

Senior Issues Manhattan Community Board 9

Date: December 7, 2022

Time: 11:00 AM

Location: Zoom

Attendance: *Co-Chairs:* Walter T Alexander, Anthony Fletcher; *Members:* Patricia Caldwell Carlton Davis, Lydia Gerson, Arelis Mejia; *Attendees:* Eutha Prince (MCB9) Verna Arthur (DFTA) Will Haggis (George Bruce Library) Patricia Caldwell, Richard Altman, Dory Garcia (ARC), Lorrienne Wilbourne, Ireatha Fletcher, Victor Edwards, Richard Allman

- I. **Call to Order** Quorum established at 11:07 AM
- II. **Adopt Agenda** Motion to adopt the minutes with necessary corrections; Verna Arthur asks for a correction to the November minutes, which had incorrect Medicaid enrollment dates. The correct dates are October 15th through December 7th—not the 4th. Email address for the NYC Department for the Aging is: nyc.gov/aging.
- III. **Adopt Minutes** Lydia Gerson made a motion to accept the corrections to last month's minutes; seconded by Arelis Mejia.
- IV. **Approval of Agenda:** Chair Alexander asks for a motion to accept the agenda for this month's meeting. Anthony Fletcher does so; seconded by Lydia Gerson.
- V. **Presenters**
 1. Roy Bruno, Executive Director of Morningside Retirement and Health Services (MR&HS); Joanna Stolove, Assistant Director, MR&HS; Located at Morningside Gardens, La Salle & 123rd street.
 1. MR&HS is a Naturally Occurring Retirement Community or NORC for adults over the age 60.
 2. MR&HS is one of the original NORCs beginning in the 1990s
 3. NORC aims to provide a sense of community and that is why the program is limited to a specific housing complex though some activities are open to the public. Virtual attendance sponsored by the Morningside NORC is open to an almost unlimited number of participants.
 4. The program seeks to provide a range of services to the elderly through voluntarism, serving on the board or through other actions.
 5. Reference was made to an article in the December 3, 2022 New York Times: *The New Old Age: Who Will Care for 'Kinless' Seniors?*
 6. The number of Kinless Seniors is expected to increase due to the aging of the "Baby Boomer" population, increased divorce rates, childlessness and longer life spans
 7. Assistant Director, Joanna Stolove, talked about the assistance she has rendered those residents of the MR&HS NORC who need assistance in accessing services that they are entitled to but whose directives are too labyrinthine to be managed by a senior resident who may suffer some cognitive impairment. Such individuals may also fall prey to scams.
 8. Lydia Gerson asked how a building would qualify for a NORC.
 9. A distinction was made between NORC and *NORC* program: the former term, NORC, is a demographic distinction that says a certain number of people in a district are over 60; the latter is a program set up by a building or

complex. Funding may be applied for the hiring of nurses and social workers through the city or state or by application to the City Council representative for discretionary monies. Organizations such as JASA or Self-Help may assist in the process of application for funding.

10. In response to Richard Allman's questions whether only a single building would qualify for NORC status, the answer was a block or a group of buildings could. In response to Mr. Allman's question if there is a working relationship between senior centers and NORCS, Mr. Bruno's response was that most NORC programs are standalone.
11. Patricia Caldwell spoke about the difficulties of accessing funding for such projects due to institutionalized racism.
2. Victor Edwards, 1st Vice-Chair, CB #9; Chair, Strategic Planning Committee
 1. Mr. Edwards spoke about the Community Benefits program with Columbia University, a twenty-five year agreement that might not be extended
 2. The Strategic Planning Committee has monitored the benefits agreement with Columbia and the West Home Community for the last several years.
 1. Benefits through agreement total \$100,000,000.
 2. \$76,000,000 in the Benefit Fund
 3. \$20,000,000 in the Affordable Housing Fund
 4. \$4,000,000 in Legal Services offering walk-in services
 1. Manhattan Legal Services
 2. Palante Harlem
 5. \$20,000,000 available to use Columbia facilities
 6. \$30,000,000 for a school to be built
 1. Senior Programs
 1. Shuttle Bus service
 1. Program needs to be publicized
 2. Gail Powell notes that the service is not convenient; can schedule be amended?
 2. Members of these centers-- Manhattanville Center, Grant Houses Center and Randolph Center—may avail themselves of dental screening, as well as Blood Pressure checks
 3. Other programs: Forty Undergraduate scholarships per year; Youth internships, camps etc.

VI. **Action Items** Mr. Edwards will find out if the above centers do walk-ins; Eutha Prince proposed a senior event at the district office during May, which is Seniors Month for Dental and blood screenings. Gail Powell asked if Vision screening could also be offered.

VI. **New Business** Co-Chair Walter Alexander proposed to meet in person. All agreed that this should be contingent on weather; Nilaja Mwata Nubian, the director of the Jackie Robinson Adult Center, introduced himself. Gail asked Dory Garcia, ARC XVI, how she could access transportation. Ms. Garcia replied that one must call transportation and schedule 24 hours in advance. Appointments must be from 10:00 AM in the morning and before 2:30 PM in the afternoon. Verna V. Arthur announces that the term, "Senior," to describe older adults is no

longer used; it is replaced by “Older Adults” or “Older New Yorkers.” The agency is now referred to as NYC. Aging. The latter has now launched a campaign to encourage New Yorkers, 60+ to join its local adult centers. Cordell Cleare did not attend this meeting.

VI. Adjourn Pat Caldwell made a motion to adjourn the meeting; Gail Powell, seconded. All agreed.

VI. Next meeting January 2, 2023 via zoom.

Respectfully submitted by Lydia Gerson