

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

ALAN DUBROW
ANA CALI
AVROHOM WOLFSON
ARTURO ENAMORADO III
BETH SLEPIAN
CHAIM SCHNEIDER
CHESKY BLAU
DANIEL KERADNAM
DAVID FRIEDLANDER
DOUGLAS JABLON
ELLIE KASTEL
ELLIOT SIDDIQUI
JACOB ASKAL
JACOB HASS
JACQUE FRIEDMAN
JEFFREY DWECK
JOHN TALMADGE
JOSEPH GROSS
JUDITH OJO-DIAZ
JULES FLEISCHER
LOUIE LIU
MAMNUNUL HAQ
MARIA ARETTINES
MIRIAM HERSKO
MORDECHAI KATZ
MORRIS SENDEROVICH
NAFTALI TESSLER
SAM STOBER
SOL WAHBA
WIL FISHER
YAAKOV KAPLAN
YERUCHIM SILBER

COMMUNITY RESIDENTS

APPROXIMATELY 15 RESIDENTS PRESENT

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

ADRIANA VINK
AMNAH KHAN
ALEXI SHALOM
BERNARD FREILICH
DAVID SHLOMOVICH
EDGAR GLUCK
MOSHE FRIDMAN
NICK BERGHALL
PETER REBENWURZEL
ROMINA FERNANDEZ
ROCHELLE ZAMI
SHARON FUCHS
SHLOMIE RIEGER
YAAKOV SCHAPIRO
YITZCHOK MOSKOWITS
YONAH MOSES

STAFF PRESENT

BARRY SPITZER – DISTRICT MANAGER

ELECTED OFFICIALS AND REPRESENTATIVES

ANTONIO REYNOSO, BROOKLYN BORO
PRESIDENT
JACOB EISDORFER, REP. BP REYNOSO
ANASTIA YASAKOVA, REP. MAYOR ADAMS
ALEXANDER GURVICH, REP. DA ERIC
GONZALEZ
JACK PLUSHNICK, REP. CONGRESSMAN DAN
GOLDMAN
ROSLYN JOINVIL, REP. CM RITA JOSEPH
AVROHOM MALACHOWSKI
CHAIM SCHNEIDER, REP. AM EICHENSTEIN

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ATTENDANCE

ADOPTION OF DECEMBER MINUTES

CHAIRMAN'S REMARKS

Delivered by First Vice Chair Yakov Kaplan

- I hope everybody had a wonderful New Year. We are all eager to begin the work of a new year.
- Mazel tov to our 2nd vice chair Yeruchim Silber on the birth of a grandson.
- Mazel tov and Congratulations to Louie Liu on the upcoming wedding of his daughter next month.
- On a sad note, on behalf of our entire community, I would like to extend our condolences to the entire Esposito family on the passing of former NYPD Chief of Department Joe Esposito. He was the Chief of Department, Commissioner of Emergency Management, and most recently the Deputy Commissioner for enforcement at the Department of Buildings. Early in his career he was the commanding officer of our own 66 Precinct. He had great relationships with the community and dedicated his life to the service of others. He will be greatly missed.
- Our next meeting will be February 27.

APPOINTMENT OF NOMINATING COMMITTEE

- The chairman appointed the following board members to serve on the 2024 nominating committee:
Yitzchok Moskowitz, Moshe Fridman, Rochelle Zami, Louie Liu, Joseph Gross.

BORO PRESIDENT ANTONIO REYNOSO

- The Boro President thanked the Chairman and the District Manager.
- He wished all Greetings and a Happy New Year and said he was excited for what 2024 has in store.
- He will be doing rotations at community boards in person and is looking forward to seeing many members in person. He is looking forward to getting more people to attend the meetings in person. While the zoom option is a great feature that enables more people to interact, there is great value to having members attend in person. So, he will be encouraging more in-person participation.
- He has been engaging in conversations with the mayor's office to discuss creating more development opportunities with community boards for board members. One of the things they are looking to do is to have training related to how we, as members, should be conducting ourselves.

Another thing we are looking to do is create an orientation training that can get board members ready to get going with board work on day one. The current opportunities to learn how to be a member and how committees work are limited. This is the first borough to start the process for orientation opportunities.

- Another training they want to do is related to harassment and other kinds of training that city employees are required to do. While community board members are not employees, it can be helpful to allow for interaction in a positive way.
This is the 3rd board where this development opportunity is being announced.
- Term limits are coming up in 4-5 years. We will need to start having serious conversations so that when the limits do come up, we don't lose 40 members at a time, and with that the knowledge that current members have. We will need to start the process of reaching out to long-

term board members to see if they know people who want to be involved. We don't want to lose everyone in one shot.

- Mazal tov to everyone who is getting married and having babies.
- In this community board we were able to get 2 new Hatzalah vehicles and the first electric Hatzalah vehicle in the state and arguably the country. This is a great move so we can see if we can transition to electric vehicles. This is good for the environment, and good for Hatzalah's rescue efforts as a significant amount of money ambulance organizations spend on is fuel.
- Every single Passover we have a cleanup crew that comes out twice during Passover. We want to make sure we keep our streets as clean as possible.
- We will hopefully see you all in person in the next few months.

The Boro President opened the floor to questions.

Barry Spitzer- District Manager: Thank you for joining us in our first meeting of the year, it is an inspiration.

Beth Slepian- Board Member: She wondered if the Boro President had any more information on the timing of the trainings.

Boro President: One of the things effecting the timeline is that we have community boards, that are an agency that has no commissioner. What it has is a political figure, me, that makes it so that it is a political process involved in community boards that takes away from its root existence of being the first line of civic engagement. Boards have a politician at their head and not a commissioner.

The trouble with that is that when we try to solve a problem it is hard to depoliticize, and the solutions chosen will be considered biased. So, we are looking to start a conversation with the mayor's office for the Civic Engagement Commission to play a larger role in these decisions. The hope is to have CEC run the harassment training and all the protected categories and how it should be operating. We are in conversations and all community boards are on board with having the CEC, which allows for a more objective entity to make decisions for community boards where when a Boro President would make the decision it would be political.

We don't have a concrete timeline for the training, but we are meeting with the mayor sometime before the end of the month to further discuss this.

Yeruchim Silber- Board Member: Thanks for joining. I've been on the board for 20 years. We as residents many times vote on items, but because we are an advisory organization, it gets overruled. Is there a way to give the community board decisions more weight to reduce this frustration.

Boro President- There are two issues are play. The one issue is that community boards need to have better access to government service agencies, as the city charter requires. When community boards are trying to get help with a broken streetlight, they should have readily available access to the DOT. To get information on either getting the problem fixed or why it can't happen.

When it comes to service boards should have the same access as elected officials, but that is not always the case. In our role we try to help make that connection.

The second issue is when it comes to recommendations. We live in a city and don't live in individual zones. What happens in your community board is not isolated and effects all of NYC. Many communities don't want to build above certain heights and that makes it so that rents are extremely high, and we have unhoused people in shelters. We have to do things in a communal way and can't always take only individual concerns into consideration. If we allow every community to do only what it wants or cares about, then it does not contribute to the success of the city. We need to consider the greater good.

On any service delivery issues or general recommendations, the community board can reach out to the Boro President's office to get involved. There are community boards who send things every day. If you feel you are not getting a response, let us know and we will follow up. These agencies have an obligation to respond, as it says in the charter.

Chaim Schneider- Board Member: Thanked the Boro President for being at the meeting and giving personal attention to the board. He asked how we can get community members to be interested in the board if when we put a lot of effort into things, like the budget, we are ignored.

Boro President: I think community boards are deeply important. The work that is done on boards, considering that most people who are on community boards are in some levels of leadership or have a strong voice, if anyone wants the strength of a community outside the elected officials, you go to a community board. Elected officials will not ignore the needs of the community board. One of your councilmembers representing this district is 100% in lockstep with the community board.

We as humans tend to focus on the 10% that we don't get- but for the most part the request of community boards on large items are considered.

Regarding the budget, I agree all community boards request more funding. And our budget office should be taking the consideration of the board's advice more. But it comes down to whether the mayor wants to follow through on the advice of the community board. There are other states that weigh the advice of community boards more through participatory budgeting. I want to be very careful on this notion that we don't listen to the community boards.

I see CM Hanif here, and when I was a councilman, the last thing I wanted to do was to go against what the community board wanted.

Maria Arettines-Board Member: She is happy that the Boro President is working on doing trainings. She had some follow up questions. 1. Will the training be only for board members or also for board leadership. 2. And how will it help to enable all board members to participate in committees, because this is an issue now.

Boro President: The orientation is a training format that will enable informing community board members on how the charter is modeled for community boards and let them see how things like how committees run. While he is not familiar with all community boards and how the committees work, he wants to encourage participation. These trainings are something we are trying to do citywide; we have been talking to other Boro Presidents and these issues seem to be a problem across the board throughout the city. All boards operate differently, and we want to both encourage diversity but also have some uniformity throughout the city.

Regarding the harassment training, it will have to be taken by everyone: executive members, staff, and board members. The trainings program is not fully baked yet, though.

VOTE ON CITY OF YES FOR ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY TEXT AMENDMENT PROPOSAL

First Vice Chair Yakov Kaplan proposed a vote and opened the floor to questions from the board.

Beth Slepian- Board Member: thanked Inna Guzenfeld and the Department of City Planning for being here to answer some questions. There are a few areas of concern, and I am wondering if you can speak about it.

The first thing we have been hearing is that one of the effects of the zoning text amendments is that there will be a weakening of the community boards' decision making when it comes to zoning changes.

The second thing is about the lack of environmental review on changes and how that is changing. She also wanted to publicly acknowledge that she is very grateful to the DCP employee who followed up with questions via email.

Inna Guzenfeld- Department of City Planning- I did not work directly on this project, but as far as the proposals go, there is no direct attempt or desire to weaken the power of community boards, there may be a perception that it would be a consequence. This is more of a policy question, but I'm happy to take it back to government affairs to look into if the indirect consequence of community board weighing in on certain proposals is going to be weakened. Regarding the environmental review, we are undertaking an extensive process of review. I can't speak to why this has not been yet, that is a question for our environment assessment team and the review division. I will take this question back to them and email their response to you.

Will Fisher- Board Member: The board has previously discussed rezoning the entire Coney Island Avenue when considering rezoning 534 CIA. A lot of members would like to see the rezoning of the entire avenue, maybe the board should write a resolution making that request. This might be a good forum to do that.

Chaim Schneider- Board Member: I noticed on the DCP website it says regarding parking, this proposal would change the mandate for requiring off street parking. The proposal claims that it would not require off-street parking in places where it is not needed. But I haven't seen places in the district where there isn't a need for parking- it is a hot commodity in our area, so I'm not sure how the option not to require parking is applicable.

Inna Guzenfeld- DCP: This is more related to City of Yes Zoning for Housing Opportunity ("ZHO") the other part is Zoning for Economic Opportunity ("ZEO") there are multiple projects that benefit from lowering parking. One such way is being able to provide more housing or more affordable housing because projects don't have to use the space for parking, or the cost of excavating and constructing underground parking. Above ground parking is even more expensive than underground at times. So, this is a way of promoting building and maintaining more affordable housing by waiving the requirement. This does not mean a developer cannot propose or make parking, it would only make it voluntary.

Chaim Schneider- Board Member- This district is residential, does the removal of parking requirement also apply to housing in non-economic districts?

Inna Guzenfeld- DCP- That is what the environmental review will look into.

Anna Cali- Board Member- Those of us who live in the area and know the issues of parking here don't really need an environmental study. We live here and know how bad the parking situation is. To not have a requirement is very disturbing to anyone who will hear about it. We understand you need affordable housing, and that parking is expensive, but not including parking in new projects is not being a good neighbor to the people who live in the area already. So, I think you should take this back to them and say let's put some kind of requirement for parking. A lot of times people come to us for a variance to limit the parking.

Inna Guzenfeld- DCP- Thanks for the comment, I can't speak to it directly because the review process is ongoing, and I do not work directly on ZHO.

The DCP will be doing training on ZHO and there will be opportunities to comment on these proposals as they are being introduced. The District Manager receives emails regularly on these.

Yakov Kaplan- First Vice Chair- Proposed a motion to approve the City of Yes Zoning for Economic Opportunity Text Amendment:

Roll call vote: 5 yes, 21 no and 2 abstentions: the motion failed.

ZONING & VARIANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

Delivered by District Manager Barry Spitzer

Item 1: 1002 Avenue N Variance Application

This application is for a proposed development which will require waivers for floor area/FAR; front yard; side yard; wall height/building height; and parking.

The applicant seeks to construct a community facility building to be used as a house of worship. The building would have a cellar and four stories above: a proposed front wall and building height of 46' contrary to the maximum permitted perimeter wall height of 21' and a maximum building height of 35', and a floor area of roughly 13,864 square feet (2.31 FAR) instead of the permitted 9,000 square feet of floor area and 1.50 FAR.

The building would provide a 2' side yard at the eastern lot line, and an 8' side yard at the southern lot line instead of the required two side yards with one 2' in width and one 20' in width. The proposal calls for a non-compliant front yard of 5' along East 10th Street, as well as a compliant front yard of 10' along Avenue N (per ZR Section 113-542, buildings in the Subdistrict follow the front yard requirements set forth in ZR Section 23-45 for an R4-1 district; front yards in the R4-1 district must be a minimum of 10' in depth).

The proposed development would require 16 parking spaces. Nonetheless, the Congregation would qualify for the CPC waiver for locally oriented houses of worship. The Congregation currently has 106 households. Of those 106 households, 102 live within a ¾ mile radius. As such, the proposed building would be required to provide 6 parking spaces, which falls below the maximum 10 spaces that can be waived. Given this information, the Congregation would meet the requirements for the CPC waiver and would thereby be exempt from providing any parking. There were no members of the public that attended, and no comments were sent in to the office's online form.

The committee voted unanimously to recommend approval of this application.

First Vice Chair Yakov Kaplan: Proposed a motion to approve the committee's recommendation.

Unanimous approval, with the abstention of Chairman Yidel Perlstein.

The motion carried.

Item 2: 394 East 3rd Street Variance Application

This is an application for a variance filed pursuant to ZR §72-21 of the Zoning Resolution of the City of New York, to permit a three-story three-family dwelling in an R5 district (Special Ocean Parkway District). The proposed building would have three residential dwelling units without the required side yards in an R5 district, contrary to the underlying regulations of ZR §23-461(a). The Premises is located on a uniquely narrow interior lot with a width of only twenty-three feet. If developed pursuant to R5 district regulations, the development would only consist of 1,709 square feet with a 10' wide home due to the side yard requirements. Therefore, an as-of-right development would result in an uninhabitable development.

The proposed variance would completely waive the side yard requirement and permit the development of a 2,811.58 square foot, three story residential building with three dwelling units. The building would have a total of 2,811.58 square feet or 1.22 FAR. The first floor will have a 966.08 square foot apartment. The second floor will have a 922.75 square foot apartment. The third floor will have a 922.75 square foot apartment.

The first-floor apartment will have two bedrooms, one bathroom, one living area, one dining area, and a kitchen. The second-floor apartment will have two bedrooms, two bathrooms, one living are, one dining area, a kitchen, and a roof terrace. The third-floor apartment will have two bedrooms, two bathrooms, one living area, one dining area, a kitchen, and a balcony.

There were comments from the neighbors at the hearing that were opposed to this application as well as comments sent into the office's online form that were opposed. The office also received some letters from neighbors from the attorney that were in favor.

The committee voted against a motion to approve.

(8 members voted. 2 Yes; 2 No; 4 Abstained)

The floor was open for discussion.

Yeruchim Silber- Board Member- He was at the committee meeting and wanted to point out that some committee members voted yes. He lives not far from the lot in question; it's a narrow empty space. As was mentioned, building what is allowed as of right would result in an unlivable project. He spoke to neighbors who were in favor of the variance. There is an acute need for housing, as was discussed earlier, this project is not out of character for this neighborhood. Therefore, he encouraged board members to vote for the proposal.

Mamnun Haq- Board Member- He also attended the meeting, though not as a member of zoning committee. He lived around the neighborhood of the lot for more than 30 years. The lot has been empty for a long time. The owner came up with an idea to do some sort of proposal for 3 family units. The building next door is also a 3-family house, the block has many 3 family houses, so why not this one? He supports the project, as the Boro President said, we are in deep crisis, we have trouble with housing in our area and this is an opportunity to help the problem. He urges everyone to support the proposal.

Beth Slepian- Board Member- She also attended the meeting and has some concerns, and there were a few concerning things about the project.

1. there was not a rendering to see how the project would fit into the spacing, especially considering there is a balcony in the project. Housing is an issue and there is the potential for something on this lot. But this proposal, as it stands, seems incomplete. She suggests that instead of having yes or no vote perhaps we can we go back to the developer and ask for a revision of the project.

2. She wanted to highlight that although there were neighbors in favor of the project at the public hearing, according to at least one person who came, the people in favor are not actually people who live there. They are absent landlords. She agrees there needs to be housing but would ask that we ask for a revision and ask for something more in line with the neighborhood.

Yakov Kaplan- First Vice Chair- He added the developers explained that any revisions on the plan would mean they can't develop. He added his own comments on this project as well. We frequently get preposterous ideas with huge buildings that are out of character for the neighborhoods. And we deny it because we want uniformity. This is a project for 3 family homes, and this is on a block of 3 family homes. He has 2 relatives on the block and they both live in 3 family homes.

First Vice Chair Yakov Kaplan: Proposed the motion from the committee to deny the application. This means that a yes vote would mean denying the application and a no vote would mean approving the application.

The motion failed with a majority of members voting against the committee's recommendation.

PUBLIC HEARING

Ben Reich - Resident

- He appreciates the chance to speak.
 - He is bringing up an issue that has already been addressed previously by email with the staff. This is regarding traffic congestion, particularly the traffic on 14th and 15th Ave. during the times when there is bus traffic. The situation is so bad that it arises to a dangerous situation when emergency vehicles need to pass. The answer to the Community Board suggestion of converting 15th and 16th Avenue to one way, or 12th and 15th Ave. to one-way directions, was that the Boro Commissioner has reviewed this request, and this request has been denied and please contact the Boro Commissioner's office for further detail.
 - Mr. Reich would like to get an idea of what it would take to get the DOT to do a traffic study.
- Barry Spitzer- District Manager:** He said he will call Mr. Reich tomorrow and go into more detail into what happened when the request was made to DOT.

DISTRICT MANAGER'S REPORT:

Delivered by District Manager Barry Spitzer

- He thanked DSNY for doing a good job with salting the ice.
- Everyone is probably aware of the horrible event that took place here on Saturday. He thanked NYPD for how they treated this with sensitivity and thanked Chessed Shel Emes and Misaskim who worked side by side during this tragedy, but wanted to raise the issue that it looks like mental health was involved in this and just wanted to say that there are a lot of resources available for mental health with NGOs, CBOs and government. If anyone knows someone who needs help please reach out, we can point you in the right direction.

First Vice Chair Yakov Kaplan- We are proud that our chairman is in Krakow now and that is why he cannot be here tonight. He is part of a delegation to visit Auschwitz and we are proud of him for all the work he does. Thank you, Yidel.

REPORTS FROM ELECTED OFFICIALS, REPRESENTATIVES & AGENCIES

- **Jack Plushnick, representing Congressman Dan Goldman**
 - He wished everyone a Happy and Healthy New Year.
 - He reminded everyone that the congressman's office is available to assist if you need help with any federal issues.
 - They are working on a few projects about which there are more details in the District Report left with the community board.
- **Jacob Eisdorfer, representing Boro President Antonio Reynoso**
- **Anastasia Yasakova, representing Mayor Eric Adams.**
 - Good evening and Happy New Year.
 - She recognized that in this month we also celebrated Martin Luther King Jr. Day, and the Lunar New Year. She also acknowledged International Holocaust Remembrance Day.

There were some announcements from the mayor's office:

 - Funding was restored to the Department of Education to bring back certain programming. Funding was also restored to the NYPD to enable another police academy class.
 - Lastly, Mayor Adams and NYPD Commissioner Caban issued an open call to City Council members to ride along with NYPD officers to see how they patrol the city and to see what strategies they employ.
- **Alex Gurevich, representing District Attorney Gonzales**
- **Roslyn Joinvil, representing Councilmember Rita Joseph**
 - She announced some events the Councilmember is hosting:
 - On January 29 there will be a Fair Fares enrollment event.
 - The councilmember will be hosting a Clergy Breakfast on February 1 at the Flatbush Central Market and is inviting all people of all faiths to meet and discuss issues of the district.
 - The NYLAG van will be at the CM's office on February 8.
 - The Councilmember would like to extend an invitation to everyone to attend her State of the District and Swearing in Ceremony to take place on February 25.
 - If there are any issues, please call the CM office at 718-287-8762.
- **Councilmember Shahana Hanif**
 - (The First Vice Chair acknowledged that the Councilmember was here and thanked her for attending.)

- **Avrohom Malachowski, representing Councilmember Farah Louis**
 - He wished everyone a Happy and Healthy New Year.
 - One of the main reasons he came to the board meeting was to see what was said about the City of Yes Text Amendment Proposal. It was noted and he will report back to the Councilmember.
 - Anyone with questions or concerns can reach out 718-629-2900.
- **Chaim Schneider, representing Assemblyman Simcha Eichenstein**
 - He hopes everyone had Happy Holidays.
 - He wished everyone well on the upcoming Tu B'shvat.
 - The Assemblymember is working on arranging e-waste events as well as shredding events.

Old Business

Beth Slepian- Board Member:

She wanted to address 2 things.

1. She brought up the approval of the minutes that happened earlier in the meeting. She wanted to state for the record that members received the minutes at 6:07 pm and had a 7 pm meeting start time. She appreciates the detailed minutes, but getting the minutes this late- which she raised her hand to suggest tabling the minutes. And even though she was here in person she was not given permission to speak. It is in the bylaws that members should be given a week's notice to approve the minutes. Members' time should be respected and should be given the opportunity to vote on minutes fully.
2. She understands the chairman is out this evening, but she is concerned about committees. She is also concerned about the nominating committee because it seems that each year, we have the cycle where the chair appoints the nominating committee which then reappoints the current executive board. It seems like a cycle that is very hard to break in terms of the leadership of the board. Perhaps the leadership is the best leadership for the board, but we should have more of an open process.

As we heard from the Boro president, committees are where the real work happens, and she wants to serve on the Sanitation committee.

New Business:

No New Business

MEETING ADJOURNED

Respectfully submitted by: Gittel Fekete