cuts resulted in the loss of previously expected \$45K from the city.

### **District Manager's Report**

City Human Rights Commission providing workshops on working with transgender and gender-non-conforming individuals, and protections available to them under city law.

Board office working with 30th Pct. and Dept. of Sanitation on conditions left behind from free market on 138th and Hamilton Place. Community Team Up to Clean Up trash pickup activities happening this weekend and ongoing.

### **Committee Reports**

#### **Arts & Culture**

Requested more information from Harlem Music Festival, which they did not want to provide. Committee asked for community artists to be considered in planning and prominently featured. Disagreement with organization about what was communicated and when. WHDC has provided funding to support this event.

#### **Uniformed Services & Transportation**

Bank Street is closing 112th from Broadway to Riverside daily from 8am to 4pm for school. Does not require CB support for closure because of city's Open Streets policy. 26th Pct had no objection; barriers will be staffed and removable for emergencies, deliveries, and residents.

#### **Economic Development & West Harlem Piers**

Seeking information from Columbia on how they will provide funds they have promised to piers. Need for traffic signage between St. Clair Place and 133rd where pedestrians cross bike lane in multiple places. CM Levine funds secured for replacement kayak launch, which sunk.

#### **Landmarks & Parks**

Omission Project has Instagram account @omissionproject to take portraits of residents in St. Nicholas Park. Supporting three bills being promoted by Housing Justice For All (HJ4A), seeking passage before Oct 1 eviction date, as well as Stock Transfer Tax bill.

#### **Health & Environment**

Cannabis resolution in meeting documents. Need to add update about ACS based on YEL committee discussion. Black Lungs Matter screening at board meeting. Will

connect CB9 with people behind gas pipeline. Ambulance noise complaints are up. National Suicide awareness and prevention month.

### **Youth, Education, Libraries**

Broadway Presbyterian Church Nursery School is in session, taking appropriate precautions. Riverside Park Conservancy maintained summer internship program thanks to WHDC grant. HSA facade renovations complete.

Presentation on ACS from advocates from Parent Legislative Action Network (PLAN) to promote reforms to protect more rights for parents under investigation. Made connection between child services system and mass incarceration system.

### **Senior Issues**

Worked hard to do outreach to get seniors the correct Zoom link for monthly meeting. Discussions of food, housing, senior centers, and access to technology. Developing buddy system of seniors to check on each other, and phone bank to seniors to connect them to services (in association with Sen. Jackson's office).

### **Strategic Planning**

Back-to-school event held today as collaboration among community organizations; another one will be this weekend. Talking to activist Columbia students to share ideas and what we have been working on.

### **Housing, Land Use, Zoning**

Discussion about Hamilton RKO theater project and 701 W 135th, where street collapsed, and connected issues with building.

### **Action Items**

Letter of support for MAD

There was general agreement that the board should draft a letter, to be voted on at next GBM. MAD activists seemed amenable to changes requested by the committee.

Letter on West Harlem Piers park

M. Dunn described letter requesting information about Columbia funding for West Harlem Piers park, including restoration of drinking fountain.

Legalization of marijuana

Comprehensive resolution from M. Aristy-Farer and Health committee on cannabis industry, federal and state law, and economic justice for communities of color.

Meeting adjourned at 9:17pm.

Submitted by, Alec Barrett, Secretary