



Social Services & Housing Committee Meeting Minutes

May 7, 2019

Chair: Rosemary Ordonez-Jenkins

Vice-Chair: Daniel Porro

Board Members Present: Rosemary Ordonez- Jenkins Chair of Committee, Daniel Porro, Angel Martinez, Doralina Colon, James Tynan, Sarwar Jahan, Kevin Kiernan, Mitchell Halpern, Henry Pelayo, Nicholas Himidian, William Rivera (DM)

Meeting Start Time: 7:00 P.M.

Attendees of meeting introduced themselves.

Introduction: *Committee Description: The social service & housing committee represents the community's interests with regards to social services including senior services, disability, veterans and housing concerns and acts as a liaison between community members and the NYC Human Resources Administration, Department of Homeless Services, Department of Aging, New York City Housing Authority, and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. The Disability Sub-Committee is under this committee.*

DM Rivera/ Board Members

- Community Board 9 was first notified by DHS about the proposed shelter at 2008 Westchester Avenue on February 22, 2019.
- March 15, 2019- Community Board 9 hosted a meeting with DHS, Samaritan Village, Elected Officials and Board Members of the Social Services Committee, to receive and review details of the proposed shelter. CB9 initiated a group email with community leaders, elected officials and DHS, so all parties can collect and disseminate important information.
- March 18, 2019- DHS submitted answers to questions
- April 12, 2019- Community Board 9 organized a shelter notification meeting to inform the public of the proposed shelter at 2008 Westchester Avenue. This was a very productive meeting with over 500 stakeholders as well as media reporting on the event. CB9 prepared informational packets for the public and collected over a hundred questions/comment forms. Questions from this meeting has been databased.
- April 18, 2019- DM William Rivera updated the Board on the proposed shelter at 2008 Westchester Avenue and upcoming events.

- April 20, 2019- Email was sent to DHS with questions
- April 23, 2019- DM William Rivera conducted a site visit of a shelter in Brooklyn that is operated by Samaritan Village, similar to the proposed shelter at 2008 Westchester Avenue. To observe operations and attend a Community Advisory Board meeting to gather information and report findings to the board.
- Samaritan Village and DHS will be at the next CB9 General Board meeting. This is the first time they are presenting to the full board. This will be an opportunity for board members and chairs of the committees to ask questions.
- Senator Luis Sepulveda and Assembly Woman Karines Reyes organized a Town Hall meeting for May 3, 2019. CB9 was not invited as a guest of the panel and wasn't made aware of this meeting until after the flyer was circulated on social media. CB9 did not organize or sponsor this Town Hall.
- Assembly Woman Karines Reyes organized a petition for no sex offenders at the site
- At the Town Hall meeting Assembly Woman Karines Reyes stated to the public that CB9 was given the opportunity to make recommendations years ago on the shelter. This is not true.
- There were Board Members present at the Town Hall and the Executive Board found out through PIX 11. DM Rivera stated that he found out from the news as well about what was said at this Town Hall
- The Executive Committee had an emergency meeting and they expressed their outrage and wanted all the facts
- Board Member Rosemary Ordonez-Jenkins stated that at the Town Hall a lot of questions came from the community and because of the outrage in the room community members weren't able to hear responses. Rosemary also stated that it will be helpful to get clarity on the site
- Chairman Nicholas Himidian stated that CB9 has worked very hard to change the dynamics of the reputation of this board, CB9 strives for excellence. CB9 advocates for the community. Mr. Himidian also stated that Assembly Woman Karines Reyes made a false statement at the Town Hall meeting on May 3rd, because CB9 has no jurisdiction at all over a shelter site, unless it is a rezoning, which will then be a ULURP. The proposed shelter is an "as of right" project. Mr. Himidian also asked Samaritan village when this location was decided on and they replied "6 months ago".

Deputy Commissioner Anabel Palma/Samaritan Village/DHS

- The meeting was organized by Elected Officials, they wanted participation from DHS and the provider
- Deputy Commissioner Anabel Palma stated that February 22, was the official date of the notification for 2008 Westchester Avenue. Ms. Palma stated that she reached out to Councilmember Diaz but the conversation did not finish because the Councilmember opposed to the shelter. Ms. Palma stated that she then reached out to
 - DM Rivera to hold a notification meeting
 - Senator Luis Sepulveda

-Assembly Woman Karines Reyes

-Senator Biaggi

- There will be 165 individuals at this shelter
- The cluster sites in district are for families. The people who are from the district are offered permanent housing. 3,600 hundred units were being used as of today 1,800 were closed. In this district a total of 23 were closed since 2016. 6 other cluster sites will close by 2021.
- In CB9 there are 2,017 homeless people (families included) Chairman Nicholas Himidian and DM Rivera asked if a breakdown can be provided of families and single individuals in this district.
- No one is turned away from a shelter there is “right to shelter”
- This will be an employment shelter. Clients with mental illness or have issues with substance abuse won’t be accepted at this shelter. Everyone will reviewed who is going to the shelter. If someone is from this community they can be placed in this shelter if they are “appropriate”
- Services are not provided for clients coming out of jail
- Not an SRO
- The administration wants to make sure people go back to the communities that they come from. Shelters are always placed in low income neighborhoods. No recommendations were received from Community Boards but there is an obligation to move forward. People don’t understand the crisis and the needs that these sites have to be opened. Just because some districts have zero shelters doesn’t mean that they aren’t being looked at or that it isn’t proposed.
- Security will be on site. There are hardly any complaints of crime being increased because of a shelter being placed. 911 calls are mostly because of someone being sick.
- Incident reports are reported to DHS
- The number one priority is safety
- Cameras are on the facility
- Staff will be trained on site. There will be:
 - 4 security per shift around the clock
 - 1 Program Director
 - 1 assistant Director
 - 6 case managers
 - 2 Clinical Supervisors
 - 2 employments specialists
 - 2 job developers
 - 3 kitchen staff
 - 5 housing managers
 - 4 Residential aides
- If curfew is missed the clients have the risk of losing their bed and being transferred to another facility. If the client has to work, proper documentation has to be provided for their bed to be held for them.

- Shelters do not decrease property value
- There will be no level 3 sex offenders at this site. Level 1 and 2 sex offenders will be accepted.
- Jobs are offered to the community when shelters are being opened. Applications and resumes are accepted as soon as they are ready to open.
- There will be a Samaritan staff member to report around the clock
- Samaritan Village is committed to having a community advisory board.
- If any incident happens an incident report has to be submitted by staff and security. DHS is also notified.

DM Rivera stated that he wants to communicate to the community why will this facility be in this District. DM Rivera also thanked the Board Members, Samaritan Village and DHS for attending the meeting and made an announcement to the meeting attendees that if they have any questions please fill out a questionnaire. Chairman Nicholas Himidian stated that we will try to get answers for all unanswered questions by the General Board meeting.

Meeting Adjourned: 9:00 PM

OFFICE INFO

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